

Designing marketing strategies for kiwifruit Export to international markets based on Grounded Theory and SWOT method (A Case study of Amin Caspian Shomal co.)

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Abstract:

Considering the government's advocacy of and support for non-oil exports and the importance of cultivation and job creation opportunities relating to the kiwifruit product in the northern provinces, and taking into account the limitations of the mode of distribution and competition of producing countries in the global markets, it is imperative that the preparedness of Amin Caspian Shomal company in exporting kiwifruit in order to enter the global markets and the factors influencing it are investigated. For this descriptive research, which was conducted on the basis of strategic studies process, and is applied in terms of objective and takes on a qualitative approach, the Grounded Theory method and SWOT matrix for the purpose of strategic planning have been used. On the basis of the findings of the research, and after the analysis of the information, the result of the Internal Factors Evaluation matrix was calculated at 2.08 and the External Factors Evaluation matrix was calculated at 2.24, and the strategic position of the Amin Caspian Shomal company was set in a defensive mode.

Keywords: exports marketing, social responsibilities, marketing capabilities, managerial capabilities, entry strategy

Introduction

The field of marketing and the concept of product marketing have undergone many different changes over time. Also, marketing strategies have undergone many changes over time, so that the focus of marketing has been on the enamel of customer orientation due to changing customer needs and expectations. Over time, different issues arise in marketing strategy and companies always try to adopt different marketing strategies to achieve a competitive advantage in the market (Walter Wymer, 2017). Research in the field of marketing strategies has shown that companies should direct their business and development activities in a way that the entire organization can have the least risk for

non-renewable resources and preserve them for the future. Therefore, given the circumstances, companies, like the citizens of the community, must accept social and environmental responsibilities in relation to the issues and consequences of their actions and behavior. Of course, this is not known as a cost or constraint, but a specific goal for Creates companies and can be considered as a competitive advantage. Because this not only leads to respect for customers but also leads to a long-term relationship with them. In this regard, another researcher has argued that the management of marketing strategies helps organizations to achieve sources of innovation, opportunity and competitive advantage (Taherdangkoo.et, 2016). As the competition in the global market of agricultural products is increasing day by day, so maintaining and strengthening the global market of these products is essential. Since one of the important economic issues in Iran is the issue of non-oil exports and increasing The share of non-oil exports is a major goal in economic development programs. Meanwhile, the export of agricultural products has a major role in non-oil exports and the export of this sector is more stable than other sectors (Aboutrab et al., 2017).

With the globalization of markets, competition pressures, plurality of credible trademarks, and above all the frequent transformation of the lifestyle and behavior of consumers, organizations have been prodded to develop strategies that can retain more clients and implement programs to keep their customers committed. In addition, one of the primary concerns of every company is the application of marketing patterns to forge long-term relationships with the customers and eventually improve the performance and increase sales (Dehghan, Nabiollah et al, 2014).

One of the important policies of the agriculture sector aimed at rural development is laying emphasis on strategic products suitable for different regions, since the cultivation of these products can engender a sustainable economy for the farmers. Moreover, it will add a special economic and political standing to the country. Today, with the exponential growth of population and the emergence of the phenomenon of globalization, we are witness to the increased demand of the human societies for the provision of nutrients. Accordingly, identification of the capabilities of lands and natural resources with the goal of producing specific crops appears to be vital (Soltani, Reyhaneh & Khouran, Masoud, 2014).

The first stage of exports activities for the companies that are willing to export their products is to assess their preparedness for exports. When a company makes a decision to export goods, it must set up a strategy. Setting up a strategy is the pivot of every sort of commercial activity. The exports strategy of a company will determine where it is headed and how it should achieve its goals. A clear-cut and lucid exports strategy offers a unique portrayal of the goal which the organization staff can understand. In order to implement an exports strategy, an exports marketing plan is required. In fact, the strategy of a company is the company's agenda in countering the competing companies in the target export markets (Bolourian Tehrani, Mohammad, 2013: 1).

Considering its potentials for contributing to global trade and global markets, Iran must build on the capabilities and capacities of the agriculture sector in the realm of exports, given that a clear-cut and lucid strategy offers a unique portrayal of the goal which the organization staff can understand. Having known that in the multiplicity of exported goods, the development of the share of non-oil exports is one of the major goals in the nation's economic development plans, the Amin Caspian Shomal company has been able to achieve a special and appropriate standing in the export of kiwifruit, given the numerous capabilities and capacities present in the agriculture sector and in the exports of kiwifruit in the recent couple of decades, reasserting it as one of the world's leading producers of kiwifruit. In addition to its nutritional role and the revenues it generates for Iran's northern provinces, kiwifruit is considered to be a major non-oil exports product.

Results of investigations in the regions of Iran fertile for kiwifruit production reveal that the coastlines of the Caspian Sea, namely the provinces of Guilan, Mazandaran and Golestan, are the most suitable areas for the cultivation of this crop nationally.

Considering the profitability of kiwifruit and its potential for generating foreign currency as a completely economical product, it has a high economic turnaround as compared to other products growing in similar climate, and the Amin Caspian Shomal company, by possessing precise strategies and capitalizing on the suitable status quo, can work on generating profits and bring in more foreign currency.

At the moment, China, Italy, New Zealand, Iran and Chile are the major producers of kiwifruit. When produced in Iran, this crop has got a more delectable taste due to limited use of chemical fertilizers and also reasonable harvesting time of the product, and provided that the packaging standards are observed and the transportation capability of the country is enhanced, it can claim its position in the global markets. Based on the latest FAO statistics on the kiwifruit producing and exporting countries, it was determined that in the preceding year, Iran exported a total of nearly 112 thousand tons of kiwifruit valued at more than \$82 million to other countries. Considering the existing potentials for the production and development of this crop in Iran's northern regions as the country's kiwifruit hub, and the reception of Iran's kiwifruit by the global consumption markets due to its quality (taste and size), paying attention to relative advantages in producing and exporting the crop, gaining a foothold in secure global markets of distribution and prioritizing the target markets with the aim of crafting a strategy for kiwifruit marketing appear to be necessary.

Therefore, considering the importance of kiwifruit exports and given that by far, no comprehensive study has been done on designing a special strategy to enter the global markets of this crop, in the present study, attempts were made to design a marketing strategy model for the kiwifruit to integrate the Amin Caspian Shomal company in the global markets of kiwifruit, and to ensure essential action is taken for the export of kiwifruit in the said company.

Theoretical foundations and framework:

-Strategic marketing

The art and science of formulating, implementing, and evaluating multiple task decisions that enable an organization to achieve its long-term goals. As can be deduced from this definition, strategic management emphasizes several factors for organizational success: coordinating management, marketing, finance, production, research and development, and computer information systems.

-International Marketing:

It is the marketing of goods and services in more than one country, which includes the export of goods from one country to another.

- Strategies to enter international markets:

Companies must create international supply chains to survive in international markets. Effectiveness refers to reducing the costs of operations and activities of the company on a global scale. Multinational businesses with multiple value chains around the world should pay special attention to how they organize R&D, production, product sourcing, marketing, and customer service activities.

Export:

Export has been the most common way to enter the market of the host country since ancient times. Governments often encourage their companies to export because exports increase employment, intensify competition, and generate currency.

Concession:

The rapid expansion of global marketing has made conferencing one of the most common market entry strategies. A grant is the payment of a certain amount as a royalty by the recipient to obtain the right to use an invention patent, trademark, product formula, company name or anything else of value. In other words, concession means the transfer of an intangible asset from a concessionaire to a concessionaire. The majority of concessions are made among developed countries.

International marketing strategy

Strategy

"Strategy is the science of planning and directing large-scale military operations, with the aim of identifying and finding the best position before the actual conflict with the enemy begins." Strategy is actually a way of thinking and a way of thinking. Its purpose is to regulate or compile or classify and systematize the movement, which must be done in terms of priority and special order and sequence, and then according to that sequence and order, choose a specific method and method that is the most effective. Quinn strategy as follows Defined that strategy is a pattern or plan that combines the goals, policies and operating chains of an organization into an interconnected whole. If the strategy is set correctly, it will be effective in allocating and directing human resources in a unique and growing way, based on the capabilities and relative inadequacies within the organization, predicted environmental changes, and contingent moves against smart competitors. In

fact, the strategy It is regulated and implemented by looking at environmental developments (Forouzandeh Dehkordi et al., 2014, p. 5). Strategy can also be defined as the process of setting long-term fundamental goals, adopting the method of allocating the necessary resources to achieve these goals. Making decisions about the development of activities or the establishment of factories and offices in different regions, entering new economic activities, creating diversity in production lines, requires setting new fundamental goals. New solutions must be devised and the necessary resources allocated to achieve the goals, as well as to achieve the goals, maintain and expand the company's activities in new areas of work in response to changing demands, resource changes, fluctuations in economic conditions, technical advances and competitors' activities. Resources must be reallocated. The strategy has both the end result and the means to achieve it. The goals and decisions that shape the organization's strategy may have been planned in advance or may emerge over time as a model in important decisions (Alvani and Danaifard, 1399, p. 122).

Marketing

Marketing is the process of satisfying human needs and wants. According to Philip Cutler, marketing is an organizational activity to satisfy needs and wants through the exchange process (Balabanis.et, 2014)

international marketing

International marketing, at its simplest level, is a process in which a business has to decide on its marketing bench beyond its borders. Its most complex level involves creating a production unit and coordinating the death of the company's marketing strategy worldwide (Baldauf.et, 2011). According to another definition, international marketing is the conduct of business activities to deliver a company's goods and services to its customers or consumers in more than one country for profit (Barney, 2011).

product

They are something that can satisfy a desire (Cavusgil, 2007).

Export

Export is about connecting and working with professional markets and market professionals across borders. Exports are the starting point for interacting with others. Exports are for the economic growth and development of the country, which is obtained from the sale of products and services to other countries to earn foreign exchange and helps to establish trade balance and create economic balance (Cavusgil, 2014).

background research:

- 1- A research in 2017 entitled "Sociological analysis of energy management strategies, a case study of citizens of Sanandaj" was conducted by Loghman Emamgholi et al. In this study, the approach of structural strategies and psychological strategies is used and in it 3 basic components Attitudes toward subsidy targeting and efficiency are perceived and incentive policies of energy consumption are assessed and the results show that there is a relationship between attitudes towards targeted subsidies and perceived efficiency and environmental incentive policies and energy consumption behavior. This finding indicates that with the increase of each of these three components,

energy consumption behavior becomes more responsible (Loghman Emamgholi et al., 2017).

- 2- A study was conducted in 1396 with the title of formulating strategies for the development of tourism industry in Ilam province.) Occurs in an appropriate situation that indicates the adoption of growth and development strategies. Considering the strategic situation, some strategies have been proposed; However, it is necessary to pay attention to the SWOT and in accordance with the results obtained from the model, a combination of strategies for the development of the tourism industry; However, according to the analysis done, they are more important with the strategic position of Ilam province. (Omidi et al., 2017).
- 3- A study was conducted in 2018 entitled "Study of the impact of social media marketing activities on brand equity and customer response in the airline industry" in this article the impact of social media marketing activities on brand valuation and customer response Analyzed in the aviation industry and the results of this study showed that popularity is the most important part of social media marketing and social media marketing has a significant impact on brand and brand awareness. Also, brand awareness significantly affects commitment and This brand image significantly affects the word online and commitment. The results of this study are expected to be used as key data in the development of aviation social media marketing strategies (Eun-Ju Seo, Jin-Woo Park, 2018).
- 4- A study was conducted in 2018 entitled "The Impact of Entrepreneurship, Market, Knowledge Management Approaches on Detergent Producers and Sustainable Competitive Advantage" and the results show that companies in different economic sectors play a key role in promoting sustainable development in the region. They are there, they have it. There have been previous strong effects of strategic drivers (entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, and knowledge management) on detergent manufacturers, noting that the correlation between the previous three is high, indicating that research firms separate from drivers Use strategically, and when combined, there is a potential for success with a significant increase in sustainable competitive advantage for SMEs (Julio Cesar Ferro & et.al, 2018)
- 5- A study was conducted in 2017 entitled "The Importance of Email Marketing in Online Commerce", which is an important part of today's e-commerce. Click-through rate showed that email marketing is one of the most effective communication tools and includes many different ways to introduce the company such as email marketing, content marketing, social media and affiliate marketing (Martin Hudak & et.al. 2017)
- 6- A study was conducted in 2017 entitled The effect of marketing communications on the financial situation of the company. The results of this research indicate that making marketing communications is a way to provide the required information to customers in the best and fastest and most efficient form of communication. Good marketing in the company can increase the number of customers, which is often an important factor in increasing sales. However, costs are associated with the transformation of the marketing idea

(using marketing channels and communication tools) into the final form that includes customers (Lukas Falata, Martin Holubcikb, 2017)

Methodology

Strategy design is a type of prescriptive research (as opposed to descriptive). But to identify the main factors in this design, qualitative research has been used using the data method of the foundation or grounded theory. The reason for using this method has been the existence of severe environmental changes and dynamics within the organization. In other words, the degree of uncertainty and complexity of the external environment along with the dynamics within the company, especially the ability to learn to use capabilities and capabilities, has made it impossible to identify strategic factors according to a specific theory. Therefore, with emphasis on the appropriateness of the organization and the external environment, the swot method (after recognizing the main factors that can be examined from the qualitative method) was designed to design a strategy to enter international markets. The present study is a qualitative research and the strategy used in the research is the fundamental conceptualization theory or the Grounded Theory as well as the SWOT analysis method to design strategies of entering the global markets. The Grounded Theory approach is an inductive and exploratory method rooted in reality, giving explanations for the events as they happen. This method equips the researcher with the capability to take action to compile theories himself instead of relying on existing and pre-compiled theories. These theories are put together on the basis of real data in an organized manner (Bazargan, 2014: 91). On account of increased attention to social interactions and investigating processes embedded in social behaviors, the Grounded Theory study has been able to materialize as one of the most important interdisciplinary research works. A qualitative research is in fact any type of research the findings of which are obtained through methods other than statistical methods or other sorts of quantification. The aim of qualitative analysis is to comprehend the meaning and the nature of relationship between the variables. In addition, we deal with concepts in qualitative research which are sometimes impossible to be quantified. Qualitative methods are means to assess incommensurable facts about individuals being studied by the researchers as well as elements indicating their characteristic features. As a result, researchers, through qualitative techniques, can join in others' understanding and comprehension. In the present research, the statistical population consists of two groups. The first group includes specialists and experts who were university faculty members, and the second group includes proficient specialists and managers who have had a minimum of at least 15 years of experience in commercial affairs and exports. Sampling in the present research is purposive. Purposive sampling is a method by which it is possible to define the target informing groups on the basis of subject, question and position of the research (Ferasatkhah, 2010: 135). Moreover, the technique used in the sampling is the snowball technique. This is a method based on which the sample units, at the same time as presenting information about themselves, provide the researcher with information about the other society units (Strauss and Corbin, 2008: 65).

The modus operandi was such that first, a primary group were selected for interview, and then, on the basis of the recommendation of the first group, interviews were conducted with the subsequent groups. Interviews continued until the point when no new thought was achieved, or in other words, theoretical saturation happened. It is noteworthy that from the fourteenth interview onward, the repetition of codes was observed. That said, the process of the collection of interviews continued until the 20th interview so that complete theoretical saturation could be ensured. Therefore, in sum, 20 interviews were conducted.

The most important principle in the process of the analysis of data resulting from interviews is coding. Coding includes closely reading the data line by line, and converting them into the smallest components possible (Adib Hajbagheri, Parvizi and Salsali, 2007: 128). Codes are in effect the outcome of microscopic analysis of the data (Strauss and Corbin, 2006: 91). One of the most prevalent methods frequently used in Grounded Theory studies to collect data, underpinning the deep involvement of the researcher with the experiences of the participants, is the interview method (Graham, 2007). Therefore, in the present study, in order to collect the research data, the semi-structured interview method was used. After the required coordination with the eligible participants and obtaining written consents from them, all interviews were conducted in locations they deemed appropriate. Prior to the beginning of the interviews, the researcher, given the objectives, set out to elucidate the research for the participants and then posed a variety of questions to them. Each interview lasted between 90 and 100 minutes. After the conduction of the interviews, the researcher attempted to extract the preliminary codes. After that, the data obtained from the text of the interviews were analyzed using the MAXQDA software program for improved accuracy and increasing the pace of the research. First, open coding was carried out, then the concepts were created by putting the preliminary codes alongside each other, and eventually, the themes were formulated by connecting the concepts. In the Grounded Theory method, open coding is the first step in analyzing the interviews. This step is called open because the researcher aims at extracting codes and constructing themes with an open mind and without any restrictions as to the number of codes and themes (Golding, 2002: 14). Open coding includes an analytical process through which concepts are first discovered in the data and then, the concepts are compared to each other to identify the similar phenomena and are categorized as themes (Corbin and Strauss, 1990: 18). As a result, it can be stated that open coding involves splitting, comparing, conceptualizing and thematizing the data (Danaee Fard & Emami, 2007: 81). In the open coding stage, 469 codes extracted from 20 accurate interviews with experts and specialists working in the research field were converted into 95 more abstract concepts and eventually, 10 themes were identified. The results of this stage, including the formulation of concepts and themes related to them are shown in the Table 1.

factors	Theme	Concept	No.
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internal factors	Marketing capabilities	Marketing mechanisms	Establish and maintain relationships with foreign customers	1
			The location of the company and the appropriate geographical distance between the company and the target market	2
			Quality of customer service	3
			Financial condition and working capital of the company	4
			Ability of sales force	5
			Power distribution network	6
			Speed of new product introduction	7
			Knowledge about customers and competitors	8
			Skills in segmenting and targeting the market	9
			Having the necessary legal licenses for export	10
			Advertising	11
			Pricing	12
	Marketing information	Competitors' arrival time	13	
		Position and position of competitors in the target market	14	
		Field survey of stores in target countries to assess needs and tastes	15	
		Recognize competitors	16	
		Identify favorable markets	17	
		The amount of competitors' capital	18	
		Global competition of competitors	19	
	Managerial capabilities	Ability in export marketing	Increase or limit the amount of exports	20
			Increase exports to expand the market	21
			Timely supply of export products and goods	22
			Develop and improve export performance by interacting with global markets	23
			Select a target market	24
			Benefit from advanced technologies for export	25
			Familiarity with global markets and customer tastes	26
			Determine long-term financial strategies	27
			Participate in specialized and international exhibitions	28
			Timely monitoring of news and information of international markets	29
			Value creation management with the aim of developing products and expanding exports	30
Use marketing research to identify foreign customers and competitors	31			

		Forming a working group and think tank on exports	32
		Understand international trade laws	33
		Comply with international trade standards	34
		Development of research and development activities (R & D)	35
		Establish coordination and coherence for marketing and export affairs	36
		The mission and plans of the leader of the organization to motivate	37
		Informing the company about news, rules and events regarding exports	38
	Managerial competencies	Possessing skills and knowledge in the field of export	39
		Access to sufficient financial resources and capital for export activities	40
		Value creation management	41
		Scientific level of company management	42
		Promote the idea of globalization among company executives	43
		Access to political knowledge and technical and managerial experience	44
	Training	Sales force training	45
		Hiring experienced and skilled salesmen	46
		Teaching cultural differences	47
		Knowledge management and conducting studies and research in the field of sales and exports	48
		Having staff familiar with international banking and marketing techniques	49
		Strengthen foreign languages and learn new and different languages	50
		Teach communication and customer orientation to employees	51
Marketing performance	Improve performance in the export market	Use of information and communication technology	52
		Appropriate quality of distribution and timely completion and delivery of orders	53
		Suitable packaging for flawless supply of export products	54
		Properties and quality of export products	55
		Increase sales revenue	56
		Increase information and advertising	57
		Increase profit margin	58

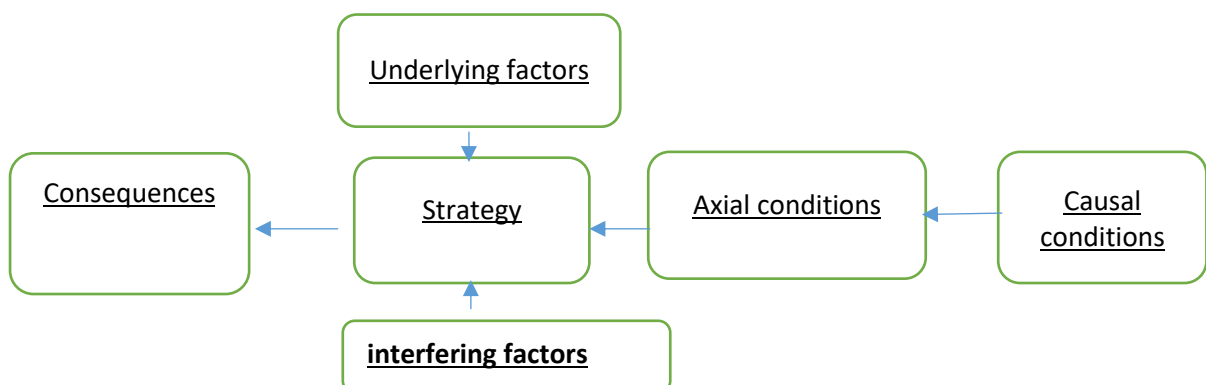
Innovation		Improve competitiveness	59
		Reduce marketing costs by using state-of-the-art technologies	60
		Reasonable price of export product	61
		Attractive packaging of export product based on the psychology of the target country	62
		Maintain a position in the market in terms of quantity	63
		Maintain a position in the market in terms of quality	64
		Update and improve technology-based capabilities	65
		Creating social networks for marketing	66
		Export product promotion and advertising programs	67
		Development of promotion programs and creating a favorable image of Iranian products in the target countries	68
	Awareness of the type and method of advertising in the destination country	69	
	Creating a competitive advantage of goods and services in terms of promotion and discounts	70	
	Social responsibilities	Humanitarian responsibilities	71
		Ethical responsibilities	72
		Legal responsibilities	73
		Cultural responsibilities	74
	Organizational Innovation	Informing government officials and legislators of the need for exports	75
		Company management knowledge about export management and global marketing	76
		Decide on the best way to distribute goods with the lowest cost and safe delivery	77
		Inter-organizational partnerships	78
		Development of participation in production and distribution	79
	Marketing innovation	Strategic and strategic views of the company's management to participate in global markets	80
		Decide on the price of a product compared to similar goods in the target market	81
		Decide on the type of product packaging compared to similar goods available in the target market	82
		Find business partners	83
Develop participation in after-sales service		84	
Improving the level of response to foreign customers		85	

External factors	Economic factors	Economic stability	Lack of market control due to the variability of the inflation growth process	86
			Lack of supervision and laws governing hoarding and the domestic market	87
			Increase marketing costs and proper packaging	88
			Lack of guarantee of long-term investment due to the political situation and global relations	89
		Existence of efficient international banks	Easy payment methods through efficient global banks	90
			Possibility of cooperation with reputable global banks	91
			Provide timely facilities by efficient global banks	92
			Providing fair and easy facilities by efficient global banks	93
			Having advanced infrastructure of banking and financial system in the country	94
			Terms and Conditions	of Challenge customs offices
	Reduce domestic bureaucracies for exports	96		
	Requirement to refrigerate export products	97		
	Stability of domestic laws regarding exports	98		
	Government policies	A small amount of Iran's relationship with other countries in the world		99
		The type and depth of Iran's relations with other countries in the world in economic, social, political and cultural terms		100
		Support for the production of quality agricultural products then exports		101
		Government incentives for exports in Iran, such as export awards		102
		Iran's membership in the World Trade Organization		103
		Holding exhibitions and seminars by the government		104
		Existence of political problems of the country and security atmosphere		105
Selection and appointment of competent and skilled diplomats in the target countries		106		
Increase the export knowledge of officials to coordinate policies with export affairs		107		
Establishment of international unions and joint global organizations (such as free trade zones)		108		
Government	Improving the country's transportation facilities in terms of sea, air and land	109		

		Improving the transportation situation and observing the standard of roads and transfer routes	110
		Government capital support in the field of non-oil exports	111
		Upgrading transportation routes and roads	112
		Large area under cultivation of export agricultural products	113
		Existence of efficient managers as marketing intermediaries by the government	114
		Financial assistance to increase favorable agricultural lands	115
		Superior quality of Iranian products compared to competitors in export markets	116
		Ensuring the security of export orders and completing and delivering them on time	117
		Provide technical support and management consulting services to export companies	118
		Increase cooperation and communication between export companies	119
		Strengthen the capacity of export companies in the field of exports	120
Environment al factors	Status of competitors	Effective and targeted marketing activities of competitors	121
		Intensification of global competition and the presence of new competitors	122
		Increasing market costs	123

Table 1: Concepts and themes extracted from the interviews

Blurred coding is the second stage of grounded theory method that needs more focus. Coding around a group is done by linking in terms of specifications and dimensions. At this stage, the researcher selects a category and explores it as a central phenomenon in the center of the process and determines the relationship of other categories with it. At this stage, the data that were broken in the open coding process are collected again to provide a more accurate explanation of the phenomenon. For this purpose, the categories and relationships between them are identified using the axial coding model in the form of the following paradigm model .

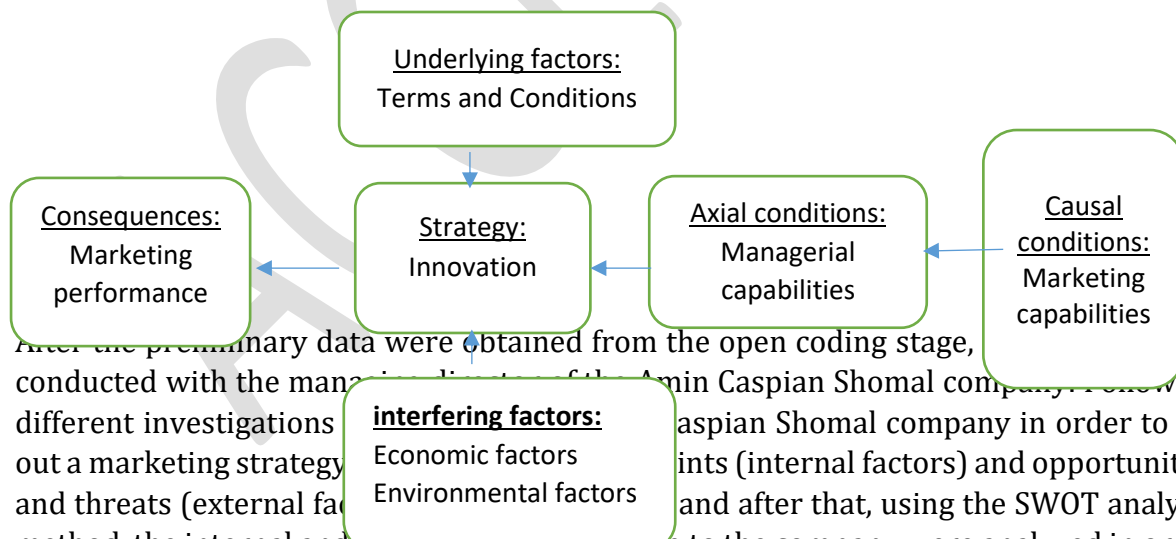


The main elements of the paradigm in axial coding

The central category of the process center is being examined, to which other categories are related. Causal conditions are categories that precede and affect the central phenomenon. Underlying conditions are specific conditions that affect strategies. Intervening conditions are general conditions that affect and facilitate or constrain strategies. Strategies are actions or interactions that are applied to manage the central phenomenon and the consequences are the result of these actions and interactions (Danaei Fard and Emami2007)

Selective coding

Selective coding is the third stage of the grounded theory method, which is in fact the process of refining the theory and the stage of theorizing. In other words, this stage of coding is the process of integrating and improving categories to form a theory, which based on the results of the previous two stages of coding to produce a theory and thus systematically relate the central category to other categories and those relationships. In the framework of a narrative and the researcher modifies and presents the paradigm model as a narrative according to his understanding of the text of the studied phenomenon. In this study, the results of open and axial coding Manj to selective coding states that export performance is a function of causal conditions (marketing capabilities), axial conditions (managerial capabilities), underlying conditions (rules and regulations) and intervening conditions (economic factors and Environmental factors) and strategies (marketing performance).

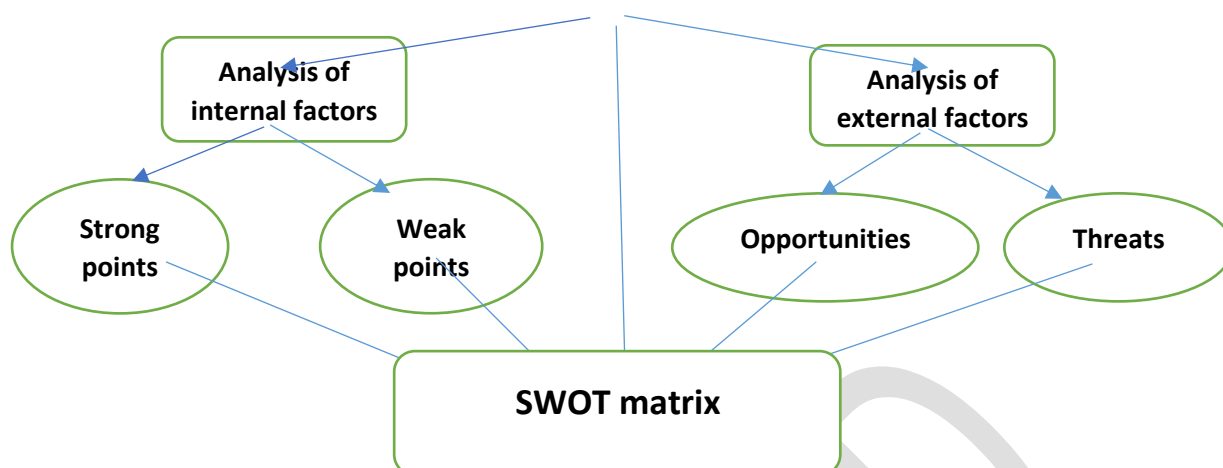


After the preliminary data were obtained from the open coding stage, it was conducted with the manager of the Amin Caspian Shomal company. Following different investigations of the Amin Caspian Shomal company in order to lay out a marketing strategy, the internal and external factors (opportunities and threats (external factors) and after that, using the SWOT analysis method, the internal and external factors relating to the company were analyzed in order to lay out an exports marketing strategy for the kiwifruit product in order to enter the global markets.

On the whole, the framework of the SWOT analysis is as follows:

Figure 1: SWOT matrix





The SWOT matrix is one of the methods used in strategic planning for the organizations. Building on this method, the strong points (S), weak points (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) of the organization are determined. In the SWOT method, strategic planners can evaluate the economic factors, social factors, etc., using the External Factors Evaluation matrix, and at the same time identify and evaluate the relationship between different issues and come up with solutions for them using the Internal Factors Evaluation matrix (Nayebpour et al, 2013: 114).

Figure 1: SWOT matrix and the mode of determination of the strategies, determination of short-term and long-term development strategies

SWOT matrix	Strong points	Weak points
Opportunities	SO strategies	WO strategies
Threats	ST strategies	WT strategies

(Eftekhari and Mahdavi, 2006)

Internal Factors Evaluation (IFE) matrix:

In the Internal Factors Evaluation (IFE) matrix, strong and weak points are determined and investigated. In fact, these factors are controllable by the organization and organizations attempt to choose strategies that redouble their strong points and do away with their weak points. Strong points are factors that count as benefits for the organization as regards the history of the organization, or the average of the industry or as to the competitors. However, weak points are factors on which the organization lacks adequate capability while the competitors retain those capabilities (Amini & Samavatian, 2010).

Table 1: Internal Factors Evaluation (IFE) matrix

Internal Factors Evaluation (IFE) matrix for the Amin Caspian Shomal company

Internal factors	Weight	Score	Final coefficient
Strong points			

1- Location of Amin Caspian Shomal company in northern Iran	0.006	4	0.24
2- High scientific potential of the manager of Amin Caspian Shomal company	0.004	3	0.12
3- Sound and reliable financial status of the Amin Caspian Shomal company	0.004	3	0.12
4- Favorable political relationships of the manager of Amin Caspian Shomal company	0.004	3	0.12
5- Favorable social relationships of the manager of Amin Caspian Shomal company	0.004	3	0.12
6- Foreign marketing experience of the manager of Amin Caspian Shomal company	0.005	4	0.20
7- Possessing shipping license	0.004	3	0.12
8- Company's financial potential in recruiting workforce	0.004	3	0.12
Weak points			
1- Absence of knowledge management and lack of studies and research in the direction of profitability in the organization	0.07	1	0.07
2- Incapability in attracting foreign customers	0.05	1	0.05
3- Absence of staff familiar with international banking affairs and novel marketing techniques	0.06	1	0.06
4- Absence of long-term financial strategies	0.06	2	0.12
5- Inadequacy in personnel training	0.05	2	0.10
6- Lack of exports affairs think tank	0.05	2	0.10
7- Absence of comprehensive and complete databank functioning as work template	0.06	1	0.06
8- Unfamiliarity with global markets and the preferences of customers	0.07	1	0.07
9- Lack of active participation in international exhibitions	0.06	2	0.12
10- High costs of distribution and marketing	0.05	2	0.10
11- Absence of publicity and advertisement	0.07	1	0.07
	1		2.08

As it is shown in the Table 1, 8 internal strong points and 11 internal weak points were determined as factors influencing the layout of the strategy of Amin Caspian Shomal company. In the framework of Likert scale questionnaire, the weight of internal factors (2.08), which is smaller than 2.5, indicates the dominance of weak points over the strong points of the Amin Caspian Shomal company.

External Factors Evaluation (EFE) matrix

In the External Factors Evaluation (EFE) matrix, opportunities and threats include events and political, economic, social, technological, legal, governmental and competitive streams that can involve immense benefits or damages for the organization in the future.

Opportunities and threats are to a great extent outside the jurisdiction and control of an organization. In order to capitalize on external opportunities and avoid the consequences of threats or mitigate them, every organization must put together certain strategies. For this reason, identification, supervision and evaluation of external opportunities and threats can guarantee the success of the organization (Amini & Samavatian, 2010).

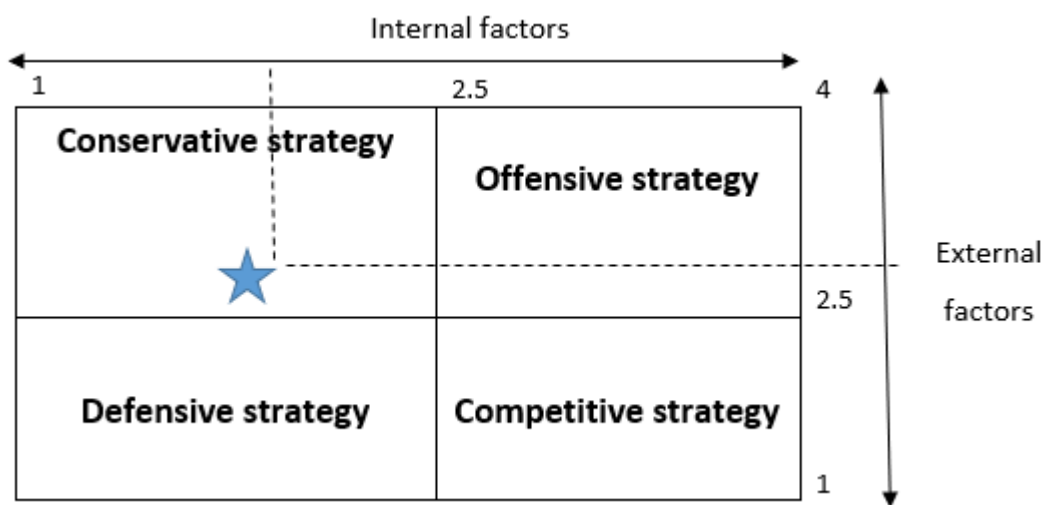
Table 2: External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrix

External Factors Evaluation (EFE) matrix

External factors	Coefficient	Rank	Score
Opportunities			
1- Cooperation with credible banks	0.06	3	0.18
2- Vast under cultivation area of kiwifruit in northern Iran	0.07	4	0.28
3- Supreme quality of Iran's kiwifruit as compared to other competitors	0.07	4	0.28
4- Favorable agricultural lands for production	0.06	4	0.24
5- Government's capital support in the realm of non-oil exports	0.06	2	0.12
6- Increasing cooperation and communication between export companies	0.06	2	0.12
7- Holding exhibitions and seminars on improving product quality by the government	0.06	4	0.24
8- Enjoying export awards	0.05	2	0.10
9- Support for the production of quality agricultural products	0.05	2	0.10
Threats			
1- Absence of international trade infrastructure	0.04	1	0.04
2- Obstructing regulations	0.05	2	0.1
3- Obligation to loading the kiwifruit product with fridge in order to prevent the crops' corruption	0.05	2	0.1
4- Iran's non-membership at the World Trade Organization	0.05	3	0.15
5- Selection of competent and skilled diplomats in the target countries	0.05	3	0.15
6- Competitors' effective and purposeful marketing activities	0.04	1	0.04
7- Intensification of global competition and introduction of new competitors	0.05	2	0.1
8- Absence of suitable and efficient management functioning as marketing intermediary	0.04	1	0.04
9- The rise of costs for marketing and suitable packaging	0.04	1	0.04
10- The country's political problems and the securitized climate of the economy	0.05	2	0.1
	1		2.52

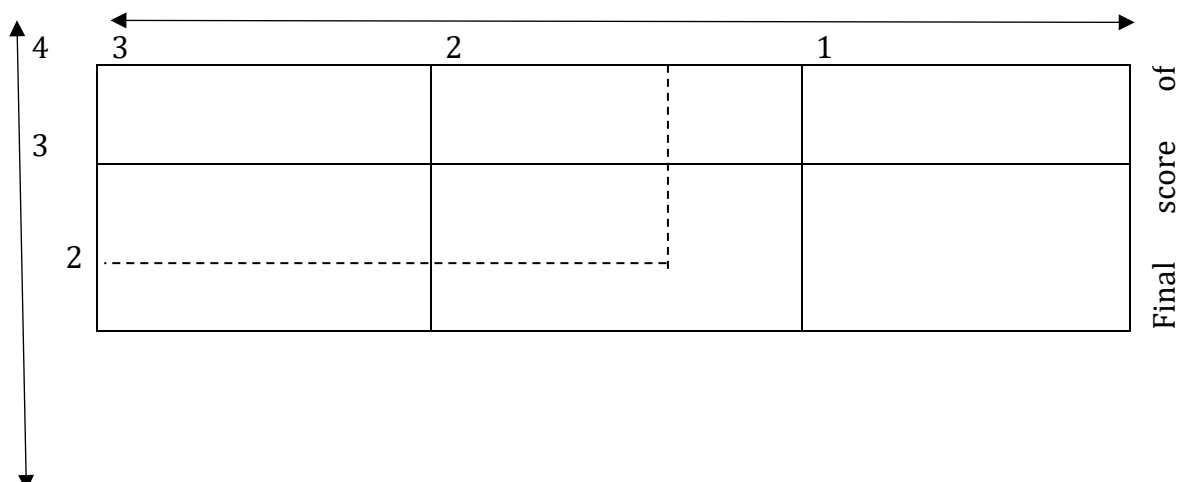
As it can be seen in the Table 2, a total of 9 external opportunity points and a total of 10 external threat points were identified as factors influencing the layout of the strategy of Amin Caspian Shomal company. Afterward, on the basis of a poll that was conducted in the framework of Likert scale questionnaire, the weight of factors was determined and the results were reflected in the Table 2. According to the above table, the weight score of the external factors at 2.52, which is higher than 2.5, indicates the dominance of opportunities over threats at the Amin Caspian Shomal company. As it is clear from the internal and external factors matrices, the sum of internal factors is 2.08 and the sum of external factors is 2.52. To identify the main strategy, the numbers obtained were illustrated in a four-cell internal and external matrix. As it can be seen in Table 3, the main strategy determined for Amin Caspian Shomal company is a conservative one.

Table 3: Determination of the strategy of Amin Caspian Shomal company



Moreover, using the Internal External Matrix (IE) for the Amin Caspian Shomal company in accordance with Table 4, the maintenance, preservation and development strategy is recommended.

Table 4: Internal External Matrix
Final score of internal factors matrix



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Considering the results obtained and the Figures 2 and 3, which respectively show the determination of the main strategy and Internal External Matrix, it turned out that Amin Caspian Shomal company must implement a conservative strategy and strategies that are aimed at maintaining and preserving the status quo and ensuring development. Therefore, in this organization, given the analysis of the abovementioned matrices, it became known that the company is making progress at a slow pace and is in a weak position in competitive terms. This company must attempt to implement swift and infrastructural reforms to preclude its dissolution and disappearance, reduce the costs to a great extent, pull out the resources from the current activities and direct them to other areas such as the recruitment of new, proficient workforce; otherwise, it would be necessary to sell out some of the company stocks or be eventually dissolved.

Preparation of SWOT matrix

In the SWOT analysis method, a 4 by 4 matrix is used to analyze the existing factors. In each of the matrix cells, one of the factors influencing the system would be placed, which will be analyzed in connection with other factors. In each case, the strong and weak points, opportunities available to the organization and threatening factors (limitations) in internal and external dimensions are investigated in intraorganizational and extra-organizational terms. Given the factors obtained, four categories of strategies can be extracted from the matrix, which include:

Table 5: SWOT strategies

Internal and external factors	Strong points	Weak points
Opportunities	SO strategy	WO strategy
Threats	ST strategy	WT strategy

- a) SO strategy: using these strategies, the company is seeking to build on strong points maximally to benefit from maximum opportunities
- b) ST strategy: using these strategies, the company attempts to neutralize the peripheral threats taking into account its strong points
- c) WO strategy: using these strategies, the company is looking to mitigate the weak points and increase capitalization on peripheral opportunities
- d) WT strategy: using these strategies, the company seeks to counter weak points and threats as much as it can, such as merger, dissolution, etc.

findings:

Based on the findings of the paradigm model obtained from the research findings obtained from the grounded theory method and using open coding, axial coding and selective coding, and also after that, the final score of the internal and external factor evaluation matrix determined that Amin Caspin's status The North is in the WO region for kiwi exports. According to these results, it should be acknowledged that these conditions indicate the use of conservative strategies, in which case the company should seek to reduce weaknesses and take advantage of opportunities as much as possible, and growth and development strategies should be for it. Be considered. But because its position in the conservative home is mediocre, in addition to growth and development strategies, conservation strategies must also be considered. Therefore, based on the conservative WO strategy, which is based on the internal and external matrix (IE) and the strategy determination matrix, kiwi product marketing strategies to enter international markets for Amin Caspian North can be announced as follows:

Considering the position of the company, which is located in the conservative range, growth and development strategies are recommended for it. However, since its position in the conservative cell is average, in addition to growth and development strategies, the strategies of maintenance, stability and preservation should also be taken into account.

List of strategies	No.
Recruitment and training of specialized and educated marketing	S1
Use knowledge management and conduct research and research in the field of sales and exports	S2
Pay attention to research and development on the culture and tastes of customers by sales forces	S3
Active participation in international exhibitions	S4
Planning for continuous training of new export marketing techniques to sales personnel by reputable educational institutions	S5
Establish a marketing committee and think tank on exports	S6
Continuous referral to orchards in the north of the country to increase the production efficiency of high quality kiwi product	S7
Establish statistical and analytical databases of marketing and sales	S8
Invest in fundamental and efficient research for the kiwi crop	S9
Use of centralized digital markets and online sales	S10
Allocation of a percentage of profits for education and marketing	S11

Recommendations:

Kiwifruit exports in the past five years show a growth of 35 percent. Kiwifruit producers, by building on marketing and packaging principles, have been able to export their products to international markets.

According to global figures, a total of 4 million 270 thousand tons of kiwi are produced in the world annually, of which Iran produces 294 thousand tons, being the fourth major kiwifruit producer globally. Out of its kiwifruit production output, Iran exports approximately 112 tons to other countries valued at more than USD 82 million.

Despite boasting relative advantage in terms of having access to resources and under cultivation areas of kiwifruit as well as being located in northern Iran and proximity with large target markets such as Turkey and Russia, the Amin Caspian Shomal company has unfortunately lost benefits in the exports stage and on the international scene as a result of the inefficiency of marketing operations when compared to other competitors. For the Amin Caspian Shomal company to achieve an appropriate and favorable standing in the realm of the global trade of kiwifruit, and considering the demand capacity of markets surrounding Iran, it should utilize potentials for exports in volumes larger than the current numbers, which requires purposeful planning for the sustainable presence of the Amin Caspian Shomal company in global markets in the framework of long-term contracts and regular exporting of the crops. Therefore, the instatement of kiwifruit product exports marketing strategies to enter the global markets seems imperative for the Amin Caspian Shomal company. Accordingly, the following solutions are recommended:

- 1- Developing and expanding studies and research concerning the domestic producers with an emphasis on the export-oriented production of the crop, developing export-oriented outlook in the production process, developing export-based research activities and launching a research committee for the kiwifruit exports will significantly contribute to the exports of kiwifruit product
- 2- By forging relationships with the kiwifruit producers in the northern Iran farms and capitalizing on supportive policies covering the farmers, particularly policies on prices, and providing training in cultivation and harvesting the exported crops, farmers should be assisted, eventually leading to the production of high-quality exports goods
- 3- Launching and shoring up an exports marketing committee. Accordingly, the company can inaugurate sales offices for the product in the target countries, participate in specialized and international exhibitions and establish sound political and economic relationships in order to mitigate the trade barriers and facilitate exports
- 4- Building on focused digital markets and engaging in online sales will have a significant effect on developing and growing the target markets
- 5- Intensifying product inventory management infrastructure, transportation and moderating the costs of distribution and resolving the deficiencies of product transportation will significantly contribute to the upward trend in the sales of the product
- 6- Diversifying the target markets for the exports of the crop, having in mind the potential exports background, and their stark differences with the current exports

markets of the country, is one of the essential strategies in the development of markets

- 7- Studying and research on the taste, preferences and the consumption culture of the intended markets, identifying the existing intermediaries in the markets and examining the performance of the competitors will significantly affect the determination of the processes and ensure appropriate performance

Research limitations:

Each research has its limitations due to its specific nature. The most important limitation was the small number of statistical population in answering the questionnaire regularly. Also, in order to understand the content of the questionnaire, the researcher had to read and explain about the content of the questionnaire and purpose. From the interview for the interviewees to receive the correct information in a qualitative manner.

Suggestions for future researchers:

Future researchers are encouraged to prioritize strategies and use decision-making techniques with gray numbers to achieve better and more effective results. In addition, several methods can be used together.

Also, to obtain the interdependence between strategies with methods such as ANP method to bring the model closer to reality.

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