

# Identifying the determinants of green product branding, a model for Iran's food industry

Safoora Meysamiazad<sup>1</sup> , Ali Hijiha<sup>2</sup> , Mohammad Ali Abdolvand<sup>3</sup> , Bahram Kheiri<sup>4</sup> 

1- PhD Student, Department of Business Management, UAE Branch, Islamic Azad University, Dubai, UAE

2- Department of Industrial Management, North Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

3- Business Management Department, Research Science Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

4- Department of Business Management, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

## Receive:

21 April 2023

## Revise:

19 July 2023

## Accept:

22 September 2023


## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify the determining factors of green product branding, a model for Iran's food industry. The research method is applicable in terms of purpose, and mixed (qualitative-quantitative) in terms of implementation method, and survey-exploratory in terms of data collection method. The statistical population of the research in the qualitative part includes 15 managers of green brand food companies with master's and PhD educations in the field of management, agriculture and entrepreneurship, as well as professors of business management and environment at the university, who were selected for an interview by means of judgmental sampling. The statistical population in the quantitative part is the consumers of green products in the food industry; 384 people were selected using available sampling and answered the questions of the questionnaire. Interviews and questionnaires made by the researcher and taken from the qualitative section were used to collect information. In the qualitative section, the data obtained from the interviews were coded and analyzed in three main stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the quantitative section, SPSS software was used for analysis and PLS was used for structural equations. The results in the qualitative section showed that 214 open codes, 85 concepts and 26 subcategories were identified and extracted from the conducted interviews. The results in the quantitative part showed that the model has a suitable fit and can be used for branding green products in the country's food industry.

## Keywords:

brand, green marketing, branding of green products, agricultural development, marketing strategies

**Please cite this article as (APA):** Meysamiazad, S., Hijiha, A., Abdolvand, M. A., & Kheiri, B. (2024). Identifying the determinants of green product branding, a model for Iran's food industry. *Journal of value creating in Business Management*, 3(4), 89-108.

 <https://doi.org/10.22034/jvcbm.2023.408366.1149>



**Publisher:** Iranian Business Management Association

**Creative Commons:** CC BY 4.0



**Corresponding Author:** Ali Hijiha

**Email:** a\_hajiha@iau-tnb.ac.ir

## **Extended Abstract**

### **Introduction**

Today, in response to the increasing public interest in sustainable development, many companies have introduced green products. The characteristics of production and consumption of green products are in accordance with the concepts of economy, where waste reduction and environmental protection are the most important (Govindan & Hasanagic, 2018). In the economy, green products are increasingly popular with consumers and widely marketed. Selling green products creates domestic competition with non-green products. Green products usually have a higher quality level than non-green products. Due to the sustainable production method, green products have a higher production cost than non-green products (Shen et al, 2019). As a result, it is widely observed that green products are more expensive than non-green products (Basiri & Heydari, 2017). Consumers are also looking for a brand that has a strong planning strategy and methodology to achieve environmental sustainability in accordance with current and future regulatory guidelines and policies. Therefore, most business units have tried to incorporate sustainability into process and product or service design (Upadhyay & Kumar, 2020). Branding can be critical to a company's long-term success, especially for companies operating in markets with many clusters (many buyers and sellers) and few differentiated products. On the other hand, in recent years, climate changes along with increasing environmental awareness have changed consumers' purchasing decisions towards green and environmentally friendly products (Aivazidou et al, 2017). Green marketing is emerging as a popular advertising strategy due to increasing environmental concerns and awareness. In addition, in order to achieve a better understanding of the environmental movement of the target society, it is an important issue to test the attitude of the consumers of that country towards environmental issues and, as a result, their behavior (Mohammadi et al, 2022).

Based on this, the current research is looking for an answer to this question: What are the determining factors of branding green products, a model for Iran's food industry?

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **brand**

A brand is not only a symbol that distinguishes a product from others, but also includes all the features that come to mind when a buyer thinks of that brand. These characteristics are the objective, abstract, psychological and social characteristics of that product (Xiangbo et al, 2021). Green brands, green labels and characteristics of green environmental products create positive feelings in certain groups and consumers who know that a product is green and when it is better to use it. Natural brands and proper labeling are successful from a marketing point of view because of the positive overall image they create, and consumers tend to buy such products and therefore stick with them (Del Afruz et al, 2017).

#### **Green marketing**

The concept of green marketing is a business process that takes into account consumers' concerns about protecting the natural environment. Previously primarily based on environmental status, green marketing is becoming more sustainable in marketing efforts, with a primary focus on environmental and socio-economic status. However, the green market is defined as part of the market segments related to green consumption (Yoo et al, 2019).

Sandoughi et al, (2022) studied the modeling process of organic agricultural products market development in Iran with an interpretative structural approach. Based on the obtained results, the process model of organic agricultural products market development starts from the

analysis of the current situation, setting goals and prospects, and ends with the stage of increasing consumption and capacity building in the market. This model can be used as a guide by policy makers and all organic field activists in various research, planning and implementation sectors.

Sarkar et al, (2022) investigated environmental and economic sustainability through innovative green products with renewable production. The findings showed that highly innovative green products perform better than low innovative products when uncertainty in demand and supply is high. Furthermore, new green products should be introduced only when the expected benefits of the new products outweigh the losses of the existing products. New policy innovation with remanufacturing is cost-effective compared to traditional innovation policy.

### Research methodology

According to its purpose, the research method is applicable; in terms of execution method, it is mixed (qualitative-quantitative); and in terms of data collection method, it is survey-exploratory. The statistical population of this research in the qualitative part is the managers of green brand food companies with master's and doctorate educations in the field of management, agriculture and entrepreneurship, as well as university professors of business management and environment. The statistical population in the quantitative section is the consumers of green products in this industry, which were considered as the sample size of 384 people using Cochran's formula and available sampling method. Collecting information in the qualitative part by the interview; and in the quantitative part of the research using the concepts obtained in the qualitative part, a questionnaire of 85 questions was used.

### Research findings

In the qualitative section, the data obtained from the interviews were coded and analyzed in three main stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In the quantitative section, SPSS software was used for analysis and PLS was used for structural equations. The results in the qualitative section showed that 214 open codes, 85 concepts and 26 subcategories were identified and extracted from the conducted interviews. The results in the quantitative part showed that the model has a suitable fit and can be used for branding green products in the country's food industry.

### Conclusion

The current research has been carried out with the aim of identifying the determining factors of green product branding, a model for Iran's food industry. The results of the present study are in agreement with the results of Sandoughi et al, (2022), Mohammadi et al, (2022), Sarkar et al, (2022), Jegatheesan et al, (2021), Mohammadi Far & Soleimani (2021), Pourjamshidi et al, (2020), Marvi et al, (2021), Pourjamshidi et al, (2021), and Tandon et al, (2016). Mohammadi Far & Soleimani (2021) investigated the design of a multi-level framework for the successful implementation of green marketing in food manufacturing companies. The findings of the model indicate that several factors influence the implementation of green marketing in a multidimensional and intertwined manner. These factors can be categorized in four levels. The fourth level factors form the most basic layer and include the penetration of belief in green marketing in the philosophy and vision of the company; the third level includes the support of senior managers and changes in the organization's internal procedures; the second level includes optimizing the organizational structure, improving the organizational culture, improving employees and managing the change process; and the first level, which was placed in the highest and most operational layer of the interpretive structural

model hierarchy, includes changes in the marketing mix, understanding and implementing green marketing audits, and developing technology infrastructure of information.

According to the results obtained from the research, it is suggested:

- Advertising programs should be developed to familiarize the general public with green products, features and benefits on the platform of social networks.
- Human resource development programs and attention to the training of people in this field should be developed.
- Selection of food industry experts and experts in the field of green products so that their experiences in the field of green products production can be used.
- To improve the quality and safety of programs related to the production of green products and achieving health and management standards.