



MASTER'S THESIS



An Investigation on Influencing Factors on Tourists Shopping Attitude of Iranian Handmade Carpet in Isfahan.

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Abstract

Tourists are eager to take something home as souvenirs from the trip and therefore, they decide to go shopping. One of the most common types of souvenirs is handicrafts and arts. The existence of various artistic attractions and handicrafts along historic monuments in Iran is a factor to attract tourists to Iran. Iranian handicrafts occupy the first and foremost level of comparison to those of the other countries in the world from the viewpoint of diversity of production involving as many as 150 branches. The researcher's intention of this study was to recognize the factors affecting the attitude of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan. Having reviewed the related literatures and the researches done in home and abroad, the factors which could affect the attitude of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets were recognized and categorized. These factors are: advertisements by salesmen, carpet quality, price, and carpet beauty.

In the present research, the sample size was determined by conducting a primary study and defining the variance of primary sample and the intended number of samples was selected carefully and randomly from the population. Then the validity and reliability of the questionnaire was determined. The used questionnaire in this research consisted of 5 common, and 28 specialized questions which were supporting the hypotheses of the research. Data was analyzed using the frequency percent techniques, and in the chapter related to the deductive statistics, one-sample t test was used to analyze and approve/disapprove the questions supporting the research hypotheses.

Key words: tourist, attitude, handicraft, carpet

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the developing industries as well as the most revenue in the world. For many regions of the world, tourism serves as a factor of economic growth and in some other regions, the development of this industry has caused in the prosperity of other economic sectors of those regions. Therefore, enforcing and encouraging the relationship between tourism sector and other economic sectors intensifies this effect upon the economy. At the beginning of the third millennium A. D., the annual trade of tourism industry in the world has gone beyond five billion dollars. Tourists are eager to take something home as souvenirs from the trip and therefore, they decide to go shopping. One of the most common types of souvenirs is handicrafts and arts. The existence of various artistic attractions and handicrafts along historic monuments in Iran is a factor to attract tourists to Iran. Iranian handicrafts occupy the first and foremost level of comparison to those of the other countries in the world from the viewpoint of diversity of production involving as many as 150 branches. This diversity tells a lot about the history and the process of development, methods of production, designs, motifs and coloring.

Iranian traditional floor coverings such as mat, felt, kilim, Sumacs, zilu, gabbe and carpet and also rug table have maintained a unique position in terms of their economical, social and cultural characteristics compared to the other crafts.

Iranian people are very famous because of their highly developed artistic craftsmanship that can be seen in their carpets, a type of thick rug or mat comprising fibers and is usually woven in cotton and/or wool thread in various colors, and in accordance with the pre-designed patterns.

Since the Iranian producer's taste is different from the tourists', shopping Iranian handmade carpets, it seems to be important to know their attitudes. Thus, we will analyze in this study the effect of various factors such as price, quality, advertisement and beauty of Iranian handmade carpet. Moreover, in this chapter we will discuss description and expression of studied issue, literature review, objectives of this study, research questions, hypotheses, summary of methodology and outline of thesis.

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1.2. Description and expression of studied issue

Nowadays, any authenticity of artistic and cultural qualities is considerable and defensible when it has economical position and justification, and perhaps fortunately one of the various types of artistic phenomena is carpet which has intensive effect upon the economy of our country, simultaneously by its traditional and native traits (Soor-e-Esrafil, 1993).

Because of the historical and decorative aspects and consistency of consumption, Iranian carpets and rugs has a vital role in handicrafts.

One of handicrafts is handmade carpet which has led many individuals of Iran population, especially villagers, have jobs. More than ten million people involve in selling carpets in the internal and external markets and nearly one third of active manpower of country are working in carpet weaving.

Regarding the lack of opportunities to work and exceeding the manpower in the rural societies resulted from population increase and the lack of suitable activities which can absorb extra manpower, diversifying the industry of handmade carpet and related sectors can be profitable to attract inactive manpower in rural areas. Also the share of this product exports, after oil export, is in the first rank among non-oil exports and brings much foreign exchanges for our country, it can be said that carpet has a specific position in national economy in terms of employment, surplus value and exports. Regarding to the fact that oil resources are exhaustible, the role of carpet industry is obvious in our country.

The role of purchasing goods as one of tourists' activities in retail market is increasing. Although the purchase is not the first motivation of traveling but it is one of important factors in a tourist's experiments. One third of a tourist's expenses in travel is devoted to purchase (Hu & Yo, 2007). The tourist's purchase activity in less-developed countries, due to the low price of products, has an important role in attracting tourists (Ibid).

Textile handicrafts and similar goods such as carpets and woven materials are of important items for tourists to purchase.

Effective factors in encouraging tourists to purchase textile handicrafts in touristy destinations are:

1. Suitable and low price in expenses of purchasing.

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2. Higher quality of handicrafts in place of purchasing.
3. Beauty of design and color.
4. Trust in the authenticity of the product.
5. Trust in the advertisements by merchants of handicrafts (Littrell, 1994).

According to the authenticity and truth in Iranian carpets, great deals of tourists are interested in purchasing Iranian handmade carpets during their travel to Iran.

In this study, we try to investigate the effective factors, such as price, quality, beauty, and advertisements, on the attitude of tourists who purchase the handmade carpets.

Independent variables, considered in this study, are as follows: Advertisements by sellers, quality, price, and beauty of Iranian carpets.

The dependent variable is the attitude of the tourist who purchases the handmade Iranian carpet.

1.3. Literature review

Iranians' knowledge about weaving techniques dates back to 5000 B.C. when Iranians wove simple clothes to meet their first needs using wool threads (The organization of handicrafts of Iran, 1978).

The First Iranian Carpet- Pazirik- was woven in the first millennium A. D. it was found sound frozen among the icebergs in Russia after more than two thousands years because of durability of its silk (Azarpaad and Rezavi, 1982). The "Baharestan" Carpet, which was woven in silk, gold and silver during the epoch of "Khosrow parviz" the King of "Sasanians", is one of the other valuable Iranian carpets. Foundation of "Harat" School in 15th century opened a new chapter in the history of Iranian carpet industry and reached its peak during the "Safavid" epoch (16th and 17th centuries).

During this period, Iranian carpet found its world wide authenticity in terms of design and motif, color and dyeing techniques, and quality of weaving. "Ardebil", "Shekarfaah" and "Chelsea" carpets are of masterpieces of this period (Namjoo and Khansari, 2002). In recent centuries, Iranian carpet has been very briefly the subject of foreign magazines. But the recognition of Iranian carpet began from 15th century (Edwards, 1975).

In 1954, one hundred thousand peoples were working in the carpet weaving industry and twenty five percents of total revenue from non-oil exports was obtained from this

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industry in 1955 (The organization of handicrafts of Iran, 1975). Before 1964, the State didn't pay any attention to other types of handicrafts except the carpet industry, and by establishing the organization of handicrafts in this year it began to market and to advertise for selling carpets inside and outside the country (The handicrafts organization of Iran, 1978).

Before the Islamic Revolution, ninety percents of Iranian carpets were exported to Europe and Middle East. In Europe, Germany and Switzerland were the main customers of Iranian carpets. Also, U. S. markets were of the most important ones for Iranian carpets around the world and as a result, the taste of Americans about Iranian carpet was an important factor in evolution and reformation of design, motif and color of handmade carpets so that some of Kerman designs and motifs were woven less than before, because of the tendency to simple and popular patterns in the U.S (the organization of handicrafts of Iran, 1975).

In the first years of Islamic Revolution, inflation and issues resulted from the revolution, the invasion of home investments to purchase carpet as worthy products, custom issues related to exports, lack of attention to marketing, and production of poor quality carpet were some of the problems Iranian carpet industry encountered (The committee for village industries, 1983).

The year 1984 was the peak for Iranian carpet exports after the Islamic revolution, and it amounted to thirty one percent of non-oil exports and in the following years this issue had a descending trend so that in the years between 1999 to 2004 Iranian share of carpet exports encountered with reduction of 13.1%, 14.7%, 18.2%, 11.4%, and 12.4%, respectively.

Today ten million persons are working in carpet industry directly or indirectly and sellers comprise ten percents of carpet activists (The development challenges, 2007).

The countries with high unemployment rates in the past such as Pakistan, India, and China have faced to the carpet industry. The existence of cheap manpower, lack of growth in the rate of inflation, governmental support for the carpet industry, and considering the taste of customers carefully have led these countries to outrun Iran in the world wide market and specially Turkey by joining the European Union (League) in the year 1955 exempted from paying imports tax and turned into a competitor for Iran (Shajari, Gharami, 2002).

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In this field various researches have been done inside and outside the country that are as follows:

Hu and Yo (2007) have said that the tourists' criterion to select handicrafts is multi-dimensional with a wide range including cultural relationship, transfer facilities, method of using and maintaining handicrafts, enjoyment resulted from purchase, mastery and proficiency in handicrafts production.

Littrell (1990) says in an essay that the reasons for tourist's interest to purchase textile handicrafts are the experience from the purchase comprising the contact with seller and artist, establishing the cultural and historical relationship, suitable price, the higher quality of products.

Littrell et al, (1993) believe the authenticity of raw materials, color, proficiency in production handicrafts, products quality, beauty of color and design, the ways the handicrafts are being used, the history of producing country, tourists' experience from the purchase, the validity of advertisements by the producing country make the handicrafts valid to the tourist.

Many famous Iranistics such as professor Poop and Grishman consider handicrafts as the noble Iranian art and in spite of fluctuations Iranian handicrafts have encountered with in some periods, but this industry has attracted the world peoples' attention by its economic, social, and cultural aspects and most of the experts believe Iran as one of three most important poles of handicrafts in Asia and in terms of diversity it may be on top of the rest counties (Nayini, 2000).

Alvani and shahrokh (1994) believe that the development of handicrafts can attract more tourists and activate handicrafts in suburb areas. They believe that tourists come to Iran to buy carpets as they go to India to buy ivory. They consider the reputation of Iranian carpet as a factor leading tourists to buy them.

The Iranian organization for handicrafts (1975) knows handicrafts as a tool to represent the nations' civilization and considers establishing the handicrafts exhibitions as a factor for marketing and attracting tourists and has concluded that tourism industry and rural handicrafts interact and can cause to increase the income of developing countries per capita.

Azizi (2003) has concluded in his essay that among the traits of Iranian handmade carpet market are diversity, the number of designs, motif and the color of them. Some

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problems for customers shopping Iranian carpets are inability to order their favorites, lack of bar-code and I.D. for carpets, and not paying attention to the customers' interests.

Previous researches didn't pay much attention to the effective factors on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian carpets in Isfahan. We tried to investigate this subject in this research.

1.4. Objectives

1.4.1. Main objectives

Determine the most influential factors and attitudes of tourists shopping for Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.

1.4.2. Other objectives

1. Rating the effect of advertisements by merchants selling Iranian handmade carpet on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
2. Rating the effect of Iranian handmade carpets' quality on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
3. Rating the effect of Iranian handmade carpets' beauty on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
4. Rating the effect of price on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.

Carpet industry is the one which has resisted thousands of years in this territory and millions of Iranians are contributed to its internal production and its exporting affairs and after oil industry, and it is among the resources supplying the foreign exchange for the country and all of its production devices and raw materials are provided and supplied from the inside resources of the country, and it is also an industry which is an interesting occupation for millions of villagers and gifted Iranian nomadic tribes in their localities and is one of the attractions for tourists and it is woven with the history, art, Knowledge and taste of Iranian tribes and is somehow indicator of them, therefore no industry can compete with it. As a result, it is reasonable to do the best in order to develop this industry and to recognize its issues and problems scientifically and

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practically and to make it grow healthy and naturally among the similar sectors and even among its competitors, while the problems and aspects of this industry are not obvious and recognized, it won't be possible to solve them. Considering the willingness foreigners show towards this product, every activity to improve the carpet industry and to develop its market will be welcomed and essential and useful from all aspects.

No study will be complete about the carpet, unless this subject is considered geographically and then the coordinates of Iran are added to it.

Fewer branches of production sectors in the world have occupied such extended geographical area either production or consumption aspects. From geographical consumption aspect, it can be said that carpet is of old and new markets' favorites.

It is to notice that the more the cultural interests increase and the more the people's life levels ascends, the more they pay attention to carpet. So it will be useful to accomplish studies about the consumers' attitudes towards this product.

Previous researches and studies about handicrafts are as Follows:

A- Conceptual and descriptive studies as thesis, journals and published books which focus on the cultural, historical and artistic aspects of carpet.

B- Practical and conceptual studies which emphasize the fundamental methods and the economic techniques of the carpet industry and it can be said that the number of such studies and books are low and regarding to the importance and capabilities of the carpet industry more studies are needed in terms of offer and demand.

The most important aspect of carpet is its self-sufficiency. Carpet is a timeless art and perhaps it is impossible to consider carpet as an artistic pure quality, but undoubtedly there are such traits in this product that distinguish it from a mere commercial product. Carpet affects upon the spirit, mind and taste of customer as artworks.

To be mono-production is one of the problems in economy of developing and third world countries, especially dependence to raw materials resulting in unpleasant consequences on political, social and even cultural structure of these countries and because the major part of foreign incomes and revenues of these countries are based on the export of one or some raw materials, these countries have a weak structure against the foreign pressures in long-term and any unusual fluctuation in the price of these products, which are their only resources for revenues, have a great influence upon their economy. Getting rid of mono-production economy through developing non-oil exports

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is among the strategies considered by politicians and when the price of oil descends in world markets, the most important non-oil product of Iran ,that is carpet, will show its value more and more and the relationship between this industry and tourism increases the importance of researches. Therefore, the study of effective factors on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian carpets is of special importance.

1.5. Research questions

1.5.1. Main question

What are main factors that influence attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan?

1.5.2. Other questions

1. Do the advertisements by merchants of Iranian handmade carpets influence the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan?
2. Does the quality of Iranian handmade carpets affect the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan?
3. Does the price of Iranian carpets affect the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan?
4. Does the beauty of Iranian carpet influence tourists shopping the attitudes of Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan?

1.6. Hypotheses

1. Dose Advertisements by merchants of Iranian handmade carpets influence the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
2. Dose Quality of Iranian handmade carpets affects the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
3. Dose Price of Iranian handmade carpets is significant on the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.
4. Dose Beauty of Iranian handmade carpets influence the attitudes of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpets in Isfahan.

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1.7. Methodology

1.7.1. Research purpose (descriptive, experimental, content analysis, historical, etc.)

The objective of descriptive study is to identify and characterize market characteristics or functions (Malhotra, 1996). If the research is concerned with finding out who, what, where, or how much, then the study is descriptive (Cooper and schindler, 2003).

In order to gather information of literature review part of this thesis we use the secondary data such as articles, books, reports govt. publication.

Quantitative research approach transform the information to numbers and amounts that later gets analyzed statistically .Quantitative studies tend to be more structured and formalized (Holme ans Solvange, 1997).

In this thesis, different factors which have been emerged from literature review are tested in an empirical way in order to see that how much they have been effective in the adoption process. Since all the results are presented in numbers and statistical analyses have been done, quantitative approach is seen as being appropriate for this study.

Quantitative research tends to be associated with the numbers as the unite of analysis (Denscombe, 2005).

This research is a kind of analytical research because all the results are presented in numbers and statistical analyses have been done in this research in order to answer research questions.

Analysis means the separation of something into its component parts. To do this, of course, the researcher first needs to identify what those parts might be, and links with a further meaning of analysis, which is to trace things back to their underlying sources. Analysis , then, involves probing beneath the surface appearance of something to discover the component elements which have come together to produce it. By tracing things back in this fashion, the researcher aims to expose some general principals that can be used to explain the nature of the thing being studied and can be applied elsewhere to other situation (Denscombe, 2005).

Because this thesis aims to find out the factors that influence on tourists shopping attitude of Iranian handmade carpet in Isfahan the strategy, the strategy, which suits for study, is a survey, survey is a technique in which information is collected form a sample of people through a questionnaire (Zikmund, 2000). Besides the research question of

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this study is in form of what and according to Yin 1994, the relevant research study is a survey.

Regarding the objective of this study, that is, investigation the factors influencing the attitude of tourists shopping Iranian handmade carpet in Isfahan, this research is applied.

Since this study uses secondary data such as books and articles for my literature review, as well as field methods such as questionnaire and its goal is to recognize the properties, references, and behaviors of different individuals of the society by referring to them. It can be said that the present study is descriptive-survey in terms of essence and the method.

1.7.2. Statistical universe

Statistical universe consist of tourists referring to the certified carpet shops in Isfahan.

1.7.3. Method of sampling

There are two major types of sampling design: probability and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, the elements in the population have some known chance or probability of being selected as sample subjects. In non-probability sampling, the elements do not have a known or predetermined chance of being selected as subject. Simple random sampling is a sampling design which all elements in the population are considered and each element has an equal chance of being chosen as the subject. The advantage of this sampling design is high generalizability of findings. The disadvantage of this method is that not as efficient as stratified sampling.

The method of sampling in this study is simple random sampling, that is, the tourists who referred to the carpet shops.

1.7.4. Volume of sample and calculation method

To determine the volume of sample, we use the following formula:

$$n = \frac{Z_{\alpha/2}^2 s^2}{d^2}$$