

**Presenting a Model of Film Marketing Process in Iran
and Describing the Model
(Case Study: Social Drama Genre)**

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Abstract

The main purpose of this research is to present a model of film marketing process in Iran. The present research is developmental-applied in terms of purpose and is a kind of exploratory mixed research in terms of nature. The statistical population in the quality department is specialists in the field of work and academia, marketing and film industry. The number of samples was obtained by the available method and the sample size was obtained by theoretical similarity. Specialists were identified by purposive sampling and snowball sampling, which according to the adequacy of the data, a total of 30 specialists were interviewed. The statistical population in the quantitative section is 294 producers, directors and media experts. In the qualitative part, the interview was used as a data collection tool and in the quantitative part, a 34-item questionnaire was used. The research method in the qualitative part was the qualitative content analysis method in the MAXQDA software and in the quantitative part the researcher used the SPSS software and the structural equation approach. Based on the results of the qualitative study, nine hypotheses were proposed. The hypotheses were tested by distributing a researcher-made questionnaire and extracting the data and then the confirmatory factor analysis test. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis test and the dimension measurement model of the variables showed that all variables are in a significant state. And in the section of structural equations, it was proved that all the relations designed in the qualitative section are approved and all the components of the model have significant relations with each other.

Keywords

Process Model, Film Marketing, Social Drama Genre

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Introduction

Production and export of cultural products in Iran is not seen as a professional business. While many Asian countries, including South Korea, Japan, China and even Turkey in our neighborhood, have been able to inject large sums of money into their country's cultural market by producing various drama series, globalization of trade gives all countries the opportunity to present their cultural products in global virtual and non-virtual markets. In this way, while introducing the distinctive features of their culture to the world, through trade in cultural goods and services and active and effective presence in these markets, to gain economic-political power and prestige and cultural influence for their country. Of course, not all countries, including Iran, have been able to take advantage of these opportunities (Maarefzadeh, Peyman, 2016). The goal of marketing is to create the conditions for the audience to get acquainted and interested and for the film to be seen by them in the midst of a lot of competitive messages that are produced for this purpose. Audiences and customers facilities and activities of the world of entertainment have never been faced with such a variety of choices as today. All kinds of audio and video invitations and calls are seen and heard. Film distributors must succeed in a competitive effort to capture a certain share of these images and sounds that reach the eyes and ears of the audience. Whatever the marketing budget, it should be able to effectively bring the voices of producers and distributors to the audience and convince them that these videos are really satisfying and viewable. It is necessary to make the audience's desire to see the film reach its peak (Mehrabi, 2011, p. 123). Film marketing, like marketing management processes in other industries, begins at the stage of producing a new product and throughout the process of shaping ideas through production and then distribution and display continues. During the key stages of a product life cycle, numerous actors in a myriad of marketing activities accompany the marketing of an idea or design with a manufacturing company. He defines film marketing as any activity that accompanies a film in reaching its target audience at any time in its life.

He continues: "Consumption of the film does not end with its release because consumers may want to continue consuming it with reviews written on sites, or by discussing the film with their friends. Consumption of a film may lead the consumer to search for other films of the same director or writer. If the movie is a remake, it will encourage them to search for the original. They may also want to watch a movie starring their favorite actor. Film consumption can be seen as a recurring activity that may be influenced by the consumption of other cultural products such as books, music, television, news, newspaper articles, and the like. Therefore, in film studies, in addition to the producer perspective, the consumer perspective should also be considered to determine the roots of the choice of cultural products. Value creation begins at a point where consumers (viewers) become aware of the film, trying to understand the messages sent by filmmakers, film marketers, the media and other film consumers. This process ends where the consumer examines his or her little experience after consumption to see it again, recommend it to others, or watch a related movie. In the present study, several points are important: First, cultural and social problems and cultural aggression have a growing rate, and destructive cultures such as consumerism, luxury, etc. are spreading in society. Second, low social capital and cultural budgets of households are very low. The general issue is that the cost of film marketing in Iran is very low, and we even have trouble introducing movies that are of good quality and full of content and style.

Background

Marketing in the film industry is important because film production in a competitive and moderate way does not bring much profit to producers. And so marketing can play a key role in increasing revenue and profit margins from movie sales. According to Craigan (2017), what the American Marketing Association's new definition of marketing does not address and lacks is in fact paying attention to the vital role of customers in the marketing process. And what is called exchange is from the

marketers' point of view, not the film's audience. In other words, in the field of cultural and artistic industries, considering the main and central role for the customer in the marketing process faces challenges. The philosophy of "the customer is king", or "the customer is always right", is in conflict with the process of product development and marketing in the film industry. Because in the film industry, more attention is paid to filmmaking, regardless of the film market. In fact, film marketing and customer acquisition in this industry is considered when filmmaking is complete. Naseri et al. (2015) in a study entitled "Comparative study of content marketing models in terms of steps and process" reviewed and compared 9 process models of content marketing. And identified four stages of planning, production, distribution and measurement as the main stages of content marketing. The main output of this study was to identify the most important steps for the content marketing process model that can be used to implement and execute content marketing. It is clear that marketers will perform better and more effectively if they consider such steps in the content marketing process. In the face of marketing cultural and artistic products, themes related to the key role of the consumer are challenged. Because the customer plays a vital or key role in marketing, and any marketing strategy to be successful in order to meet the needs of the customer, we always see the tension between this approach and the product development process in the art and film industry. Accordingly, film marketing theorists must substitute consumption value for exchange value. Film, as a service, has a consumer value. In other words, a film must be consumed and made a reality in order to create value. To create film consumption value, the consumer plays the role of co-producer or value equalizer (Vargo and Lush, 2006). Gonlius (2011), who has dealt with cultural marketing in the field of social media, proposes a model as a marketing mix in this field. Which consists of components such as relationship building, brand building, public acceptance, upgrade promotion and finally market research. In his view, media marketing should be considered as a marketing strategy that, although it can be used

for short-term purposes, should be considered in the long run. Social media, given its growing popularity among young people who make up the bulk of the film's audience, can be a good material or tool for film marketing. The Internet can be used as one of the most important materials in film marketing such as websites, apps, etc., which are used by young people as the target group of cinema audiences, due to its unlimited space and variety of information channels. Film marketing is also a social and exchange process in which filmmakers try to create and present high value with minimal cost. In return, by creating it to the customers or the audience of the film, to create more value. This exchange of value and cost between producers and audiences continues on an ongoing basis. In the process, the film industry offers a cultural value to the individual that is not available in other industries and places. In other words, the benefits, quality, service, experience, and price that the film industry or going to the cinema offers the audience to see a film, it should be valuable enough that the audience has a positive reaction to it (Goodarzi and Jafari, 2018). Based on McCarthy's core definition of a four-element marketing mix, Craigan (2010) defines a film marketing mix as a creative team, actors, screenplay / genre, age group, and distribution strategy. The creative team means actors and directors, producers, cinematographers and other creative personnel involved in the production of the film. Thus, film marketing should address areas beyond the "star" as a measure of success and consider various aspects such as film type, genre, budget, etc. Price mix is another component of the film marketing mix that distinguishes the film from other cultural services and goods. Most of the money spent on presenting the film as a cultural product is devoted to advertising. And this share may in some cases be more than half of the cost spent for the production of the film (Sabri Baghaei, 2002). The final economic value of the film is determined after its release for screening, therefore, identifying the place, manner and time of distribution and release can have a significant effect on increasing the value of the film and ultimately its price. The identification process can take place before, during or after the

film is made (Greenwell and Hendry, 2009). Therefore, before releasing the film, the factors affecting the final price of the film should be considered. Information, minimum guarantee, duration of film rights, type of media selected for sale, and possible awards received by the film at festivals are other factors influencing the final price of the film (Craigian, 2010). The mix of places is related to the type of film distribution and mainly includes theaters, cinema campuses or cultural complexes that contain theaters. Other potential venues for film screenings include festivals and cultural markets, which play an important role in choosing the type of film to be presented to the audience (Craigian, 2010). Promotion mix is another component of market mix that is mostly confused with advertising. If a film does not enter the market properly, it will not reach the desired final value. The promotion mix is one of the main challenges and goals of the promotion mix (Greenwald and Landry, 2009). Demirel et al. (2017) in a study on the marketing and consumption of art products in the film industry, studied the effect of the importance attributed by the audience. Factors such as people, movie features, script, price, ads, and distribution channels (Defined as the movie marketing mix), the audience's intention to buy, and the effect of the purchase intention on "word of mouth" (or verbal) advertising. In addition, the relationship between people's preference and frequency of attending cultural events with the intention to buy them and the relationship between people with extroverted personality and word of mouth were examined. The data of this study were collected from 904 authoritative studies conducted in Beyoğlu, one of the most important centers for the cultural and artistic life of Istanbul. The results showed that advertising, male and female actors, and the variety of distribution channels have a positive effect on people's intention to buy. In addition, the frequency of attending cultural events can determine the audience and be effective for professionals in the industry. Each element of the film marketing mix is a potential source of competitive advantage and in different market conditions, different combinations of elements of this mixture can be needed to ensure success and high final value for the

film product. In some film markets, price and in others distribution, and in other markets, the reputation of actors and agents, can be important for gaining a competitive advantage. The film marketer must consider all these conditions and by adopting a suitable approach, maximize the utilization and ultimately create value for the film (Sabbaghian et al., 2014). Salavatian et al. (2015) in their study "Factors affecting the marketing of Iranian movies through social media" under the social titles of Iranian movies in three rounds using the Delphi method. Eighteen experts in communications, media economics and marketing were members of the Delphi panel. These individuals participated in a semi-structured interview to express their views on the capabilities of social media in marketing Iranian films. Finally, technical factors include "social media security" and "social media graphic quality", content factors including "film quality", "attractive teaser or trailer uploaded", "Posting interesting dialogues", "comments of those who have seen the film", "comments of critics and cinema people" and "presence of movie stars", process factors include "choosing the right social media", "social media reputation", "word of mouth marketing", "forming interest groups in the film", "interaction and communication with users", "creating a social page when making a film", "knowing the audience", "behind-the-scenes footage" and "advertising by fans" and the factors related to message management, including "dissemination of appropriate and correct information", were agreed upon by experts. However, the findings of this study are appropriate and effective for designing a marketing model due to the correct and detailed study of these factors.

Method

In the present study, first the qualitative content analysis method in MaxQDA software was used to present the model and then the quantitative research method (structural equation model) was used to test the model. This research is quantitative-qualitative in terms of applied purpose, quantitative-qualitative in terms of data type (qualitative model extraction

and data testing is quantitatively tested) in terms of cross-sectional data. It is a descriptive survey in terms of field performance and data collection. In exploratory mixed exploration design, the researcher first collects the required information through a qualitative research method. Gathering qualitative information leads to describing countless aspects of the phenomenon. This initial knowledge makes it possible to formulate a hypothesis (s) about the occurrence of the phenomenon under study. After this stage, the researcher can validate the data obtained from the qualitative stage by using quantitative research methods in order to test the developed hypotheses. And modify, replace, or eliminate factors that have had less effect. Thus, the research approach in the first step (qualitative studies) is inductive and in the second step (quantitative studies) is deductive. In the present study, qualitative content analysis method has been used to answer the research question. Therefore, at first, the snowball sampling method was used to select the correct sample and after the first interview, the interviewee was asked to introduce the next person or persons who have good information about the research topic. Then theoretical sampling is used. After the initial analysis, the initial conceptual model of the research was developed, but in some respects the data were insufficient. Therefore, more interviews were conducted to complete aspects of the model that required more data. The researcher empirically concludes that (theoretical saturation) qualitative sampling does not create new insights into new samples. Therefore, sampling has continued until the completion of the conceptual model. To finalize the structures influencing the development of Internet TV, after collecting related articles and extracting the structures, from the theoretical foundations of the articles, for finalization, interviews were conducted with 30 people with the following characteristics, and finally the factors were confirmed in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Experts

Indicator	Demographic information	Frequency	Frequency Percentage
Female	Gender	23	77
		7	33
		30	100
Man	marital status	9	30
		21	70
		30	100
Total	education	0	0
		2	7
		5	17
		23	76
		30	100
Single	work experience	2	7
		21	70
		7	23
Married	Managerial work experience	30	100
		8	27
		17	57
		5	16
		30	100

Table 2
Components Extracted from Qualitative Data

Open coding (concepts / components)	Axial coding (categories)	Variables
Identify the target audience	Evaluate and identify the target audience	Dependent
Pay attention to audience satisfaction		
Understand the needs of the audience		
Commitment to the audience		
Continuous assessment of target audience satisfaction		
Identify gaps and opportunities	Evaluate and identify market opportunities	Dependent
Identify market potential		
Identify capabilities and resources available for film production		
Take advantage of existing opportunities to make and produce best-selling films		
Identify and apply new ideas and ideas	Evaluate and identify the issue	Dependent
Use interesting topics and social and drama updates		

PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

Open coding (concepts / components)	Axial coding (categories)	Variables
Use experienced and knowledgeable screenwriters	Evaluate and select film elements	Dependent
Select an experienced investor and supplier with strong financing potential		
Employ efficient actors		
Employing famous and popular actors		
Employing prominent directors		
Using new filming tools and techniques such as special effects		
Upgrade the video quality of the released video		
Well-made film and final product		
Participate in national and international festivals	Evaluate and select the appropriate advertising strategy	Dependent
Using mass media to introduce and promote the film		
Using the capacities of the national media to introduce and promote the film		
Advertising and introducing movies online through social media apps		
Use actors to promote movies through personal virtual pages		
Create a virtual movie page to interact with the audience, advertise and attract the audience during the filming stage and before the movie is shown		
Using film criticism capacities to promote and attract the audience		
Using virtual pages to share viewers' opinions and promote the film word of mouth		
Identify broadcast channels with a high potential to attract the audience	Evaluate and select the appropriate promotion strategy	Dependent
Use home video playback capacity		
Utilize playback capacity through online platforms		
Select appropriate and quality theaters		
Simultaneous distribution of films in multiple identified theaters with the potential to attract the target audience		
Use up-to-date distribution channels such as websites and home shows	Evaluate and select the appropriate system and distribution channel	Dependent

PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

Open coding (concepts / components)	Axial coding (categories)	Variables
Choose the price that suits the economic situation of the target audience as much as possible	Evaluate and select the appropriate pricing strategy	Dependent
Offer special shopping discounts for age groups interested in cinema such as teenagers and young people, or family shopping		
Scan special sales through popular social media in exchange for movie ads		
Create online sales options on online platforms to reduce ticket prices and increase sales		
Use different tools and methods to maximize movie sales	Apply methods, tools and potentials to increase sales	Dependent
Apply different methods to attract the audience and increase sales		
Utilize existing potentials to increase movie sales		

After content analysis, in the next step, in order to initial modeling and identify the conceptual model of the research, the categories extracted in the Strauss and Corbin paradigm model, they were categorized into six dimensions: "causal conditions", "intervening conditions", "contextual conditions", "interactive dimension", "phenomenon-oriented dimension" and "consequential dimension" (Table 3).

Table 3

Initial Modeling Based on the Paradigm Model of Strauss and Corbin

Dimensions	Category
Axis Phenomenon: The main event to which the flow of actions and reactions goes in order to manage, control, or respond to it.	Strategic video marketing
Causal conditions: conditions that cause the creation and development of the central phenomenon.	Market research - production strategy - diversity strategy - differentiation strategy
Strategic conditions: Purposeful behaviors and actions that occur in response to a central phenomenon and influenced by the interventionist conditions.	Distribution Strategy - Concentration Strategy (Target Audience) - Market Influence Strategy (Promotion)

PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

Dimensions	Category
Background conditions: Specific conditions that affect strategies.	Film Maker - Elements of Film Production - Pricing - Brand Management Strategy
Intervenor Conditions: Structural conditions that facilitate or limit strategies in a particular context.	Film position among the target audience - Film life cycle - Purchasing power of the target audience - Synergy of traditional content with new technology tools for supply and sale
Results and Consequences: Some categories express the results and consequences of adopting strategies.	Upgrading the position of the film in the consumer shopping cart

Also, for collecting quantitative data, a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale was used in a range between completely agree (maximum value) to completely opposite (lowest value). The statistical population of the present research in the quantitative phase includes producers, directors and media experts. In a quantitative phase, the findings of the current study were explained using inferential statistics. In the quantitative part of the research, after collecting and summarizing the data, exploratory factor analysis was used using SPSS software and structural equation software of descriptive tests. To analyze the research data, a total of 186 questionnaires were collected and analyzed using statistical software. Convergent validity method was used to evaluate the fit of measurement models. Accordingly, AVE shows the degree of correlation of the structure with its characteristics. The higher the correlation value, the higher the fit, and a value greater than 0.5 indicates a good fit and acceptable convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated in this study is obtained using SPSS software and a pilot study with the distribution of 30 questionnaires among the sample. The results are presented in Table 4. Since Cronbach's alpha coefficient of all questionnaire instruments is higher than 0.7, so the reliability of the measurement tool is confirmed.

PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

Table 4

Convergence and Cronbach's alpha validity test

Narrative indicators	AVE Coefficient	CR Coefficient	Condition
Evaluate and identify the target audience	0/645	0/712	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and identify market opportunities	0/721	0/785	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and identify the issue	0/563	0/724	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and select film elements	0/650	0/749	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and select the appropriate advertising strategy	0/584	0/754	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and select the appropriate promotion strategy	0/583	0/814	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and select the appropriate system and distribution channel	0/621	0/758	Validation and reliability
Evaluate and select the appropriate pricing strategy	0/762	0/765	Validation and reliability
Apply methods, tools and potentials to increase sales	0/741	0/716	Validation and reliability

As can be seen in Table 4, given that the mean extraction variance (AVE) and Cronbach's alpha of the combination for all research variables are higher than 0.5 and 0.7, respectively, it can be stated that the research tool has an acceptable convergent validity. All items are significant at the confidence level of 0.95. The significance of the items is higher than the significance number of 1.96. Therefore, according to the obtained values, it can be said that the convergence validity of the measuring instrument is confirmed.

Findings

After analyzing and examining the fit of the measurement model, in this section, the fit of the structural model is examined. In fact, the second step in the procedures is to use path analysis, coefficient of determination and model fit index. In path analysis, the relationships between variables

flow in one direction and are considered as distinct paths. The concepts of path analysis are best explained through its main feature, the path diagram, which reveals possible causal links between variables.

Table 5

Indicators of the Conceptual Model of the Research

Fit index	Optimal amount	Model value
χ^2/df	Less than 3	1/68
Fit goodness index	More than 0.90	0/085
Adjusted index of good fit	More than 0.90	0/81
Normalized fit index	More than 0.90	0/96
Bentler Bount		
Adaptive fitness index	More than 0.90	0/94
Incremental fit index	More than 0.90	0/94
Root of the mean of the remaining squares	Less than 0.05	0/071
Square root of the square root error	Less than 0.08	0/058

After examining the fit of measurement models, structural model and general model, in this section, research hypotheses are examined and tested: The significance coefficients of the model paths indicate whether the research hypotheses are significant or not. Also, the standardized coefficients of the paths indicate that what percentage of the changes in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable.

Table 6

Test of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	R2	Significance level	Result
Evaluate and identify the target audience -> increase movie sales	0/67	0/325	8/26	Confirmation
Evaluate and identify market opportunities -> Increase movie sales	0/90	0/437	9/01	Confirmation
Evaluate and identify the issue -> Increase movie sales	0/25	0/82	3/68	Confirmation

PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	R2	Significance level	Result
Evaluate and select movie elements -> Increase movie sales	0/28	0/056	2/68	Confirmation
Evaluate and choose the right advertising strategy -> Increase movie sales	0/76	0/58	10/25	Confirmation
Evaluate and select the appropriate promotion strategy -> Increase movie sales	0/28	0/32	6/58	Confirmation
Evaluate and select the appropriate system and distribution channel -> Increase movie sales	0/17	0/18	3/15	Confirmation
Evaluate and select the appropriate pricing strategy -> Increase movie sales	0/25	0/28	4/02	Confirmation
Apply methods, tools and potentials to increase sales -> Increase movie sales	0/48	0/43	7/43	Confirmation

As it was clear from the results of testing and testing the hypotheses, all hypotheses were confirmed based on path coefficient and significance. This means that the research hypotheses have a direct, positive and significant effect on increasing film sales

Conclusion

In the qualitative part of the research, 34 components or concepts were extracted. These components were categorized into 7 main categories. The categories were: evaluation of the target audience, evaluation and identification of market opportunities, evaluation and identification of the subject, evaluation and selection of film elements, evaluate and select the appropriate advertising strategy, evaluate and select the appropriate system and distribution channel, evaluate and select the appropriate pricing strategy and finally, the application of methods, tools and potentials to increase sales. The categories were categorized into the dimensions of "causal conditions, intervening conditions, contextual conditions,

interaction dimension, phenomenon-centered dimension and consequential dimension" to perform initial modeling and identify the conceptual model of the research. By passing the traditional process models of marketing mix and relying on the model of Strauss and Corbin (1990) paradigm, the conceptual model of the research was extracted from the qualitative method. Which showed that the relationships and interactions of causal elements in a process model had not been considered until now. These 34 identified components with proper management and sufficient knowledge of the existing conditions can be effective in the development of film marketing in Iran. In the next stage and in the quantitative phase, after the formation of the conceptual model, descriptive indices, factor loads and their coefficients, t-test coefficient, and a good fit model of each category were determined. The results of the application of related statistical tests showed the confirmation of the proposed model and the hypotheses. Also, based on the results of the qualitative study, nine hypotheses were proposed. The hypotheses were tested by distributing a researcher-made questionnaire including 34 items and extracting the data and then the confirmatory factor analysis test. The results of confirmatory factor analysis test and dimension measurement model of variables showed that all variables are in a significant state. Therefore, the membership of all evaluated factors in these variables was confirmed. In addition, the results of the reliability test showed the reliability of all variables with a CR coefficient higher than 0.6. The results of the convergent validity test with a value of AVE coefficient of more than 0.5 for all variables, showed good fit and convergent validity of appropriate and acceptable measurement models. Evaluating the overall model fit led to the results indicating the goodness of the conceptual model of the research. The present study uses a mixed method consisting of a qualitative method of content analysis and a quantitative method of structural equation modeling, relying on the general framework and paradigms of the research, he designed and compiled a model of the film marketing process and then evaluated that model. The results of the study showed that the


adoption of appropriate strategies in the areas of audience identification, market opportunities, subject matter, selection of film elements, advertising, promotion, distribution, pricing strategies and the application of methods, tools and potentials have a positive and significant effect on increasing film sales. And therefore should be considered in film marketing models. Therefore, each of the components of this model and the hypotheses raised can be considered as practical suggestions. And future researchers are advised to study the possibility of generalization and application of this model in the field of film industry marketing. It is also recommended that each of these components be considered separately and their effect on increasing film sales. One of the main limitations of the present study is the lack of time for surveying and completing the questionnaire by more experts and stakeholders. Also, in a small stage, a classification-based questionnaire was used, which may have deprived individuals of the possibility of expressing an accurate answer. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the research affects the generalizability of the results.

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PRESENTING A MODEL OF FILM MARKETING PROCESS IN IRAN

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