



## Studying the Role of Modern Marketing in Developing Non-Oil Exports (A case Study: Carpet Industry in Eastern Azerbaijan Province)

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Available online at: [www.isca.in](http://www.isca.in)

Received 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2013, revised 17<sup>th</sup> February 2013, accepted 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2013

### Abstract

*The expansion of non-oil exports needs controlling the imports and doing efforts to develop national production through the recognition of the present capabilities besides supplying the subsets. Thus, studying the problems of the exporters and trying to remove them is considered to be an important step towards the development of the exports and economic flourishing. The present research aims at studying the role of modern marketing in developing the carpet exports in Eastern Azerbaijan Province to identify the weak points and strong points of the current situation by recognizing the mixture of the important elements of marketing and the effective variables on the process of exports and developing carpet exports. Thus, based on the marketing literature, the role of the research variables which entail the famous 4 Ps in marketing as the product, price, the distribution channel, and promotion and advertisement which are called marketing associates on carpet exports was investigated. Regarding research methodology, we have used the correlation test and Freedman's test to measure the relationship and rank the research variables in developing hand-woven carpet exports. The research results showed that the exporters could not present the exporting carpet in the appropriate location, appropriate time, and with the desirable format due to the lack of knowledge about the different techniques in marketing and the lack of knowledge about the consumers, market, rivals and other variables which affect the process of carpet export.*

**Keywords:** Modern marketing, exports' expansion, carpet industry.

### Introduction

In today's competitive world marketing is not only a tool to absorb customers and sell products, but also it has entered into the daily lives of people beyond that. Even making someone in line with your own idea is a type of marketing. In other words, marketing has changed into a culture and it is not used solely to sell the products or services but it entails all steps after that, too. Today the competition focus of economic entities has moved towards the international markets as an alternative to local markets and it is fostered by globalization<sup>1</sup>. The opportunities and challenges resulted from globalization of economic and business activities has forced companies to study more about their marketing programs and has motivated them to use novel marketing methods. We can not ignore the role of marketing and its factors on exports of countries<sup>2</sup>. The exports of Iran have not been developed fully due to the lack of having an appropriate and efficient marketing and business system. In most cases the goods and services exported from our country could not get the position it deserved in global markets although they had a high level of desirable quality and even much beyond that due to the lack of a suitable advertisement and information system in international transactions. Thus, the need is felt to have appropriate marketing strategies in order to develop the goods exported from our country especially carpets which are among goods that can bring a lot of money to our country<sup>3</sup>.

### Statement of the Problem

The expansion of exports especially non-oil exports is highly important in Iran. The sales of oil and crude oil materials and incomes resulting from them have always been changeable and inconsistent. The experiences during the recent years in Iran show that the reliance on oil economy and incomes resulting from that has been followed by inconsistencies in export incomes. Thus, in order to reduce the economic dependency of Iran to crude oil exports and focus on multi-products economy in exports and for the routing towards non-oil exports or goods exports or services exports, goods and services should have a relatively high advantage. It is possible that a country is advantageous regarding the production but it is not advantageous in marketing<sup>4</sup>.

On the other hand due to the existence of unaware people and dealers in exports, the share of our country has decreased in global markets. Regarding that a broad part of non-oil exports of Iran is related to carpet exports and according to the statistics published by central bank annually, the hand-made carpet comprises a great volume of foreign currencies coming to our country we can claim that it is considered as the representative of non-oil goods and an alternative of oil incomes. There is no doubt that Eastern Azerbaijan province plays an important role in carpet exports due to its geographical, economic, and political conditions. Therefore, we should try to know about the novel

literature in marketing and market management especially international and global marketing<sup>5,6</sup>. In the present research we will try to study the role of marketing factors in increasing the exports of hand-made carpets of Eastern Azerbaijan to the target markets based on marketing literature and marketing factors which are the same as marketing integrations and form the research hypotheses. Their roles and relations with carpet exports will be investigated. The thing that makes this research seem extremely important is that there are a lot of problems in carpet exports in Eastern Azerbaijan in recent years which have resulted in decreasing the share of Eastern Azerbaijan exports in total exports of our country and there has not been any research done in the field. We hope to step forward in order to resolve the problems of exporting this important and strategic product of Eastern Azerbaijan.

**The importance and necessity of the research:** Increasing the share of economy of Iran and promoting it in international business and global economy is one of the fundamental issues in economic policies. The importance of this issue is due to the fact that as a result of the complete economic dependency on oil and the fluctuations in its price, the share of our country has decreased dramatically in global business. On the whole, non-oil exports are considered as one of the most important factors of supplying the foreign currency needed for our country and increasing national incomes. Today the necessity of doing continuous researches in the field of non-oil exports has become more evident than before for authorities, the parliament and government. The increasing consistency of national gross production and the national incomes of the government should be searched in developing the market for different products to develop exports. The release from one-product economy and creating variety in export items and especially the development of products which have a relative advantage over the others such as carpet is deemed to be among the special necessities of the government. In this trend, carpet industry as one of the varied and job producing industries can help flourishing national economy by accurate economic programming in order to develop exports and increase foreign currency incomes<sup>7,8,9</sup>.

**Azerbaijani carpet:** Carpet weaving dates back to ancient times in Azerbaijan. The supply of raw materials and easy access to the necessities of this profession compared to other areas in Iran had changes Tabriz not only into a carpet market but also an appropriate market for other products in medieval ages<sup>10,11</sup>. Tabriz has been among the main centers of carpet production and exchanges since Holakokhan's (Mongolian Emperor) period. Like Heart (old Khorasan and new Afghanistan) carpet weaving had been in its complete form. Especially in Safavids' period the great carpet weaving factories gathered great weavers to create valuable carpets<sup>12</sup>.

The most delicate carpets of Iran are produced in Tabriz. Carpets of Tabriz are considerably thick, heavy, and strong. Carpets weaved in Tabriz are 25\*25, 30\*30, 35\*35, 40\*40, 50\*50, 60\*60 in rows (knots in every 7 centimeters window).

25\*25 row carpets are the cheapest ones to be sold in the market. 30\*30 is the usual market type. 35\*35 is the type usually ordered by European companies to be weaved regarding their favorite design<sup>13</sup>. Carpet maps are categorized in 19 groups in the categorization presented by Iranian carpet corporation organization regarding the design and sketch of the carpets. Tabriz has great samples and works of most of these designs due to the variety of the designers and abundance of weavers such as: ancient monuments' designs and Islamic buildings having Shah Abbasi sketches, Eslimi maps, Afshan map, brick-shaped map, tree map, hunting ground design, frame map, European flower design, vase design and mixed fish design (Herati) and especially turtle design, and also altar design and geometric designs and carpets and rugs having images and bush designs. On the whole, the color composition of Tabriz carpet can be summarized in 3 parts: i. Color composition in which there is a high amount of contrast which has been common in most original and ancient designs. ii. Colors with average differences in which the distance between the colors had become less and the contrast among the colors decreased with the same ratio. iii. Using the color tones close to each other and similar which is called "Ulurang" in Turkish language and "Kohnerang" (old color) is another name for it. For example, besides a cream color, a light brown color is used which is extremely similar to cream color. This method makes the carpet old and harmonious<sup>14,15</sup>.

Tabriz carpet can be found in different sizes from very small to the largest. Also image carpets have small or average sizes and silk carpets are mainly in bigger sizes<sup>16</sup>.

**The necessity and role of carpet exports in creating jobs:** Non-oil exports affect all parts and factors of economy especially employment. Carpet industry has the capability of creating a lot of jobs due to the diversity of this field. Another feature of it is that it can supply the money needs of those who work in this field with a little amount of capital. About 600000 to 700000 young work forces enter working market annually in our country. The primary studies show that creating jobs is possible with the least investments in carpet industry. Carpet industry needs human work force. Thus, in order to increase the production and exports we will need more human forces. Therefore, for more exports, more employments will be created locally<sup>17,18</sup>.

**The necessity and role of carpet exports in creating foreign currency incomes:** The economic structure of our country has been planned during the long years ago based on imports and consuming the incomes resulted from oil sales. Thus, in a country like Iran which is encountering foreign currency limitations the connection of economy and economic living with global economy through non-oil exports can be considered as one of the ways to supply the needed foreign currency. Thus, the successful presence in global markets needs the utilization of developed marketing methods and strategies and tactics. Regarding the fact that which of the four elements of integrated

marketing has more importance in global carpet markets, and regarding that carpet market is going through a downwards movement period and the role of integrated marketing elements is highly important in the present situation can be a very important guide for the managers of the organizations related to exports and marketing managers of carpet export companies. But the reason to carry out the present research is the emergence of increasingly reductions in the share of Iranian carpet especially Eastern Azerbaijani carpets in global carpet markets and that the carpet exports of our country is decreasing every day. Thus, the causes and effective factors to avoid the depression of carpet exports and effective factors in developing carpet market should be investigated<sup>19,20</sup>.

**The status of carpet in economic growth:** The importance of carpet is due to the fact that carpet is one of the fundamental items among non-oil exports which supply foreign currency for the country. Carpet art and industry is probably one of the limited professions which create a lot of job opportunities indirectly. In the present economic situation, creating jobs is considered as one of the most important policies of the government. Carpet industry is one of the industries which need a lot of works to be done which can create a great deal of employment opportunities with little fixed capitals and by using simple equipments in households for our country's economy. This industry entails other peripheral activities and jobs in addition to carpet weaving which increases the rate of employment opportunities created by this industry. Some of peripheral jobs are as follows: spinner, thread producer, dye seller, dyer, designer, warp, knot tier, and exporter. By producing a traditional carpet, the farmer, animal keeper, wool worker, thread weaver, designer, dyer, danner, carpet seller, exporter, carpet weavers and their families get employed and gain money for living. The role of carpet in rural development and regarding the economic structure of our country is highly important in agriculture and animal husbandry. Regarding the population which works in this industry in rural areas in our country, we can call carpet industry as a complementary industry for agriculture. Because we can supply the materials needed for carpet industry in our country by appropriate and logical planning in agriculture and animal husbandry parts, carpet industry can be called a potential independent industry which will need less imported items by improving the local supplies. Regarding the close relationships between carpet industry and the economic subsets related to carpet, the development of our country will be more effective by vertical and horizontal relationships of different economic parts and as a result of this direct and logical relationship among the economic parts domestically the carpet industry of Iran will become completely capable and strong. Regarding the fact that carpet is connected with varied subsets the capabilities of these subsets will result in promoting carpet market and its production. Because of the existence of qualified raw materials needed for carpet, the situation for producing high quality carpets is smoothed and finally this will result in the progress of exports and carpet markets<sup>21</sup>.

**Review of the Related Literature:** Nourozi carried out a study entitled: "Studying the obstacles and problems of carpet exports of Khorasan during the years between 1996 and 2001". This research topic was chosen due to the export policies of the government and the interests of the researcher about hand-made carpet exports and also the relative knowledge with Khorasan province. In this research, the effective factors such as the skills of human forces, tools and equipments, raw materials, environmental factors, and governmental regulations were investigated to promote the quality and the optimization of Iranian hand-made carpets. In this research, the researcher tried to analyze the effects of foreign currency policies on non-oil exports generally and carpet exports specifically and finally wanted to conclude whether the foreign currency policies had had positive effects on carpet exports during the years between 1991 and 1995 or they have had imposed some problems on them. In this research, the foreign currency policies were considered as the independent variable and carpet exports was considered as the dependent variable. The descriptive and inferential methods were utilized to express the problems related to carpet exports and the goal of the research was to study the role of the foreign currency policies on carpet exports. The statistical sample selected was 220 people from among the exporters and scholars in the field and producers and the sampling method was Morgan's method<sup>22</sup>.

Bahrehdar carried out a research entitled: "Recognizing and ranking the priorities of the elements of integrated and environmental marketing in weaving industry of our country". In this research, he tried to recognize and rank the priorities of the key elements of integrated and environmental marketing variables based on the viewpoints of scholars and technicians. To do so, after the preliminary studies and supplying the preliminary list of the effective factors on the sales and exports of this product, a questionnaire asked the scholars by using Oloweak's spectrum about the amount of the ideal importance and the present satisfaction measured by each of these factors. The analytical model of this research was 4P model plus environment. The following results emerged studying the marketing variables: in studying the product factor, the most effective factor was using developed machineries. In studying the price factor, the appropriate use of the production capacity had the highest amount of importance. In studying the distribution factor, the expansion of distribution canals domestically had the highest priority. In studying the promotion factor, appropriate use of advertisement tools and suitable advertisement had the highest priority<sup>23</sup>.

Sanatkar studied the role of marketing integration in developing date exports in Khozestan province during the years between 1994 and 1997. This research studied the role of marketing management in developing date exports in Khozestan province to recognize the important elements of aggregate marketing and the influential environmental variables on export process to recognize the weak points and strong points of date exports and also to present appropriate suggestions in order to improve the

present situation by identifying the environmental opportunities and threats and thus achieve the optimal date export capacity in the province. The results approved all research hypotheses. The results showed that the exporters could not present the exported dates in an appropriate location, appropriate time and with the desirable form for the customers due to the lack of knowledge of the exporters about the different techniques of marketing and lack the needed cognition about the consumers, market, rivals and other effective variables on date exports<sup>24</sup>.

Dehghani-e-Firoozabadi studied about the reasons for decreases of the share of Iranian carpet in global market compared to the rivals and presenting appropriate approaches to improve it. In this research the problems of this industry was studied regarding international marketing. Due to the nature of this issue, the research method chosen was post-incident through which the effects of factors such as the mixture of promotion and rewarding, concentration strategy, and the main decisions in international marketing (independent variable) on the reduction of carpet exports (the dependent variable) were investigated. The results approved all the hypotheses. According to the results, the exporters do not pay enough attention to the mixture of promotion and rewarding. Also they enter the target markets using the traditional methods and do not pay much attention to the business limitations, economic status of target markets, and rivals' status before entering these markets. And they do not pay attention to the differences between the distribution canals in different countries. Also they mostly use the concentration strategy and this increases the risk of exporters. Meanwhile, exporters should concentrate on several parts instead of using the concentration strategy in one part because it will result in more success and less risk<sup>25</sup>.

Shamabadi carried out a research entitled: "Designing an export marketing pattern for hand-made carpets of Iran". This study aimed at designing a pattern for an export marketing pattern for hand-made carpets of Iran as one of the most important export goods of the country and in order to encounter the environmental conditions reasonably and implementing an appropriate management and appropriate decision makings related to this issue. Therefore, the identification of the effective factors on export pattern, the determination and ranking the priorities of the factors and the type and amount of the effectiveness of the factors on each other were among the most important goals of the research. The results of the research through questionnaires and analysis were as follows: an export marketing pattern was presented and the principles and main characteristics of it and the process dimensions, harmony, unifying and the systematic look at the factors and the variables related to the industry in the form of designing the research pattern were realized<sup>26</sup>.

Stephan Grow and Reymond Fisk and Jabi John did a research entitled: "The role of marketing services in exports". This research was carried out by Stephan Grow and et al in 2003. This study was about the future of effective marketing elements in export services. According to this research, there more than

two factors of marketing involved in exports which have direct effect on export services. In most methods, the acceptable growth and development method is resulted from marketing. In other words, the route for growth and development of exports is derived from marketing. In this research, the researchers have tried to prepare a complete report of the real analysis about the effective marketing elements in exports. The goal of this research is to recognize the effective elements in exports and determine the amount of their intervention. In this research it was identified that there are almost 10 effective factors in exports some of which such as price, product, distribution, advertisement, and public relationships are highly important. Thus, the result of the research is as follows: export expansion can be realized by developing marketing and marketing mixtures and considering the type of exports with marketing elements<sup>27</sup>.

## Research Hypotheses

**Main Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between marketing mixtures and the expansion of hand-made carpet exports.

**Minor Hypotheses:** i. There is a meaningful relationship between price element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports. ii. There is a meaningful relationship between product element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports. iii. There is a meaningful relationship between distribution element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports. iv. There is a meaningful relationship between advertisement element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports.

**Research method and data analysis:** In order to analyze the data collected from the questionnaires, we have used the descriptive and inferential statistical methods. To describe the answers given to the questions of the questionnaire of the research, we have used box and dispersion figures. To give an image of some of the statistical data, we have used column graphs. To infer testing some of the hypotheses, we have used r Kendal and Spearman and also we have used Freedman's ranking test. To determine the consistency of the questionnaire, we used SPSS software. We used consistency analysis model called "Kronback's Alpha" and the resulted alpha was 0/733.

**Testing research hypotheses: Main Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between marketing mixtures and the expansion of hand-made carpet exports of Eastern Azerbaijan province.  $H_0: \rho = 0$  (There is not any relationship between marketing mixtures and export expansions.)  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$  (There is a relationship between marketing mixtures and export expansions) (table-1).

Regarding the fact that the correlation coefficients of Kendal and Spearman between the two variables above are equal to 0/949, and 0/991, respectively and the meaningfulness level for both is 0/000, the null hypothesis (zero hypothesis) claiming that there is not any relationship between the two variables

above in the meaningfulness level of 0/05 is rejected. This can be approved by observing the dispersion of the figure, too. The slant stroke line shows that increasing marketing mixtures accompanies the expansion of exports of hand-made carpets in Eastern Azerbaijan province.

**Minor Hypotheses: First Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between price element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports.  $H_0: \rho = 0$  (There is not any relationship between price element and export expansions.)  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$  (There is a relationship between price element and export expansions) (table-2)

Regarding the fact that the correlation coefficients of Kendal and Spearman between the two variables above are equal to 0/954, and 0/989, respectively and the meaningfulness level for both is 0/000, the null hypothesis (zero hypothesis) claiming that there is not any relationship between the two variables above in the meaningfulness level of 0/05 is rejected. This can be approved by observing the dispersion of the figure, too. The slant stroke line shows that increasing price element accompanies the expansion of exports of hand-made carpets in Eastern Azerbaijan province.

**Second Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between product element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports.  $H_0: \rho = 0$  (There is not any relationship between product element and export expansions.)  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$  (There is a relationship between product element and export expansions) (table-3)

Regarding the fact that the correlation coefficients of Kendal and Spearman between the two variables above are equal to 0/956, and 0/990, respectively and the meaningfulness level for both is 0/000, the null hypothesis (zero hypothesis) claiming that there is not any relationship between the two variables above in the meaningfulness level of 0/05 is rejected. This can be approved by observing the dispersion of the figure, too. The slant stroke line shows that increasing product element accompanies the expansion of exports of hand-made carpets in Eastern Azerbaijan province.

**Third Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between distribution element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports.  $H_0: \rho = 0$  (There is not any relationship between distribution element and export expansions.)  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$  (There is a relationship between distribution element and export expansions) (table-4).

**Table- 1**  
**The results of testing the correlation of the main hypothesis**

	Marketing Mixtures					
	Kendal's correlation			Spearman's Correlation		
	Correlation Coefficient	meaningfulness	frequency	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency
exports expansion	0/949	0/000	100	0/991	0/000	100

**Table -2**  
**The results of testing the correlation of the first hypothesis**

	Price Element					
	Kendal's Correlation			Spearman's Correlation		
	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency	Correlation coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency
Exports expansion	0/954	0/000	100	0/989	0/000	100

**Table -3**  
**The results of testing the correlation of the second hypothesis**

	Product Element					
	Kendal's correlation			Spearman's Correlation		
	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency
exports expansion	0/956	0/000	100	0/990	0/000	100

**Table- 4**  
**The results of testing the correlation of the third hypothesis**

	Distribution Element					
	Kendal's Correlation			Spearman's Correlation		
	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	Meaningfulness	Frequency
exports expansion	0/955	0/000	100	0/987	0/000	100

Regarding the fact that the correlation coefficients of Kendal and Spearman between the two variables above are equal to 0/955, and 0/987, respectively and the meaningfulness level for both is 0/000, the null hypothesis (zero hypothesis) claiming that there is not any relationship between the two variables above in the meaningfulness level of 0/05 is rejected. This can be approved by observing the dispersion of the figure, too. The slant stroke line shows that increasing distribution element accompanies the expansion of exports of hand-made carpets in Eastern Azerbaijan province.

**Fourth Hypothesis:** There is a meaningful relationship between advertisement element of marketing mixtures and the expansion of carpet exports.  $H_0: \rho = 0$  (There is not any relationship between advertisement element and export expansions.)  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$  (There is a relationship between advertisement element and export expansions) (table-5)

Regarding the fact that the correlation coefficients of Kendal and Spearman between the two variables above are equal to 0/956, and 0/990, respectively and the meaningfulness level for both is 0/000, the null hypothesis (zero hypothesis) claiming that there is not any relationship between the two variables above in the meaningfulness level of 0/05 is rejected. This can be approved by observing the dispersion of the figure, too. The slant stroke line shows that increasing advertisement element accompanies the expansion of exports of hand-made carpets in Eastern Azerbaijan province.

**Freedman's Test:** To rank the role of marketing mixtures in expansion of hand-made carpet exports of Eastern Azerbaijan, we have used a test called 'Freedman's Test'. As it can be seen in table 6, the averages of each of the elements above were calculated and the amounts were 23/50 for price element, 27/29 for product element, 28/96 for distribution element, and 28/24 for advertisement element, respectively. Also in table 7, the average rank of each of the elements above was calculated as follows: 1/41 for price element, 2/54 for product element, 3/17 for distribution element, and 2/88 for advertisement element, respectively. This showed that the distribution element has had

the most and the price element has had the least effects on the expansion of hand-made carpet exports of Eastern Azerbaijan. The advertisement element ranked the second and product element ranked the third.

### Conclusion

Today the release from one-product economy and the expansion of non-oil exports is consider an important issue to overcome the limitations imposed on developing countries' economy. In the present research, the important issue related to the exports of hand-made carpet was challenged. The present research posed some scientific and experimental resolutions regarding the importance of the elements efficient in it and the assignment of the priorities for these effective factors was investigated to know how to devise an appropriate program regarding the present situation for the exporters and manufacturers and the beneficiary organizations. The research findings showed that non-oil exports are critically important for our country and investing on them is highly important. Because regarding the great human force resources and the climate conditions and the nature of our country make the non-oil products exports especially hand-made carpets advantageous, the competitive advantage of hand-made carpets for our country and our province makes the necessity of considering this valuable good as highly important to be known clearly. Regarding the research findings if the distribution and transport canals of this product are arranged regularly and based on the principle foundations, we can gain a higher level of shares in the competitive market and as a result of it we can devise better production, pricing, and advertisement programs for it to follow the strategy devised and the hand-made carpet exports will achieve the position it really deserves. The results showed that the exporters couldn't present their exported carpets in an appropriate location, appropriate time and with the desired format to the customers due to the lack of knowledge of the exporters of the different marketing techniques and the lack of enough knowledge about the consumers, the market, rivals and other effective variables on carpet exports process.

**Table- 5**  
 The results of testing the correlation of the fourth hypothesis

	advertisement element					
	Kendal's correlation			Spearman's correlation		
	correlation coefficient	meaningfulness	Frequency	correlation coefficient	meaningfulness	frequency
Exports Expansion	0/956	0/000	100	0/990	0/000	100

**Table -6**  
 Freedman's test to measure the role of the marketing mixture elements in carpet exports expansion

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Price Element	100	23/50	2/513	18	31
Product Element	100	27/29	3/543	19	44
Distribution Element	100	28/96	3/366	20	45
Advertisement Element	100	28/24	4/025	19	54

**Table-7**  
**The ranking of marketing mixtures in carpet exports expansion based on Freedman's test**

	Mean Rank
Price Element	1/41
Product Element	2/54
Distribution Element	3/17
Advertisement Element	2/88

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