

# Present the policy model of Iranian saffron export marketing management

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## Abstract

Today, export growth for countries is a key to re-creating the economy. Export development is at the top of government priorities and policies in almost all developing countries. Furthermore, there is an ever-increasing awareness and attention to the importance of exports in developed countries. Accordingly, this paper attempts to identify and design the export marketing model of Iranian saffron. The statistical population consisted of business management and management experts. Sampling was performed by the purposive sampling method. A sample of 15 subjects was selected at the saturation stage. Data was collected through an open interview. The question items were determined based on the research objectives. The interview analysis showed that the model presented qualitatively includes nine main categories of marketing measures, macro strategy, micro strategy, limiting factors, facilitators, internal factors, external factors, and short-term and long-term consequences. The results show that the presented model can be used as a basis for Iranian saffron export marketing.

Keywords: Saffron, Marketing Pattern, Export, Iran  
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## 1 Introduction

Today, export growth for countries is a key to re-creating the economy. Export development is at the top of government priorities and policies in almost all developing countries. Furthermore, there is an ever-increasing awareness and attention to the importance of exports in developed countries. Poturak and Duman [16] argue that in today's ever-changing world with a complex business environment, export performance is an essential guide for any company operating in international markets.

Companies' primary goal in entering international markets is to create good profit opportunities. Thus, many companies have been motivated to research opportunities in that foreign market after receiving an indefinite order abroad. When a company decides to enter a foreign market, it has to thoughtfully and effectively commit itself to

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providing continuous goods and services. Export is the easiest and most cost-effective way to enter foreign markets. Hence, companies try to determine a suitable entry strategy according to their conditions and their country of origin [6].

Li [8] states that in recent decades the presence of foreign markets has played a significant role in the economic developments of countries. Consumables, industrial and service goods, or resource markets, including capital markets, materials, and technology, have increasingly integrated. In the meantime, various trade memorandums and available commercial policies among countries have eliminated supportive tools and commercial barriers. As a result, almost all corporate, regardless of their origin, size, and industry type, face the fact that non-participating in global markets shall not be a long-term policy [2].

Somlev and Hoshino [19] believe that the international commercial arena has become more competitive and complex. The seriousness of international competition requires commercial and industrial corporation managers and policy-makers to account for an international strategy; therefore, the corporates use to access to the global markets as a strategic tool to gain competitive advantage and development [17]. Reliance on process marketing and the fact that in the information economy of the 21 century the survival of the organization depends on the effectiveness of the organization's processes, and also accounting for coordinated and integrated marketing, and macro and holistic approach in designing the export marketing model led to the use of more effective factors in modelling [7].

In the meantime, attention to the marketing of agricultural products is of great importance. Saffron, among agricultural products, plays a decisive role in the country's national economic development. Because few products are enjoying the medicinal value, market demand, and processing level of Saffron, more attention should be paid to this non-oil export good, considering the economic capacities of Saffron, both in the production and agricultural sectors, and the potential capacities in the industrial by-products, and high exchange rate. In addition to the success in exploiting as much as possible and creating added value on this product, we can continue our monopoly in the global market [18].

Iran has a lot of potential in trade and export, including saffron or red gold with the potential to transform the country's economy, however, there are few investments in it. Given that about 90% of saffron cultivation belongs to Iran and only one percent of the world's saffron is produced in Spain, however, 30% of world saffron exports belong to Spain. This in turn shows shortcomings. This paper is to design an Iranian saffron export marketing model, accounting for the importance of saffron export and its effect on the country's economy (Case study: Iranian saffron).

In the last three decades, exports have been the most important engine of economic growth, offering an economic boom by increasing the productivity of production factors. Saffron has a special and key place in economic growth and development for its high reliance on merely domestic resources and their lower foreign currency consumption, and the significant share of value-added in the whole economy [20]. In the meantime, non-oil export is vital in developing countries, especially Iran, which faces international sanctions. According to many economic experts, non-oil export development is the best strategy to gain foreign currencies and avoid reliance on oil export [15]. Meanwhile, agricultural products play an important role in expanding exports to developing countries due to their high and stable exchange rates. Among agricultural products, saffron is one of the most important agricultural exports with a large share in creating added value in the agricultural sector [5]. But despite Iran's share in the production and export of this product, it has no role in international trade [13].

Many countries motivate companies to participate in foreign markets, because this participation increases employment, develops competitiveness and increases foreign currency rates. Companies strive a lot to increase exports as the result of competitive forces and development interests [14].

The position of saffron as an essential and valuable export product in the country's economy and the global economy is becoming more and more apparent. Recognizing barriers and export problems and providing appropriate solutions to overcome them can be essential to maintaining Iran's position as the largest producer and exporter of saffron in global markets and further developing the export of this valuable product [10].

The consequences of choosing the entry method can substantially affect the success of the company. For example, an inappropriate entry method can reduce opportunities, limit the company's choice of the primary market, and lead to high financial losses, such as losing control over the foreign market. Iranian companies are also slowly but surely entering global markets and trying to achieve their rightful place. Therefore, the export marketing model, strengthening itself by considering the influential factors and eliminating its weaknesses in this framework, is vital to its success in the international arena.

The studies indicate the effect of various factors on export performance. Katrina Markia et al. showed that export innovation positively impacts export performance. Sofan (2014) considers the distance from the target country, the

target country's population, and the exchange rate between countries as the main influential factors in facilitating export among Jordan and other countries. Ismailpour and Aram [4] indicate the positive and significant effect of intra-organizational factors (learning-oriented, strategic flexibility, information, and communication technology) on the central export strategy. Tavakoli Dastjerdi et al. [20] show the negative effect of exchange rate fluctuations on the export value of saffron and pistachios. Mohtaram and Motashegh [11] show that export companies in turbulent environments and close competitive markets psychologically adapt their marketing mix to the needs of foreign markets. Amiri et al. [1] show the positive impact of the innovation capacity variable on export performance. The marketing innovation variable ranked first in terms of affecting export performance. Mosleh et al. [12] show that futurism, pioneering, and risk-taking strategies positively and significantly affect export performance. Also, Madhoushi et al. [9], state that political stability in the target country is recognized as the most crucial factor in selecting new saffron markets, followed by trade barriers, cost of attending exhibitions in the target country, knowledge of the type of product in the target country, trade agreements, amount of product import in the target market, per capita consumption of product type in the target market. Also, Hosseini et al. [3] show that the marketing margin of saffron has a direct relationship with its price at the retail level and has a direct and significant relationship with marketing costs such as wages and transportation costs.

Therefore, the main problem of this paper is to design an export marketing model for Iranian saffron. Saffron exports have been threatened in recent years, especially by Spain and other European countries, and the need to attract foreign customers is becoming more and more essential for saffron exports. Hence, this paper, first examines main saffron export problems. Then, the collected data were examined to extract the proposed factors and their impact on export marketing, and finally a model is presented to improve the marketing process.

## 2 Methodology

This is a qualitative paper based on data collected from interviews. In fact, this plan described and analyzed the structures or components in questions based on qualitative studies. Thus, the framework and factors of the structures and components are extracted, and indicators are developed. This paper has used the content analysis method. The statistical population of the article consisted of business management and management experts. The maximum diversity sampling method was used with a total number of participants of 15 subjects. Then, after each interview, the collected data were reviewed, with the following interview conducted according to the reviews. This process continued until theoretical saturation was reached. Also, an attempt has been made to observe theoretical sensitivity as a general principle by implementing theoretical sensitivity methods in the whole research process, considering its promotion.

The researcher's sampling inclusion criteria are:

- People familiar with saffron exports;
- People familiar with marketing;
- People with books and scientific-research articles written in the above topics;
- People with teaching experience in the above topics;
- People with work experience in the above areas.

This paper uses, Guba and Lincoln criteria to evaluate the validity and reliability of the findings.

It should be noted that the use of these indicators was achieved through the following:

- Increasing theoretical sensitivity, practical participation and communication with participants to evaluate the researcher's perceptions;
- The researcher's practical participation and presence in the environment and exploring the details of the participants' experiences;
- Periodic inspection of information and codes obtained to prevent bias and ensure accuracy, by the researcher and a colleague (PhD student) familiar with the subject;
- Review the information obtained with the help of the research team and a survey of interviewees about the results;

- Use multiple sources to collect data;
- Comparing the data obtained from the studied sources with other sources continuously throughout the research.

The reliability of the retest method was used to assess the reliability in the qualitative part. To calculate the reliability of the retest among the interviews, several interviews were selected as a sample and compared in two time intervals of each interview, and thus the amount of agreement and disagreement in the two stages of coding the stability index for that research was calculated. The results of this evaluation are as follows:

Table 1: Calculation of reliability of qualitative findings

No.	Interview No.	Codes	Agreements	Disagreements	Reliability
1	P1	46	21	4	0.913
2	P5	34	15	4	0.882
	Total	82	36	8	0.878

An internal agreement of more than 60% would indicate good instrument reliability, so the results in Table 2–3 show that the interviews conducted were reasonably reliable.

The qualitative information was analyzed via three overlapping processes of concept coding, sub-themes and main themes. The codings and analyzes were done manually.

### 3 Findings

#### 3.1 Descriptive results

This part presents the research subjects features in terms of level of education, education field and activity.

Table 2: Demographic features of research participants

No.	Education (field)	Education (level)	Activity	
			Executive	Academic
1	Business Administration	PhD		*
2	Business Administration	PhD		*
3	Executive Management	PhD	*	*
4	Business Administration	PhD		*
5	Business Administration	PhD		*
6	Business Administration	PhD		*
7	Business Administration	PhD	*	*
8	Business Administration	PhD		*
9	Business Administration	PhD		*
10	Business Administration	PhD	*	
11	Business Administration	PhD	*	
12	Business Administration	PhD		*
13	Executive Management	PhD	*	
14	Business Administration	PhD	*	
15	Business Administration	PhD	*	

According to the Table, 100% of the interviewees held a doctorate in Business Administration, 46.7% were active in executive posts, and 53.3% were university employees.

#### 3.2 Qualitative results

The concepts coding was the first step in content analysis. At this stage, based on the first stage coding, which is known as open coding, 122 concepts were identified by reviewing the interviews conducted with experts. In the second stage of data coding, called sub-coding, sub-themes were created.

Table 3: Sub-themes enumerated based on basic concepts

Sub-themes	Primary concepts	Sub-themes	Primary concepts
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing the group and product code of saffron from medicinal to food</li> <li>• Promoting conventional agriculture</li> <li>• Monitoring activities</li> <li>• Training and upgrading the knowledge of users and exporters</li> <li>• Fight against saffron onion smuggling</li> <li>• Promoting new agricultural methods</li> </ul>	Strengthen the intangible component of products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an attractive physical environment</li> <li>• Product packaging</li> <li>• Creating a friendly environment among employees</li> </ul>
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the target community</li> <li>• Identify global competitors</li> <li>• Considering people's interests</li> </ul>	Cost Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardization of production factors</li> <li>• Low finished costs</li> <li>• High standards products through the use of advanced production technologies</li> </ul>
Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an information network</li> <li>• Use of social media</li> <li>• Access to local media</li> <li>• Use of multiple distribution channels</li> </ul>	Activities of competitors and intermediaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of serious efforts of domestic producers regarding innovation</li> <li>• Lack of attention of producers to saffron export markets</li> <li>• Extensive and significant presence of brokers and intermediaries in the market</li> <li>• The entry of some profiteers and non-specialists in the field of saffron exports</li> </ul>
Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of geographical indication</li> <li>• Social responsibility</li> <li>• Introducing the brand and logo</li> </ul>	Extreme marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brand triviality</li> <li>• Continuous supply of regular products</li> <li>• Export in bulk</li> </ul>

Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coastal front line pricing</li> <li>• Competitive pricing</li> <li>• Special pricing</li> </ul>	Changing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water crisis and the continuation of drought</li> <li>• More complex border systems</li> <li>• Changing the political position of the country</li> <li>• Variety of tastes of foreign consumers</li> <li>• Reducing the price of agricultural and food products in the world</li> </ul>
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay special attention to consumption preferences</li> <li>• The need to comply with HACCP standards</li> <li>• Product royalty power</li> <li>• The degree of exclusivity of the product</li> </ul>	Knowledge the target country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade laws and tariffs of the target country</li> <li>• Demographic, geographical and social characteristics of that country</li> <li>• Export statistics of the desired product to the target country</li> <li>• Political and economic relations with the target country</li> </ul>
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Export terminals</li> <li>• Establish online stores</li> <li>• Establishing exhibitions</li> </ul>	Export policy-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing the export system and encouraging the establishment of organizations and unions</li> <li>• Apply incentive policies to diversify goods</li> <li>• Facilitate customs barriers</li> <li>• Creating an export culture for the general public</li> <li>• Implementing long-term fiscal, monetary and export policies</li> </ul>
Tendency to innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety in products and services</li> <li>• Innovation in marketing</li> <li>• Pioneering technological innovation</li> </ul>	Organizational factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting the training needs of employees</li> <li>• Having a strategy for the international expansion of the field of activity in the organization</li> <li>• Export commitment of the company</li> <li>• Providing domestic resources for the export of saffron products</li> </ul>

<p>Performance definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the features and characteristics of Iranian saffron</li> <li>• Introducing the capabilities of Iranian saffron</li> <li>• Introducing product efficiency and effectiveness</li> </ul>	<p>Management factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign language skills for managers</li> <li>• International business knowledge of managers</li> <li>• History of activity in the field of trade and export of the product</li> <li>• Motivation of managers</li> </ul>
<p>Encourage domestic investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private sector investment in infrastructure</li> <li>• Stability of the country in economic issues</li> <li>• Strengthening the country's financial system</li> <li>• Reducing economic corruption</li> </ul>	<p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using electronic communication system</li> <li>• Modernization of small and medium industries</li> <li>• Using the decision-making system</li> <li>• Using office automation system</li> </ul>
<p>Encouraging foreign investment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removal of capital restrictions</li> <li>• The open economy of the country</li> <li>• Non-economic stability of the country</li> </ul>	<p>Production Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low production standard</li> <li>• Improper production method</li> <li>• Small production units</li> <li>• Lack of suitable trade unions for production and trade</li> </ul>
<p>Distinctive orientations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differentiation through simplification</li> <li>• Differentiation through complication</li> <li>• Differentiation through specialization</li> </ul>	<p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of customs infrastructure</li> <li>• Internet problem</li> <li>• Lack of financial infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of legal infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of security infrastructure</li> <li>• The unavailability of the latest technology in the world</li> </ul>
<p>Industrialization of the agricultural sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market-oriented agricultural economics</li> <li>• Investment in machinery</li> <li>• Activation of unions and cooperatives in value chain management</li> <li>• Flourished agricultural trade</li> </ul>	<p>Business Psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tendency of foreign investors to invest</li> <li>• Controlling inflation and exchange rates at the national level</li> <li>• Development of international banking relations</li> </ul>

Generalizability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generalization of Iranian saffron brand</li> <li>• Generalization of the target market</li> <li>• Geographical generalization</li> </ul>	Increase competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing price elasticities</li> <li>• Increase competitiveness</li> <li>• Increasing the income of export demand</li> </ul>
Cooperation between manufacturers and retailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource sharing between producers and retailers</li> <li>• Exchange of information between manufacturers and retailers</li> <li>• Class management</li> </ul>	Increase revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the income level of agricultural producers</li> <li>• Creating foreign exchange earnings</li> <li>• Development of income insurance for agricultural products</li> </ul>
Government support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing production facilities by the government</li> <li>• Providing technical and credit assistance for facilities for storage, processing and packaging of agricultural products</li> <li>• Export incentives to encourage production</li> </ul>	Export value enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of export tariffs</li> <li>• Market information integration</li> <li>• Added value of products produced from saffron</li> </ul>
Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic stability of the country</li> <li>• Job creation in the agricultural sector</li> <li>• Increasing GDP</li> </ul>	Market penetration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-export of saffron product</li> <li>• Increase saffron exports in the long run</li> <li>• Increasing the level of penetration in foreign markets</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Sub-themes

Based on the results of the second phase coding and the relationships between the identified concepts, 34 sub-themes were formed, including process, people, promotion, place, price, product, status, innovation orientation, performance definition, domestic investment incentive, foreign investment incentive, differentiating orientations, industrialization of the agricultural sector, generalizability, cooperation between producers and retailers, government support, strengthening the intangible component of products, cost leadership, the activities of competitors and intermediaries, extreme marketing, changing conditions, knowledge of target country, export policy, management factors, organizational factors, technology, production challenges, infrastructure, facilitate trade, increasing competitiveness, increasing revenue, promoting export value, economic growth, and market penetration.

### 3.4 Main Themes

the main themes structuring includes arranging the sub-themes together based on logic and relating it to other categories, validating the relationships and filling in the blanks with the categories that need further modification and expansion. In fact, this stage is the most abstract level of coding through which the relationships between the created



sub-themes are described. To achieve the desired integration at this stage, it is necessary for the researcher to adjust the main phenomenon and commit to it.

Table 4: Adaptation of main themes based on sub-themes

Sub-themes	Main themes	Sub-themes	Main themes
Process	Marketing measures	Tendency to innovate	Brand architecture
People		Performance definition	
Promotion		Encourage domestic investors	Investment
Status		Encourage foreign investors	
Price		Distinctive orientations	Macro strategies
Product		Industrialization of the agricultural sector	
Place	Generalizability		
Cooperation between manufacturers and retailers/ Micro strategy	Micro strategy	Activities of competitors and intermediaries	Limiting factors
Government support		Extreme marketing	
Strengthen the intangible component of products		Changing circumstances	
Cost leadership	Facilitators	Management factors	Internal factors
Knowledge of target country		Organizational factors	
Export policy		Technology	External factors
Facilitate trade	Production Challenges		
Increased competitiveness	Short-term consequences	Infrastructure	Long-term consequences
Export value enhancement		Market penetration	

### 3.5 Pattern presentation

A paradigm model of Iranian saffron export marketing is presented to show the theoretical codes and their comprehensibility.

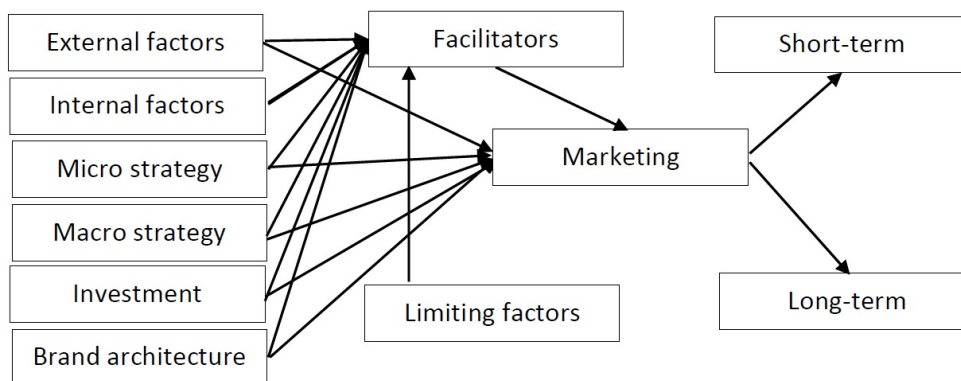


Figure 1: Export marketing model of Iranian saffron

Nine main categories were identified based on the results of the model extracted from the interviews to design the export marketing model of Iranian saffron, including four categories (external factors, internal factors, micro strategies and macro strategies) as independent variables, and two categories (facilitators and marketing measures) are identified as mediating variables. Also, limiting factors were identified as control variables, with two short-term and long-term consequences as dependent variables in the model.

#### Path analysis: What are the relationships between the components of Iranian saffron export marketing?

The structural equation model was used to examine the fit of the conceptual model of the relationship between the export marketing components of Iranian saffron and the experimental model.

Table 5 and Figure 2 show the result of the path analysis of research structures and its conceptual diagram, respectively. According to the figure, all structures have a high correlation with marketing measures. As the fit characteristics of Table (8) show, the data of this study have a good fit with the factor structure and theoretical foundation, and therefore not enough evidence was obtained to reject this model, and the data collected in this study show a very good fit with this model. Figure 2 presents the final model developed with Amos software, which is the final result of this research process. The observed data largely acknowledge the rationale of the conceptual research model. All factors have a direct significant relationship showing that the dimension with a larger factor load has a stronger relationship with the relevant variable, according to the standardized factor loads.

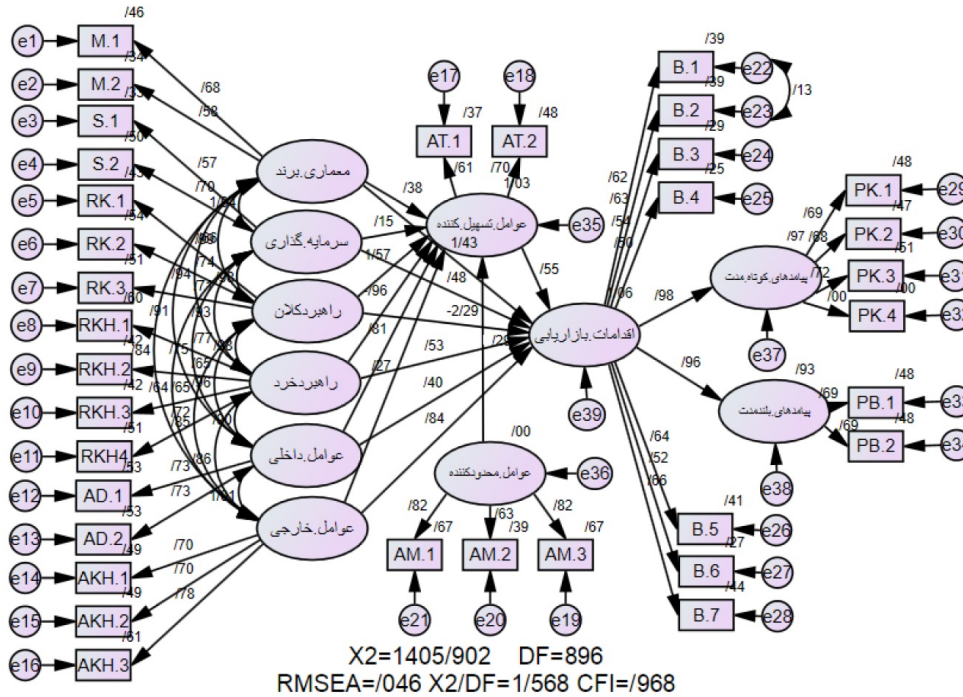


Figure 2: The Amos output for confirmatory factor analysis of the second order of Iranian saffron export marketing

In the structural equation model, the C.R statistical index is used to test the significance of the model parameters. Therefore, parameters with values greater than 2 are statistically significant. Table 5 results and the reported C.R values for each of the standard parameters validate all the reported parameters, because all the reported C.R values against the standard parameters are higher than the value of 2.

The structural model or path analysis considers the effect of variables on each other. In the present paper, the path of all variables is significant according to the value of C.R. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and the opposite hypothesis is accepted.

The results of the above table show the direct effects in the confirmatory path analysis model.

The Amos output in Table 7 shows the value of RMSEA equal to 0.046. The Good Fit Index (GFI), the Adjusted Good Fit Index (AGFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Bentler NFR in the present model are above 0.90. Therefore, the data of this study fit well with the factor structure of this scale and the predicted conceptual model fits with the experimental model.

**Path coefficient of direct effects between the components of the Iranian saffron export marketing model**

Table 6 concludes that the variables of external factors, internal factors, micro strategy, macro strategy, investment and brand architecture have a direct effect on facilitators. The direct path coefficient of the mentioned variables on the facilitators is (0.270), (0.812), (0.963), (1.568), (0.150), (0.385) and in a positive direction, respectively, and the direct effect of the limiting factor variable on the facilitators is with the path coefficient (-0.294) and in the opposite direction. That is, by increasing the standard deviation of the limiting factor variable, the effect of the facilitator decreases to -0.294 units.

External factors, internal factors, micro strategy, macro strategy, investment, brand architecture and facilitators

Table 5: Path coefficients and significance of the indicators of the research confirmation path analysis model

The effect of variables	Standard Parameters	SD	C.R	P
Limiting factors ← Facilitators	-0.152	0.030	-4.995	0.000
External factors ← Facilitators	0.321	0.036	8.343	0.000
Internal factors ← Facilitators	0.582	0.035	10.503	0.000
Macro Strategy ← Facilitators	0.216	0.059	6.369	0.000
Micro strategy ← Facilitators	0.238	0.038	6.261	0.000
Investment ← Facilitators	0.257	0.065	4.359	0.000
Brand architecture ← Facilitators	0.523	0.018	13.607	0.000
External factors ← Marketing measures	0.605	0.038	11.857	0.000
Internal factors ← Marketing measures	0.464	0.150	4.542	0.000
Micro strategy ← Marketing measures	0.956	0.094	14.352	0.000
Macro Strategy ← Marketing measures	0.547	0.117	3.210	0.000
Investment ← Marketing measures	0.817	0.123	6.420	0.000
Brand Architecture ← Marketing measures	0.221	0.119	2.967	0.003
Facilitators ← Marketing measures	0.882	0.227	3.891	0.000
Marketing measures ← Long-term consequences	0.581	0.055	10.516	0.000
Marketing actions ← Short-term consequences	0.555	0.024	10.308	0.000

Table 6: Standardized variables direct and indirect effects on the confirmatory path analysis model

Variables	Standardized Effects	External Factors	Internal Factors	Micro Strategy	Macro Strategy	Investment	Brand Architecture	Limiting Factors	Facilitators	Marketing Measures
Facilitators	Direct	0.270	0.812	0.963	1.568	0.150	0.385	-0.294	-	-
	Indirect	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marketing measures	Direct	0.842	0.403	0.527	2.286	0.484	1.430	-	0.549	-
	Indirect	0.148	0.446	0.529	0.861	0.082	0.211	-0.161	-	-
Short term consequences	Direct	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.964
	Indirect	0.669	0.241	0.111	1.373	0.546	1.174	-0.155	0.530	-
Long term consequences	Direct	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.983
	Indirect	0.682	0.242	0.112	1.400	0.557	1.197	-0.159	0.540	-

Table 7: The fit indices of the proposed model

Fit index	df	X <sup>2</sup>	p	RMSEA	AGFI	NFI	CFI
Prepared model	892	1405.905	0.137	0.046	0.968	0.986	0.968

have a direct effect on marketing measures. The direct path coefficients of the mentioned variables on marketing measures are (0.842), (0.403), (0.527), (2.286), (0.484), (1.430), (0.549) and in a positive direction, respectively.

Facilitator variables and marketing measures have a direct effect on short-term consequences variables. The direct path coefficient of the mentioned variables on the short-term consequences variable is (0.343) and (0.465) respectively and in a positive direction. Marketing measures also have a direct effect on long-term and short-term consequences variables. The coefficient of the direct path of the mentioned variable on the variable of short-term and long-term consequences is (0.964) and (0.983) respectively and in a positive direction. That is, by increasing the standard deviation of the variable marketing measures, the effect of long-term and short-term consequences increases by 0.964 and 0.983 units, respectively.

**Path coefficient of indirect effects between the components of Iranian saffron export marketing model**

Table 6 concludes that the variables of external factors, internal factors, micro strategy, macro strategy, investment and brand architecture have an indirect effect on marketing measures. Indirect path coefficients of the mentioned variables on marketing measures are (0.148), (0.446), (0.529), (0.82), (0.211) and in a positive direction, respectively, and the indirect effect of the variable of limiting factors on marketing measures with path coefficient ( $-0.161$ ) and in the opposite direction. That is, by increasing the standard deviation of the limiting factor variable,  $-0.161$  units, the effect of marketing measures is indirectly reduced through facilitators.

The variables of external factors, internal factors, micro strategy, macro strategy, investment, brand architecture and facilitators have an indirect effect on short-term consequences. The indirect path coefficients of these variables on short-term consequences are (0.669), (0.241), (0.111), (1.373), (0.546), (1.174), (0.530) and in a positive direction, respectively, and the indirect effect of the limiting variable short-term consequences with path coefficient ( $-0.155$ ) and in the opposite direction. That is, by increasing the standard deviation of the limiting factor variable,  $-0.155$  units, the effect of short-term consequences is indirectly reduced by the facilitators.

Finally, the variables of external factors, internal factors, micro strategy, macro strategy, investment, brand architecture and facilitators also have indirect effects on long-term consequences. The indirect path coefficients of the mentioned variables on long-term consequences are (0.682), (0.242), (0.112), (1.400), (0.557), (1.197), (0.540) and in a positive direction, respectively, and the indirect effect of the variable of limiting factors is on long-term consequences with path coefficient ( $-0.159$ ) and in the opposite direction. That is, by increasing the standard deviation of the limiting factor variable,  $-0.159$  units, the effect of long-term consequences is indirectly reduced through facilitators.

## 4 Discussion and Conclusion

Currently, the high reliance of Iran's economy on the currency resulting from oil exports due to fluctuations in the oil market necessitates focusing on non-oil export potentials in general and the agricultural export sector in particular. In the production of export goods, items such as access to cheap factors of production can be considered as a competitive advantage in the production of a commodity compared to other countries. However, agricultural product exports depend on climate and specific climatic conditions required to produce a product to increase the possibility of competition compared to other countries to take advantage of comparative advantage. Considering the above and also that the competition export of non-agricultural products is much narrower compared to the other agricultural exports, the production of agricultural export products can always be considered. In the meantime, saffron attracts special attention due to Iran's high share of the global market export volume. Saffron enjoys advantages such as low water requirement and also non-interference of its water consumption season with most products, its high potential for job creation and exchange rate, with its high price indicating the high economic potential of this product.

Due to the importance of export marketing of this product, this paper attempts to analyze the export marketing model of Iranian saffron. The results of the analysis of interviews showed that the model presented qualitatively includes nine main categories of marketing measures, macro strategy, micro strategy, limiting factors, facilitators, internal factors, external factors, short-term consequences, and long-term consequences. The results show that the presented model can be used as a basis in Iranian saffron export marketing.

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