

Explaining the Vital Role of Intelligent Geomarketing in Export Development

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Abstract

The present study aims to explain the vital role of smart geomarketing in export development. This study has a mixed approach (qualitative-quantitative) and an applicable research method. In the qualitative part, the statistical population included government experts, major exporters of kiwi products, and also academic experts in Gilan province (Iran), of whom 15 people were considered as a sample after data saturation. The sampling method was purposive. The data were analysed using the Grounded theory methodology. Then, the research strategy in the quantitative part was conducted as a survey. The statistical population included 316 individuals and legal entities active in kiwi exports, of which 173 people were selected as a sample through the Cochran formula in a limited population using non-probability sampling. The data collection tool was a questionnaire. The results of structural equation modelling using Smart PLS software showed that management capabilities, government support policies, export development marketing, environmental factors, and kiwi cultivation characteristics have a significant effect on smart geomarketing. Smart geomarketing has a significant effect on the development of marketing capabilities, training and persuasion of officials for export development, and the development of spatial data infrastructure. The development of marketing capabilities, the development of spatial data infrastructure, and the training and persuasion of officials for export development have a significant effect on increasing share in global markets, increasing global reputation, developing brands in foreign markets, and increasing foreign exchange. Of course, training and persuasion of officials do not have a significant effect on increasing global reputation.

Keywords:

Export development,
spatial data,
smart geomarketing,
kiwi exports

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Marketing plays a key role in export development. With the help of marketing, companies can identify their target market, understand the needs of foreign customers, and market their products or services in a way that is well-received in the target markets (Chishty & Sayari, 2024). Among them, agricultural products, especially horticultural products and fruits, are of great importance (Publication, 2024). Iran has many agricultural products, of which kiwi is an important export product mainly grown in the northern regions of the country, especially in Gilan province, but the cities of Rudsar, Talesh, and Astara are the production hubs of this product. However, despite high production, Iran's share in the global kiwi fruit markets is very low and less than 0.7 (Khalqi Eshkalek et al., 2021). In this regard, some studies have shown that the export sector of this product has not been able to develop well due to the lack of awareness of exporters about the locational indicators of consumers, including purchasing patterns, geographical location of purchases, service area and region, addresses and delivery locations, consumption levels, expectations, attitudes, etc. Today, with the growth and development of the market, the importance of locational indicators has increased (Oliveira & Spinola, 2020). Geomarketing allows marketers to better understand the needs and preferences of customers by focusing on specific regions and markets. By analysing geographic information, marketers can identify the best places to locate branches or stores, and as a result, access to customers will be easier and more effective (Alaoui & Abdelali Fateh, 2024). One of these intelligent methods is called Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), whose advantage over the previous method is that data is generated and collected only once, as a result of which parallelism is eliminated from the spatial data generation process. Additional costs are not spent on reproducing existing data (Bansal & Singh, 2024). Therefore, the exporting company must acquire the necessary and complete knowledge of the international marketing environment in order to increase its chances of success (Fathi Bajestani et al., 2025). This knowledge increases the company's ability to market and sell products and services effectively and efficiently according to the location of consumers. In fact, this type of knowledge includes familiarity with customer needs and local market characteristics, familiarity with business conditions, and the knowledge and skills required to promote offerings in export markets (Bartoli et al., 2021). Several studies have been conducted in this field. Of course, few studies were found that examined smart geomarketing in the export of kiwi products. Because most recent studies had conducted location marketing and geomarketing to examine the weekly market (Nath et al., 2024), hotels (Gu et al., 2024), and food products (Bartoli et al., 2021). Therefore, given this research gap and considering that currently, due to the high performance of the kiwi product and the acceptance of the gardeners of Gilan province, there are good capabilities in the field of exporting this product; but if the necessary measures are not taken to realize and develop the export of this product with respect to location marketing, the possibility of losing this golden opportunity is tangible. Therefore, it must be accepted that due to the need to develop the export of non-oil products and, in particular, the export of kiwi produced in Gilan province, which global markets have welcomed, and also due to the lack of comprehensive research related to the location marketing of this product, the present study was conducted with the aim of explaining the vital role of smart geomarketing in the development of exports.

Research Methodology

This study has a mixed approach and applicable research method. The statistical population included government experts, major exporters of kiwi products, and also academic experts in Gilan province, 15 of whom were considered as a sample after theoretical saturation. The sampling method was purposive. In total, about 450 minutes of interviews were conducted over a period of more than 3 months through coordination with them. The average interview with each person was about 30 minutes. The data were analysed manually using the data-driven method and three-stage coding (open, axial, and selective). Then, the research strategy in the quantitative part was conducted as a survey. The statistical population included 316 individuals and legal entities active in kiwi exports, of whom 173 were selected as a sample through the Cochran formula in a limited population using a non-probability sampling method. The data collection tool was a questionnaire. The data were tested through structural equation modelling using Smart PLS software.

Research findings

In the qualitative part, the results showed that the central phenomenon is geomarketing. Causal factors include management capabilities, government support policies, and export development marketing. Contextual factors include environmental factors and kiwi cultivation characteristics. Strategic conditions include developing marketing capabilities, training and persuading officials to develop exports, and developing SDI infrastructure. Intervening conditions include government weakness. Outcomes include

increasing share in global markets, increasing global reputation, developing brands in foreign markets, and increasing foreign exchange. In the quantitative part, it showed that management capabilities, government support policies, export development marketing, environmental factors, and kiwi cultivation characteristics have a significant effect on smart geomarketing, and smart geomarketing has a significant effect on developing marketing capabilities, training and persuading officials to develop exports, and developing spatial data infrastructure. Developing marketing capabilities, developing spatial data infrastructures, and training and encouraging officials to develop exports have a significant impact on increasing share in global markets, increasing global reputation, developing brands in foreign markets, and increasing foreign exchange. Of course, training and encouraging officials do not have a significant impact on increasing global reputation. The weakness of the government only interferes with some relationships.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of explaining the vital role of smart geomarketing in export development. The results of this study are in line with the results of Turan and Abdiu (2024); Wanzala, Marwa, and Luanga (2024); Zhou et al. (2024); Zahir and Lu (2024); Kho, Nagya and Nam (2023); Ipek, Biçakçioğlu-Pınarçcı and Kobra Hizarci (2023); Tayen-Höke et al. (2022); Budlage and Ketter (2022); Pük et al. (2022); Zoğur and Qülu (2022); Keskin et al. (2021); and Alegre Vidal et al. (2022). According to the results obtained, the following suggestions are made: It is suggested to optimise production processes. For optimisation, it is recommended to analyse the processes in detail, because by carefully examining all stages of production, it is possible to identify points where waste, time and energy are. It is also better to design and implement lean production systems. Lean production systems, such as the Toyota system, focus on eliminating waste and resource wastage in all stages of production. By implementing these systems, efficiency and productivity can be significantly increased. To deliver goods and services to customers without using marketing intermediaries, it is better to use various distribution channels using up-to-date technologies such as GPS, SDI, big data analysis, machine learning and artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, augmented reality, virtual reality, etc., to improve interaction with the consumer. To reduce supply chain challenges, it is recommended to carefully review the personality traits model of distributors before concluding a contract.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no financial or non-financial, personal, professional, or institutional conflicts of interest relevant to this work.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

AI Use Statement

The authors declare that no generative artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, writing, or editing of this manuscript.

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Ethics Approval

All procedures performed in this study were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the responsible institutional and national research committee.