Industrial Effects and Firm's Survival (Case Study: Iran- East Azarbaijan Province)
Ghaffar Tari

Abstract—The aim of this paper is to investigate the effect of mean size of industry on survival of new firms in East-Azarbaijan province through 1981-2006 using hazard function. So the effect of two variables including mean employment of industry and mean capital of industry are investigated on firm's survival. The Industry & Mine Ministry database has used for data gathering and the data are analyzed using the semi-parametric cox regression model. The results of this study shows that there is a meaningful negative relationship between mean capital of industry and firm's survival, but the mean employment of industry has no meaningful effect on survival of new firms.

Keywords— Firm’s Survival, Hazard Function, Mean Capital of Industry, Mean Employment of Industry.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today in all countries small and medium firms have an important role from the various social aspects, manufacturing, and service providing. In some countries these industries are the major providers of employment, basis of change and innovation, and pioneer in creating of new technologies. These industries with considerable export have an important role on economic growth of their countries [1]. However, some developed countries as U.S. were inattentive to small businesses up to 1980’s because of special Fordism perspective ruling on their industrial development policies, but plenty of countries whose small and medium businesses had a considerable role on their industrial structure, since last few decades, have made supportive policies about this part of industries.

In addition to small and medium firms' entry importance, the study of these firms' survival and factors affecting it can be considered to be of greater significance in terms of meeting long-term policy objectives related to employment and growth of the economy. Over the past two decades considerable work has been undertaken on the post-entry performance of new firms in U.S. and Europe, (see, for example, [5], [29]), however, to date there has been a paucity of work about survival of SME's in Iran.

In spite of considerable quantitative presence of small and medium firms in Iran, these businesses have confronted with many difficulties, due to the policies which had made without considering their scale. Therefore, they were unable to play the expected role as in developed and developing countries. In this paper we study the effects of industry's mean size on survival of new firms established in Iran- East Azarbaijan province through 1981-2006 using hazard function

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A number of studies have been undertaken on industry dynamics or about the process by which new firms survive and grow, or else exit from the industry. A new literature has emerged in the last few years, which focuses on the question, “what happens to new firms subsequent to their entry?”, both in terms of their likelihood of survival and their growth patterns. Most of the studies have used the theory of "organizational ecology" by Hannan and Freeman [22], which emphasizes organizational characteristics and environmental conditions; particularly the number of employees and invested capital. There has also been a similar argument about the influence of firm specific characteristics on their survival by Audretsch [2] using the 'industrial organization theory". For example, a greater start-up size of the firm increases the likelihood of survival, since the greater the size, the less it will need to grow in order to exhaust potential scale economies and ultimate survival. Both a positive relationship between firm size and post-entry growth rates have been found in the United States [21], [19], [3], [5], the United Kingdom [18], Portugal [29], [30], Germany[32], [28] and Canada[8]. In addition other studies [17] show that firm-specific factors such as capital intensity and the use of advanced technologies have affected the firms' survival.

Jovanovic [25] suggests in theory of “learning by doing” that the firms which aren’t able for successful learning and adoption, will force to exit from the industry. So the new firms in industries which are capital intensive and the scale economies have an important role, will have low survival rate. Dixit [15] and Hoppenhayan [24] argue that new-firm survival will be influenced by the amount of sunk costs in the industry. A greater degree of sunk cost should reduce the likelihood of exit and lead to lower observed growth rates for surviving firms.

Audretesch [2] suggest that the post entry performance of firms will be influenced by the degree of scale economies in an industry. Empirical evidence for the United States [3], [5], United Kingdom [18], Portugal [29], and Germany [32] supports the theory that the likelihood of survival tends to be lower in industries characterized by a greater degree of scale economies.

According to view of scholars who focuses on initial resources, the entrepreneurial and firm initiating process is one in which the entrepreneurs acquire and develop resources. In
this perspective the new venture outcome is to a large extent
determined by the nature of the resources the entrepreneurs are
able to acquire [16]. As suggested by Boeker [11], [12] and Bamford et al.[9], early decisions and founding conditions, in
the formative stages of an organization, have lasting effects
which imprint the firm, limit its strategic choice, and continue
to impact its long-term performance.

Kato found firms which invest on research and development
and have more innovation have more survival chance [26].
Cefis & Marsili found that despite the relationship between
innovation and firm’s survival, there are little empirical
evidence about the relationship between survival probability
and innovative activities [13].

The study of small and medium firm’s survival and the
affecting factors are important because of some reasons such as:
1. Small and medium firms are the major means by which
unemployment might be constrained or reduced [23].
2. The SMEs perform an equilibrating function in the
market, in that the levels of profitability and price should be
restored to their long-run competitive levels [7].
3. Entry of small and medium firms is the mechanism by
which profits in excess of the long-run equilibrium are eroded
[31].
4. Manufacturing economies through formation of small
and medium firms adjusts their specification over time towards
more competitive products [23].
5. The SMEs are an important counterbalance to contraction
and closure.

In this paper we assumed that industry’s mean size affect
the new firms’ survival. So we hypothesized as below:

H1. The mean employment of the industry has effect on survival of new small and medium firms.

H2. The mean capital of the industry has effect on survival of new small and medium firms.

III. VARIABLES

Duration (Survival): It is the dependent variable of this
study that is measured by the active duration of a firm (The
interval between entry and exit of the firm).

Mean size of Industry: It is the independent variable of this
study. This variable is measured by two criteria including
mean employment of the industry (Memp) and mean capital of
the industry (Mcapital). The amounts of these two criteria have
been calculated for each industry in East Azarbaijan province and
are seen in Table I.

IV. METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate factors affecting the firm survival, it
is necessary to examine data concerning the duration of the life
of a firm [23]. As Audretsch and Mata in [6] note, "in order to
analyze the post-entry performance of firms, a large
longitudinal database to track firms subsequent to their entry is
needed". Event-history data analysis is usually used to study
survival [10]. In this paper, the hazard function is used for
analysis, using the event-history data analysis approach.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISIC</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Mcapital</th>
<th>Memp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>4232.37</td>
<td>14.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Textile</td>
<td>667.94</td>
<td>8.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>163.35</td>
<td>10.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>969.85</td>
<td>11.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>808.12</td>
<td>7.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Pulp and Paper</td>
<td>967.14</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Publishing</td>
<td>4901.96</td>
<td>8.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Petroleum</td>
<td>6199.61</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
<td>1952.05</td>
<td>9.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Rubber and Plastics</td>
<td>1104.46</td>
<td>5.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Mineral Products</td>
<td>1849.02</td>
<td>13.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Basic Metals</td>
<td>3568.61</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Metal Products</td>
<td>1231.53</td>
<td>7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>674.27</td>
<td>7.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>529.52</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Electrical equipment</td>
<td>565.71</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>981.8</td>
<td>7.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Instruments</td>
<td>484.84</td>
<td>6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>863.27</td>
<td>8.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Other Transportation</td>
<td>847.52</td>
<td>9.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Other Manufacturing</td>
<td>485.14</td>
<td>7.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Recycling</td>
<td>284.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hazard function, also known as the failure rate, intensity
function, or hazard rate, is defined mathematically as:

\[ h(t) = \lim_{\Delta t \to 0} \frac{1}{\Delta t} \Pr \{t \leq T < t + \Delta t \mid T \geq t \} \]  \[(1)\]

The hazard function represents the instantaneous probability
that an event occurs in the small interval from duration t to
time \( t + \Delta t \), provided that the event has not yet occurred before
the beginning of this interval. The hazard rate is the
 instantaneous “event rate” at time \( t \).

Some previous studies such as [3], [5], [19], [20], do not
offer a parametric distribution model for durations in their
analysis. Kiefer [27] says the exponential distribution is widely
used as a model for duration analysis because it is "simple to
work with and to interpret, and is often an adequate model for
durations that do not exhibit much variation". He also suggests
the use of Weibull and log-logistic distributions. The log-
normal distribution is applicable for describing the growth of
firms that follow Gibrat’s Law of Proportional Effect. In this
paper we used the semi-parametric method of proportional
hazard for hypothesis test. This model which has suggested by
Cox [14] is defined as:

\[ r(t) = h(t) \exp(A(t)\alpha) \]  \[(2)\]

The transition rate, \( r(t) \), is a product of an unspecified
baseline rate, \( h(t) \), and a second term specifying the possible
influences of a covariate vector \( A(t) \) on the transition rate. The
implementation of the Cox model in TDA is based on the
following model formulation:

\[ r_{jk}(t) = h_{jk}(t) \exp \left\{ A^{(jk)}(t) \alpha^{(jk)} \right\} \]  \[(3)\]
\( r_{jk}(t) \) is the transition rate at time \( t \) for the transition from origin state \( j \) to destination state \( k \). \( h_{jk}(t) \) is the unspecified baseline rate for the same transition. \( A^{(jk)}(t) \) is a (row) vector of covariates, specified for the transition \( (j,k) \), and \( d^{(jk)} \) is a vector of associated coefficients. The covariates may have time-dependent values [10].

V. DATA

In this paper we used the Iran Industry and Mine Ministry dataset (IMM) to recognize small and medium firms that have established through 1981-2006 in East-Azerbaijan province. Total number of firms established in this period was 6500 firms. At the end of survey period (2006) 6197 firms were still alive while 303 firms were exited from the industry. The number of 600 firms is sampled using the method of categorized sampling method.

First exploratory information about data processed by TDA software is seen in table 2. The first row shows the number of firms that the transition didn’t done yet (ensored observations) and the second row presents the firms that changed their origin situation (exit from the industry). So from the 600 firms the number of 571 firms was alive at the time of observation and 29 firms were dead. The mean duration of existing firms is 78 months and for dead firms is 67 months. TS and TF presents the earliest start time and the latest finish time respectively in terms of month. The latest finish time on first group is 304 month and on second group is 249 month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idx</th>
<th>Org</th>
<th>Des</th>
<th>MT</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coeff</th>
<th>Error</th>
<th>C/Error</th>
<th>Signif</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MCapital</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>H0.0975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>MEmp</td>
<td>0.0003</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
<td>H0.0975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1 Product –limit (Kaplan-Meier) survivor function

As seen in the Fig. 1 the exit of firms has a very slow trend as at the 5th year about 96 percent of firms are still active, and after 21 year (250 month) about 87 percent of firms are still active.

VI. RESULTS

The results of Cox regression estimation is seen in table III. According to the estimations in table II the correlation coefficient between mean employment of industry (MEmp) covariate and dependent variable is -0.0975, and it shows that there is a negative relationship between mean employment of industry and SME’s hazard rates. As the hazard rate is the supplementary of the survival rate, so it is concluded that there is a direct relationship between mean employment of industry and survival of small and medium firms. Also the significance coefficient calculated for this covariate is 0.7407. It should be noted that TDA displays the probability that the parameter is different from zero, that is, accepting a significance level of 0.05 requires a look for values that are greater than 0.95. So regarding to the estimated significance (0.7407) it is concluded that at level of 0.05 there is not a meaningful relationship between mean employment of industry and survival, so the first hypothesis is rejected.

Also the estimated correlation coefficient for mean capital of industry (MCapital) is 0.0003, and standard error is 0.0002. Because these statistics according to table 2 are negative for mean capital of industry, it is deduced that, the relation between mean capital of industry and hazard rate is positive. On the other word, there is an indirect relationship between mean capital of industry and firm’s survival. Looking at significance column at the table 2, the coefficient estimated for this covariate is 0.9784 and it confirms the meaningful
relationship between mean capital of industry and survival at significance level of 0.05.

To investigate the significance of used regression model and to test its coefficients that denote the significance of relationships between dependent and independent variables, usually F statistic is used. But in event-history analysis for this purpose the log-likelihood ratio statistic is used, that is defined as below:

\[ LR = 2(LL_1 - LL_0) \]

Where \( LL_1 \) is the log likelihood of the present model (i.e. “log likelihood final estimates”) and \( LL_0 \) is the log likelihood of a model with no covariates, a so called null model. (Note that what is displayed actually is the log likelihood of the model with which the estimation started, which may be different from the null model when, for instance, you have provided starting values). The LR statistic has a chi-square distribution with degrees of freedom equal to the number of parameters omitted. For calculation of this statistic we get

\[ LR = 2[-160.4967 - (-163.7051)] = 6.4168 \]

If we compare this value with the chi-square distribution, which gives a critical value of 5.99 at the 0.05 significance level for 2 degrees of freedom, then the estimated LR is greater than the critical value and takes place on H1 part. This test says that the model at hand (with 2 parameters) can indeed explain significantly more of the “variation” in the dependent variable than a model with no information about covariates, i.e. a model assuming that the hazard rate is the same for all observations.

VII. CONCLUSION

The results of Cox regression shows that mean employment of industry hasn’t a meaningful effect on the survival of firms in that industry. Although the data of this study didn’t confirm statistically the existence of such effect, but the coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between mean employment of industry and firms survival. It seems this relationship is related with the concept of cost per each unit of employment. Although the excess employment cause to enlargement of firms and they could benefit the advantages of being large, but the manpower could be considered as the source of cost. Excess of employment involves the costs of training, improvement, maintenance and other costs that is required for best operation of manpower. In front of these costs if the firm won’t benefit the manpower optimally, in this case excess employment will be a restraining factor to firm’s survival. At the other hand, in industries with high mean of employment the firms in competition must give better services and more welfare to their manpower. Meanwhile the firms in industries with high mean of employment could take advantage of this factor as a positive element. Although most of previous studies have showed a positive relationship between initial size of firms and their survival, but the analysis of the results show that in industries with high mean of employment, the smaller initial size of firm may result to the higher chance of survival because of agility and flexibility.

The second result of Cox regression is that there is negative meaningful relationship between mean capital of industry and new firms established in that industry. This relationship maybe is because the new firms established in industries with high mean of capital don’t have ability to compete with the rivals that have more capital. In industries with high mean of capital the firms are benefiting from scale economy’s advantages and if a firm can not achieve to such financial resources couldn't invest on better technologies and subsequently couldn’t take advantage of scale economies. Such firms are confronting the danger of destruction and they must struggle to achieve the minimum economic scale (MES) in order to survive. This result is consistent with the findings of Audretsch, Houweling and Thurik [4]. They find a negative relationship between mean size and capital intensity of industry and survival. They explained that the minimum saving from scale will have disadvantage of high costs for small firms.

REFERENCES


