

Compilation of Iran's saffron export marketing model

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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 interviews 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

The increasing importance of foreign trade in the economic growth and development of countries is so much that some economists call it as the driving force of economic development and growth. 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 provide 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 (Khezri et al., 2015).

Li (2013) states that in recent decades the presence at 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 corporates, regardless of their origin, size, and industry type, face the fact that non participating in global markets shall not be a long-term policy. (Balabanis et al., 2014: p. 354)

Somlev & Hoshino (2005) 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 access to the global markets as a strategic tool to gain competitive advantage and development. (Salmani, 1393: p.1)

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 modeling. (Mroz, 1998: pp.277-278; Leeftang, 2002: 105-126)

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 (Shamsi, 2014: 1).

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 is few investments on 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 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. (Tavakoli Dastjerdi, 1397: 3) In the meantime, the non-oil export is vital in developing countries, especially Iran, which faces international sanctions. According to many economic experts, the non-oil export development is the best strategy to gain foreign currencies and avoid reliance on oil export. (Omidi & Faramarzi, 2017: 102) 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 (Kazempour et al., 2018: 2). But despite Iran's share in the production and export of this product, it has no role in international trade (Murid al-Sadat et al., 2014: 23).

Many countries motivate companies to participate 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. (Navarro, A., Losada, F., Ruzo, E., & Díez, J. A, 2010: 49)

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. (Masihi et al., 2013: 2)

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 (Gallego et al., 2009). 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 their weaknesses in this framework, is vital to its success in the international arena.

The studies indicate the effect of various factors on 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 (2018) 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. (2015) show the negative effect of exchange rate fluctuations on the export value of saffron and pistachios. Mohtaram & Movasag (2018) 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. (2017) 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. (2016) show that futurism, pioneering, and risk-taking strategies positively and significantly affect export performance. Also, Madhoushi et al. (2017), 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. (2007) 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.

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 (3-2) 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.

Findings

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.

Qualitative results

Open coding

The first step in analyzing the content is coding the concepts. In terms of the analysis unit, the concepts are done line by line, phrase by phrase, or paragraph by paragraph or as a separate page. If the concept unit is a line, a concept or code is attached to each line or sentence. These codes or concepts should be able to saturate the maximum conceptual space and its meaning.

In the following, instead of presenting all the pages written from the interviews, only the basic concepts obtained from the open coding stage are presented.

Table 3 Concepts adapted from the interviews

basic concepts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Interview number															
Training and upgrading the knowledge of users and exporters	*		*			*		*			*			*	*
Fight against saffron onion smuggling			*		*										
Promoting new agricultural methods			*		*		*	*							*
Knowing the target community			*		*										
Identify global competitors	*			*				*						*	
Considering people's interests	*					*									
Competitive pricing		*		*			*		*				*	*	*
Special pricing				*											*
Pay special attention to consumption preferences	*							*		*					
The need to comply with HACCP standards	*		*		*	*							*	*	
Product royalty power	*		*		*			*							*
The degree of exclusivity of the product				*		*									*
Establishing exhibitions					*										
Variety in products and services	*			*	*	*							*	*	
Innovation in marketing	*														*
Differentiation through complication				*			*								

Differentiation through specialization	*			*				*	*	*				*	
Market-oriented agricultural economics		*			*							*		*	
The open economy of the country	*		*		*						*	*			
Provide an attractive physical environment	*	*			*	*		*					*		*
Product packaging	*					*									*
Creating a friendly environment among employees	*	*				*		*							
Standardization of production factors				*				*	*		*				
Low finished costs				*	*								*		*
Brand triviality		*						*				*			
Continuous supply of regular products		*			*								*	*	
Export in bulk		*	*	*		*				*	*				
Water crisis and the continuation of drought									*					*	*
Low production standard				*									*		
Improper production method		*											*		
Small production units	*			*		*					*				
Internet problem	*			*		*	*					*			
Lack of financial infrastructure	*													*	
Lack of legal infrastructure	*	*			*					*				*	
Lack of security infrastructure															
Economic stability of the country			*		*			*			*				*
Job creation in the agricultural sector						*									
Increasing GDP		*			*		*					*			
Re-export of saffron product		*			*							*			
Increase saffron exports in the long run		*											*		
Increasing the level of penetration in foreign markets	*		*	*				*	*			*			
Development of income insurance for agricultural products	*		*		*	*				*				*	
Reduction of export tariffs										*					
Market information integration				*	*		*					*	*		
Added value of products produced from saffron					*			*		*				*	
Creating foreign exchange earnings			*			*	*							*	
Tendency of foreign							*	*			*				

investors to invest																
Controlling inflation and exchange rates at the national level				*					*		*				*	*
Development of international banking relations	*		*	*												*
Increasing price elasticities	*				*	*				*		*				
Lack of suitable trade unions for production and trade																
Lack of customs infrastructure					*		*			*					*	
Using electronic communication system																
Modernization of small and medium industries	*				*					*						
Using the decision-making system	*				*	*					*				*	
Using office automation system					*								*			
Foreign language skills for managers	*			*			*					*				
International business knowledge of managers	*											*				
History of activity in the field of trade and export of the product				*					*				*			
Demographic, geographical and social characteristics of that country															*	
Export statistics of the desired product to the target country	*	*	*	*	*	*						*			*	
Political and economic relations with the target country			*	*							*	*				
Changing the political position of the country					*	*	*						*	*		
Variety of tastes of foreign consumers	*				*	*	*					*				*
Reducing the price of agricultural and food products in the world	*		*												*	
Trade laws and tariffs of the target country			*						*							
More complex border systems					*						*					
Resource sharing between producers and retailers				*	*	*									*	
Exchange of information between manufacturers and retailers					*	*					*					
Class management				*			*									
Providing production						*				*			*			

facilities by the government																		
Providing technical and credit assistance for facilities for storage, processing and packaging of agricultural products	*			*					*					*	*			
Export incentives to encourage production	*			*			*		*									
Generalization of Iranian saffron brand				*	*					*								
Generalization of the target market									*									*
Geographical generalization				*				*										
Investment in machinery										*								
Activation of unions and cooperatives in value chain management									*	*			*					*
Flourished agricultural trade	*	*						*	*									
Strengthening the country's financial system	*	*		*				*				*						
Reducing economic corruption	*	*		*					*									
Removal of capital restrictions				*	*			*	*									
Pioneering technological innovation								*	*			*						
Introducing the features and characteristics of Iranian saffron				*					*									*
Introducing the capabilities of Iranian saffron	*	*	*															*
Introducing product efficiency and effectiveness	*			*	*													
Export terminals																		
Establish online stores				*											*	*		
Social responsibility		*	*															*
Introducing the brand and logo				*	*				*			*						
Coastal front line pricing								*	*			*						
Creating an information network				*					*		*			*	*	*		
Use of social media		*	*															*
Access to local media	*	*						*					*	*	*	*	*	
Use of multiple distribution channels				*								*						
Use of geographical indication		*				*			*					*				*
Changing the group and product code of saffron from medicinal to food	*	*						*					*					
Promoting conventional				*								*						

agriculture																	
Monitoring activities		*				*			*								
Private sector investment in infrastructure	*	*					*					*					
Stability of the country in economic issues		*	*					*					*	*			
Non-economic stability of the country	*			*													*
Differentiation through simplification			*				*			*					*		
High standards products through the use of advanced production technologies	*					*				*	*	*					
Lack of serious efforts of domestic producers regarding innovation		*	*					*					*	*			
Lack of attention of producers to saffron export markets	*			*								*					*
Extensive and significant presence of brokers and intermediaries in the market				*	*	*	*										
The entry of some profiteers and non-specialists in the field of saffron exports	*	*					*					*	*	*	*	*	*
Developing the export system and encouraging the establishment of organizations and unions			*								*						
Apply incentive policies to diversify goods		*				*			*				*				*
Facilitate customs barriers	*	*					*										*
Creating an export culture for the general public			*								*						
Implementing long-term fiscal, monetary and export policies											*	*	*				
Meeting the training needs of employees					*	*	*								*	*	*
Having a strategy for the international expansion of the field of activity in the organization				*	*	*		*	*								
Export commitment of the company	*	*					*										*
Providing domestic resources for the export of saffron products			*								*						
Meeting the training needs of employees		*	*					*					*	*			
The unavailability of the latest technology in the world	*			*								*					*
Increase competitiveness			*				*			*					*		

Increasing the income of export demand	*					*									
Increasing the income level of agricultural producers		*	*				*					*	*		

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.

Sub-themes

Table 4 Sub-themes enumerated based on basic concepts

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

Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of geographical indication - Social responsibility - Introducing the brand and logo 	Extreme marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand triviality - Continuous supply of regular products - Export in bulk
Price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coastal front line pricing - Competitive pricing - Special pricing 	Changing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water crisis and the continuation of drought - More complex border systems - Changing the political position of the country - Variety of tastes of foreign consumers - Reducing the price of agricultural and food products in the world
Product	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pay special attention to consumption preferences - The need to comply with HACCP standards - Product royalty power - The degree of exclusivity of the product 	Knowledge the target country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trade laws and tariffs of the target country - Demographic, geographical and social characteristics of that country - Export statistics of the desired product to the target country - Political and economic relations with the target country
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Export terminals - Establish online stores - Establishing exhibitions 	Export policy-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing the export system and encouraging the establishment of organizations and unions - Apply incentive policies to diversify goods - Facilitate customs barriers - Creating an export culture for the general public - Implementing long-term fiscal, monetary and export policies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety in products and services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting the training needs of

Tendency to innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovation in marketing - Pioneering technological innovation 	Organizational factors	<p>employees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having a strategy for the international expansion of the field of activity in the organization - Export commitment of the company - Providing domestic resources for the export of saffron products
Performance definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing the features and characteristics of Iranian saffron - Introducing the capabilities of Iranian saffron - Introducing product efficiency and effectiveness 	Management factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foreign language skills for managers - International business knowledge of managers - History of activity in the field of trade and export of the product - Motivation of managers
Encourage domestic investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Private sector investment in infrastructure - Stability of the country in economic issues - Strengthening the country's financial system - Reducing economic corruption 	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using electronic communication system - Modernization of small and medium industries - Using the decision-making system - Using office automation system
Encouraging foreign investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of capital restrictions - The open economy of the country - Non-economic stability of the country 	Production Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low production standard - Improper production method - Small production units - -Lack of suitable trade unions for production and trade
Distinctive orientations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differentiation through simplification - Differentiation through complication - Differentiation through 	Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of customs infrastructure - Internet problem - Lack of financial infrastructure - Lack of legal infrastructure

	specialization		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of security infrastructure - The unavailability of the latest technology in the world
Industrialization of the agricultural sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market-oriented agricultural economics - Investment in machinery - Activation of unions and cooperatives in value chain management - Flourished agricultural trade 	Business Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tendency of foreign investors to invest - Controlling inflation and exchange rates at the national level - Development of international banking relations
Generalizability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generalization of Iranian saffron brand - Generalization of the target market - Geographical generalization 	Increase competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing price elasticities - Increase competitiveness - Increasing the income of export demand
Cooperation between manufacturers and retailers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resource sharing between producers and retailers - Exchange of information between manufacturers and retailers - Class management 	Increase revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing the income level of agricultural producers - Creating foreign exchange earnings - Development of income insurance for agricultural products
Government support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing production facilities by the government - Providing technical and credit assistance for facilities for storage, processing and packaging of agricultural products - Export incentives to encourage production 	Export value enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduction of export tariffs - Market information integration - Added value of products produced from saffron
Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic stability of the country - Job creation in the agricultural sector 	Market penetration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-export of saffron product - Increase saffron exports in the long run

	- Increasing GDP		- Increasing the level of penetration in foreign markets
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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.

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 5 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		Management factors	Internal factors
Knowledge of target country		Organizational factors	
Export policy	Facilitators	Technology	External factors
Facilitate trade	Short-term	Production Challenges	
		Infrastructure	

Increased competitiveness	consequences	Economic Growth	Long-term consequences
Increase in revenue		Market penetration	
Export value enhancement			

Pattern presentation

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

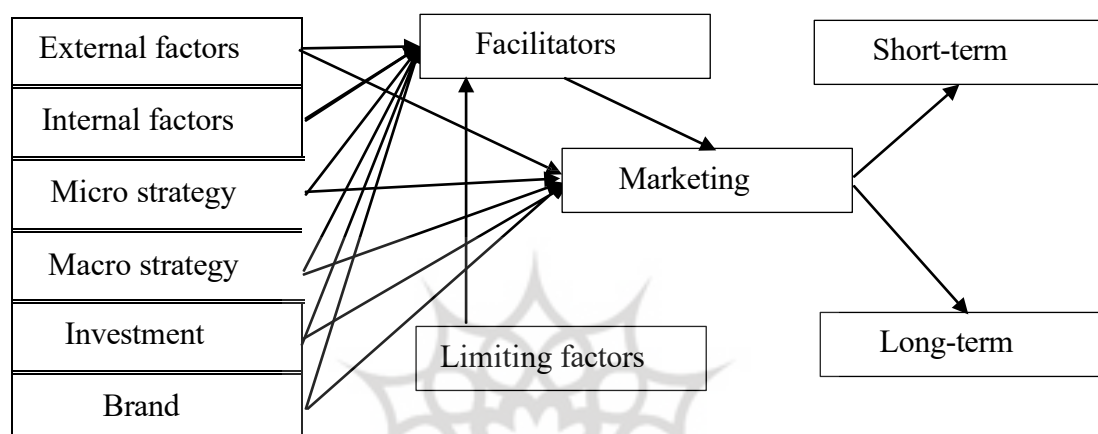


Figure 1 Export marketing model of Iranian saffron

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.

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 focus 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 products exports depends 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, so 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 of 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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