Consumer attitudes toward new pasta products in Iran market: A qualitative and quantitative study

Shahrzad Aghaei[a] and Ali Bonyadi Naeini[a*]

[a]Department of Progress Engineering, Iran University of Science & Technology (IUST), Narmak, Tehran, Iran

CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	Developed food production lines recently have built factories for novel products to find a position in the market faster, although innovation is still expensive and risky. This study focuses on contributors who persuade consumers to purchase new pasta products in Tehran, and tries to determine the correlation among the criteria. This is conducted from the market experts' view points along with a blend of grounded theory and DEMATEL. The results indicate that quality, price, packaging, promotion, phantasm and place parameters enhance new pasta pictures on customers' buying decision making. According to experts, quality and price are the most influential factors and promotion and phantasm are completely ineffective. In addition, cultural parameters, especially local recipes as well as customers' palate are important in this process.

1. Introduction

Basically, pasta is considered as a beneficial food product which consists of the semolina mixture of the hard durum wheat as well as some enriching substance. Then they are formed and finally dried. According to International Pasta Organization (IPO) (2013), the amount of world's pasta manufacture moved up from 12.8 million tons in 2010 to almost 13.5 million tons in 2013. To be more precise, Italy came first regarding world pasta production by three million and 326 thousand ton along with 24.6% share rate and 26 Kg per capita use. Other countries such as USA, Brazil and Russia were ranked after Italy in this regard. Italy, USA and Turkey concentrate on exporting pasta, whereas the other countries prefer to meet their domestic needs. In 2013, Iran manufactured 560,000 tons of pasta (International Pasta Organization, 2013). In fact, this is taken into account as a multifactor phenomenon. Some come as follows: affordability convenience nutritional values compared to other alternatives like rice. Furthermore, a variety of different samples in supermarkets and extensive commercials on media along with people's economic problems have made this product popular in Iran's market. Dried pasta is the best-selling product in this market. Interestingly, every Iranian person consumes about 8.5 Kg of dried pasta annually, which is predicted to increase in the future (International Pasta Organization, 2013).

This trend has caused pasta producers to add new health and wellness products in the field of dried pasta by developing their activities in this respect. Fortified pasta such as antioxidant (carotenoid), fiber, prebiotic can be some innovations in this domain. Furthermore, certain innovative pasta shaped pasta like 'bird's nest' shaped takes in more sauce and cooked in shorter time compared to its traditional counterpart. Some manufacturers or importing businessmen released chilled/fresh or canned/preserved pasta into the market for the first time. All of them have not been welcome by Iranian consumers, though. Innovation is analyzed from five aspects: novelty-change, variety, processing-technology, origin-ethnicity and convenience (Guerrero et al., 2009). As a matter of fact, the reasons which motivate Iranian consumers to choose and accept the products are very essential for producers. Therefore, marketers cannot be successful, unless they search for market requirements and behavioral patterns of consumers regarding innovative ideas. Sometimes, failure rates over 60% are observed in the food sector (Grunert & Valli, 2001; Costa & Jongen, 2006). Considering pervious studies on the packaged goods market, an optional period of time for a new product to be accepted ranges between six to twelve months (Nielsen, 2011). How to attract consumers' attention has always been a matter of importance for producers. However diverse and novel products do not impress all consumers alike.

Gielens and Steenkamp (2007) found a U-shaped correlation between novelty and consumer acceptance of new packaged goods. Additionally, the process of acceptance of new products is prone to consumer traits. In fact, consumers are taken into consideration as the second factor for innovation after rivals. A study of standard scale about European consumers' acceptance concerning beef processing technologies revealed that the subjects were not so eager to admit innovations. On the other hand, they might be cautious on selecting food innovations (De Barcellos et al., 2010). According to Bartels and Reinders (2010) demographic variables, social identification and social representation of new foods in the field of consumption of organic food have positive effects in three countries in West. There is another study, which investigates the innovation of traditional foods, which indicated that consumers in rural areas were more conservative than urban consumers in using innovation in traditional food products (Guerrero et al., 2009). Due to such complexity in different countries market experts should identify the local consumers' taste and food pattern. Iranian consumers, according to their food choice and decisions in purchase, set a wide range of criteria for themselves like: sensory attributes (appearance, texture, flavor, smell and color), price, health considerations, convenience, health slogans, packaging and brand (Aghapour, 2007; Hosseyini & Erfanyan, 2009; Mahdavi Mazdeh et al., 2013; Khodayari, 2013). Here we plan to consider more criteria, which affect consumer adoption of new pasta products.

In this study, we will discuss Iranian consumers' tendency in using new pasta products along with features of these products, which encouraged consumers in using or not using of them. This was performed by considering the amount of dried pasta consumption, preferences for brand, package size and pasta type. This study included 6 focus groups. Then qualitative and quantitative method, grounded theory and DEMATL was used for data analyzing in order to categorize the concluded data from focus group and understand any relationship between the criteria. The applicable results from this study will show the criteria that encourage Iranian consumers to buy new pasta products. Thus, marketers can prevent failure of many new pasta products with high costs of production and regardless of compatibility with the style of cooking and food culture in Iran.

2. Product criteria

2.1 Quality

Pasta quality is the most important criterion, which is in association with sensory attributes, cooking performance, stickiness, color, shape variety and enrichment with nutrients. If buyers accept these elements they will keep on purchasing (Di Monaco et al., 2004). The research showed that 81.65% of the food product buyers decided to purchase based on the basis of quality (Alibabiü et al., 2011). Sensory

motives have been considered as the most influential elements of consumer food choice in Europe and Russia (Honkanen & Frewer, 2009). On the other hand, it is important for the food products to have a good taste. In order to assess consumer perception and acceptance of the new pasta products, food industry requires knowing about pasta cooking way differences in Iran and its influence in pasta taste and specifications.

2.2 Price

There are several studies which indicate, consumers are open to spend more money on healthy products but it is lower than expected by the industry (Siegrist et al., 2015; Vilaro et al., 2016). It is also proved that customers who are concerned about money may downgrade the real value of product (Campbell et al., 2014). According to Di Monaco (2004) price does not play essential role in changing customer's choice, since pasta is not an expensive product and it was also felt that variability in price was not associated with real differences among product qualities. In Iran, pasta was one of the most popular food products in the recent years because of the subsidies reform program and international sanctions raised prices for its substitutes (Karami et al., 2012). Despite imported pasta products in Iranian market which is so expensive, the domestic pasta products have reasonable price.

2.3 Packaging

The view and look of the products play an important role in grabbing customer's attention at the buying stage (Schifferstein et al., 2013). Westerman et al. (2013) concluded that there is a preference for packaging shape angularity, orientation, and left–right alignment. In addition, consumers are more concern about nutrition information when they intend to choose products; gender has been identified as an important determinant of nutrition information interest and usage (Visschers et al., 2013; Miklavec, 2016). For pasta products, some studies show that there was more interest for transparent packages (Di Monaco et al., 2004). In recent years, food packaging design has changed significantly in Iran's market. Attracting pictures of food, brand identity, nutrition information, cooking instructions and producer communicating information all come on the colorful package. As a matter of fact, there is no variety in old and new product package of the same brand. However marketers should be careful when they are going to lunch new product and they have to attract more attention. Apart from transparent package, producer use opaque and cardboard for pasta in Iran's market.

2.4 Promotion and phantasm

An extended range of criteria such as brand, advertising, promotion, other's advice, etc. are included in promotion and phantasm. Di Monaco (2004) stated that pasta is chosen by people according to their previous experiences and their confidence in brand name. Gielens and Steenkamp (2007) found that it is plausible for consumers to believe the high quality of new packaged goods with high-reputation brands. Moreover much money is usually spent by marketers to advertise new products. Previously carried out researches reported on various influences of product advertisement in different countries. In some countries advertisement plays the role of an obstacle while in some other countries it guarantees the success of that product (Gielens & Steenkamp, 2007; Gielens, 2007). In Iran the acceptance of advertising is different among various groups of people (Mahdavi et al., 2013). Therefore, it seems necessary to know more about consumer's behavior and reactions towards promotional programs in every region.

2.5 Place

Past studies have indicated that the space and decoration of the store can affect customer's behavior (Pantano & Viassone, 2015). Also a great number of customers want high performance and do not like surprising stores. In addition, innovative consumers are open to high level stores than less innovative

one (Fowler & Bridges, 2010). Iran pursues a very traditional way. Small grocery stores are the channels of packaged food distribution while there is not any big retailing. These small stores get the product from the major selling channels and sell them. By now these groceries have been converted into supermarket because it is comfortable for customers to access to these modern outlets (Euromonitor, 2014).

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants involved in this research all were the residence of Tehran city and they were the customers and users of pasta with the range of once a month to times a week. All of them were recruited based on interest and availability. To increase sample variability; participants came from different types of employment status and education classes of people in society. 48 people took part in the 6 focus group (8 men and 40 women; ages ranging from 25 to 48 years, mean 37). 48% of women were full time housewife, 40% of interviewers worked full time. 94% of them were married (with or without children in the household) and 48% of all lived in family with 3 members.

3.2 Procedure

In each focus group, the setting was a conference room with acoustic and visual recording system. The questioner was designed before to make the subjects feel comfortable, the discussion began with generic questions like demographic questions (age, employment, family members, etc.), daily routines, diet, their understanding of semolina flour and, then the interview continued with more specific questions on food attitude, frequency at meal preparation and questions related to pasta buying habits (favorite size, usually acquired brand and their favorite pasta category) (Calder, 1997; Casey & Krueger, 1994). The topic guide investigated respondents' opinions about pasta as traditional or new food, the way of pasta cooking, consumers' experiences and attitude about the existing new pasta product in the market, their specifications and motivations to buy them. Each interview lasted approximately 2 h.

3.3 Data analysis

The first stage was transcribing the recorded voice into text. Then we categorized the data through using grounded theory method. The basis of this theory is careful collection and analysis of data. This method begins with a study rather than a theory and then relevant theory emerges (Strauss, 1990). Strauss (1990) stated that grounded theory consists of three groups of coding procedures which are called open, axial and selective coding. Open coding identifies, names and classifies the ideas that are found in the data. Here, according to the recordings key points, important quotes and all finding about new pasta products were summarized. Axial coding depends on the understanding the relationship of phenomena along with major data in the course of connecting process of various data groups. Here we recognized 39 groups which affected consumers' choice. Selective coding emerges the most suitable theory for the phenomena through identifying a way which shows the central core groups. At last we received 5 core categories. By this stage we have identified parameters of choosing new pasta product by customers. At the second stage we sent the DMATEL questionnaire according to previous obtained factors to ten food market research experts. A great numbers of these experts worked in pasta industry. We did this in order to know their ideas about any relationship between criteria and which motives are more important than others. The Decision Making Trial and Evaluation Laboratory (DEMATEL) method has been used to indicate the correlation among criteria and also recognize the central criteria. Therefore, in this way it can represent the impact of factors. Also this method has been used in many other circumstances such as marketing strategies, control systems, safety problems development of the competencies of global managers, and group decision making (Hu et al., 2011; Wang & Tzeng, 2012). It is worthy to say that in most studies, DEMATEL method was incorporated with other methods (Altuntas & Dereli, 2014).

4. Result

4.1 Grounded theory results

In order to segment consumer choice motives obtained from focus group we used open, axial and selective coding of grounded theory method. The results of each step are shown in Tables 1-5.

Table 1
Grounded theory outcome for quality

axial	open
Aroma and flavor	The pasta should be delicious and appetitive.
	I like to buy simple pasta, I can add any spice to it (do not buy flavored).
	not to be slippery
	I like the taste of vegetable pasta
	My favorite pasta should be tasty, no need to add salt to water.
	I don't like the taste of paprika and spinach.
Color before cooking and after cooking	Pasta should be yellow, colorful, shiny and glassy, not opaque.
	After cooking color pasta is going to be opaque.
	Before cooking color is so important, after cooking the sauce cover it.
	Color pasta is so beautiful after serving, most of the time I cook it for party.
	I use color pasta for salad.
	Golden color with sauce is so beautiful.
	Whole-grain pasta is dark, Heavy and slow digestion, while it isn't seemed good at first glance but it's very useful.
	White pasta (enriched) is not pleasant.
	Add salt and turmeric to the pasta's to have yellow, I do not like white.
	I like color pasta for shaped pasta.
	When the packaging color is red the pasta seems more gold.
Strings thickness	Thickness should prevent pasta from pasting.
	Most kids like thicker pasta.
	High thickness, more oil absorption.
	I like very thick pasta recently came to the market.
Maintain shape after cooking	I get upset if the pasta shape changes after cooking, like birds nest pasta which opens like Shoelace.
	Not to be paste, sickness, dry and elastic.
	Shape and appearance of food for children is very important.
	Pasta must have its normal form.
	I don't cut pasta before pour it into boiling water to maintain its shape.
	If different shape of pasta maintain their appearance after cooking it's so good for children who don't eat well.
	After rinsing shaped pasta get much larger.
Firmness and softness of the pasta after cooking	Soft and tender pasta will be easier to digest.
	Firm pasta is like rubber and later gets digested but cannot paste.
	I feel better when I use the soft pasta until the firm pasta.
No preservatives	Due to the absence of preservatives, it's safe and anti-cancers.
	Because of preservatives, I never buy canned and microwave pasta.
Variety of pasta	Variety of pasta attracts children attention.
	I can cook it with different materials, there is no limitation and I can change recipes.
	I mix different shapes for salad to seem more beautiful.
Enrichment of pasta with vitamins, bran, omega 3, iron and zinc	I like enriched pasta.
	Whole meal pasta has a bad color.
	Vitamin B is helpful for the growth of skin, hair and bone.
	If pasta enrich with additives which are not enough in our food basket, is more useful.
	I don't like enriched food at all.
	If flour use with its barn it doesn't cause obesity.
	I use whole meal pasta just because of digestive problems.
	If the taste of enriched pasta was different from ordinary pasta, I do not use.
	Enriched pasta color is different with ordinary one so they are actually less popular.
Calories and starch amount	Diet pasta is excellent.
	I do not care about these items because it's not diet food.
	Because of importance of calories and starch component for my son whom goes to gym, we use pasta in weekly program.
	It is useful for children and they Feel full up.
	Pasta is beneficial For growth and weight gain of children.
	Pasta is a good substitute for rice because of calories and starch.
The requirement for salt and oil	Pasta is a fatty dish and intake oil a lot, so it causes obesity.
	Oil and salt are not good for people with diagnostic problem.
recipe existence on the package	The existence of real and applicable recipes is important to me.
	It's better if the recipe is on the cover of package instead of inside it.
	I would like a brochure of different recipes inside packaging.
	I read recipe at first usage.
	I prefer text and images in different side of package, because in this way I can read recipe better.
	Foreign products have more than one recipe but Iranian products have just one.
Existence of ISO certificate	Having ISO certification assures consumers more about products.

Table 2

Grounded theory outcome for price

axial	open
No price fluctuation	The price isn't very important because pasta isn't an expensive product.
	I don't understand any price change because I buy all I need together.
	Pasta price change is not very visible because price changes occurring across all goods.
Price proportional to the product	Nest product prices compare to spaghetti products with the same weight range is so high.
	If famous brand wants to launch a new product on the market, its price should be low for accepting a product by customers.
	Pasta is known as cheap food and high prices are not appropriate.
Unexpected price fluctuations	Price has a main role, if it raises a lot; this product can't be used repeatedly and comes out from family food program.
	For one time I can buy expensive good not repeatedly.
	No matter how high the price, I have to buy pasta, but I reduce the amount of the usage.
	If pasta prices up as much as rice, 80 percent of the people prefer to eat rice.
	If the price is too high, I go find replacement for it.
Existence of discounts or cash prize	Cash prize or discounts is a good motive for adult but for children cute toy is attractive.
	I never send the prize code.
	For me prize in the packaging is more attractive than draw.

Table 3

Grounded theory outcome for packaging

axial	open
color	Packaging color should be cheery and attractive.
	Packaging color is different from other brands.
	Blue and green is often associated with sanitary products; they are not appetizing for food product.
	Warm colors like red and black is better.
	Various boxes of same brand should have different colors.
	Packaging color should be corresponding with pasta color and logo.
	Green and checkered design, remind me Tak pasta and tablecloth.
Image and design	Images and designs of Tak is exclusive, wherever I see it know it (it says I'm here).
	Images and designs of some of the brands evoke the other products like biscuits, freezer bags and facial tissues.
	Image of some brands are so appetizing and delicious, so I always remember them.
	Package Image should be clear and not fade.
	Image with steam is more attractive for me.
Easy opening	The existence of yarn or plastic flexible packaging prevents the whole package at once torn away.
	Some packages were tightly packed so during opening they were blown open.
Easy open label	If I do not use some of that pasta in a serving, I can maintain remaining.
Weight	Considering the number of family members, we usually use 500 grams package.
	The weight number Should be specified on the package.
The existence of nutritional value table	If the nutritional value tables are in one side, I can check easier.
	It's better if the nutritional value table be viewed with minimal rotation.
	The nutritional value table is important for the first time, when it became routine I don't care.
	Through this table I realize good nutritional value of pasta.
Readability and expiration date	Expiration date and should be in front of view.
	Expiration date and should be legible.
	When I want to buy product at first I check expiration date to make sure about the safety of the product.
Vertical or horizontal packing	Vertical packaging takes less space.
	I can keep horizontal packing easier in the cabinet.
Packing material	I prefer plastic packaging into cardboard because I can easily see the color and product quality.
Transparent or opaque the film	I prefer transparent packaging into opaque because I can easily see the color and product quality.
Packaging resistant	The packaging should be in a way that the product inside dose not hit or crushed.
	If the product crushed, consumer returns it.

Table 4
Grounded theory outcome for promotion and phantasm

axial	open
Advertising	Advertising introduce new products or brands to consumers.
	I will be familiar with new products by way of billboards.
	Bahooneh cooking program (perform by Saman Golriz) make me acquainted with new products.
	TV advertising makes me familiar with new product.
	I do not like any kind of advertising, only if somebody whom I believe his/her cooking advises new product, it's important for me.
	Semolina flour has introduced by Tak ad on television.
	The ads that I see and stay in my mind, is effective during buying.
	I taste of products which are in Sampling plans to get to know the new products.
	Wide publicity will be cause greater recognition of the brand.
	Satellite advertising especially in the series Magnificent Century, attracted the attention of customers.
Products sort on the shelf	I do not like products arranged on the shelf in a way that take a lot of time to look for.
	Some brand products are very similar when stacked, I make mistake.
Brand and its background	If I don't know brand, I wouldn't buy.
	Brand is so important for me.
	My husband always buy Tak, he can't remember other names.
	If I couldn't find my favorite brand, I'm going to find it in another place, I wouldn't replace.
	Torre trusted am like the old one.
	I trust Tak because it's the old one.
	Tak is a famous brand; I use to buy it, because it was the first pasta replaced with Turkish pasta.
	If a brand is good, I do not use the other brands.
	In first usage if pasta is delicious, I will continue to buy.
	Younger consumers use new brands and older ones use old brands.
Clarification of shape of the logo and brand	Brand and logo should be more highlights to packaging and high color contrast with the ground.
	Logo and brand should be visible.
	Word is more attractive than shape.
The slogan on the packaging	Semi-prepared product slogan attracts more attention.
	I thought that semi-prepared product should be keep in refrigerator.
	The slogan on the packaging's on my mind.
	Many people do not understand semi-prepared, it's better to replace this slogan" with without the need for boiling water".
	Semi-prepared slogan has negative impact on the customer's perspective.
	"With semolina flour" slogan is on the most of packaging.
Evokes a particular mood or memory	Delicious food, gorgeous, delicious.
	Italian restaurant evokes for me.
Seller recommendation	If the seller confirms the new product, I will buy it.
	I try at least once seller recommendation; if it was good, I will continue.
	For me seller recommendation is more important than media propaganda.

Table 5
Grounded theory outcome for place

axial	open
The availability of store	Most of the time I buy grocery from the store near to my house because of availability.
Existence the complete product basket in supermarkets and department stores	Most of the time I buy grocery from the Chain stores (Hyper, Shahrvand, Refah, …) because of vide range of products.
Product arrangement in supermarkets and department stores	Tak products are arranged in a way that they are seen easily.
Store pureness	I prefer department stores because of pureness.
	Because of bad smell and existence of insects, I wouldn't buy anything from the store located near my house as I can.
Continuous supply in the market	All Tak products are distributed in all the shops, but Zar distribution isn't good.
	In some stores when the main products finished, all shelves are filled with low sales products such as whole-grain or enriched pasta, so consumer will have to buy another brand.

5. DEMATEL results

In this study we are not only seeking for the most important factors which motive people to show a tendency in buying new pasta products, but we are also trying to determine the relationship among dimensions and criteria. We also asked ten marketing experts to determine the importance of relationship among the dimensions. This determination has scores with range from 0, 1, 2, 3, to 4, representing 'No influence (0),' 'Low influence (1),' 'Medium influence (2),' 'High influence (3),' and 'Very high influence (4). For clarity, the original DEMATEL method is showed in the following:

Step 1: Find the average matrix A

Table 6
The total answer matrices

		quality	price	packaging	Promotion and phantasm	place
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
quality	C1	0	34	25	27	24
price	C2	33	0	30	25	22
packaging	C3	28	34	0	31	17
Promotion and phantasm	C4	21	25	21	0	19
place	C5	16	18	16	24	0

Table 7
The initial direct relation matrix, which is obtained by averaging the answer matrices

		quality	price	packaging	Promotion and phantasm	place
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
quality	C1	0	3.4	2.5	2.7	2.4
price	C2	3.3	0	3	2.5	2.2
packaging	C3	2.8	3.4	0	3.1	1.7
Promotion and phantasm	C4	2.1	2.5	2.1	0	1.9
place	C5	1.6	1.8	1.6	2.4	0

Step 2: Calculate the normalized initial direct-relation matrix D

Table 8
The normalized initial direct-relation matrix D

		quality	price	packaging	Promotion and phantasm	place
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
quality	C1	0	0.3063	0.2252	0.2432	0.2162
price	C2	0.2973	0	0.2703	0.2252	0.1982
packaging	C3	0.2523	0.3063	0	0.2793	0.1532
Promotion and phantasm	C4	0.1892	0.2252	0.1892	0	0.1712
place	C5	0.1441	0.1622	0.1441	0.2162	0

Step 3: Compute the total relation matrix

Table 9
Total relation matrix

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	ri
C1	1.6083	2.001	1.7102	1.8973	1.5472	8.76408
C2	1.8502	1.781	1.7502	1.8991	1.5443	8.824846
C3	1.8282	2.0218	1.5437	1.9385	1.5174	8.849535
C4	1.4713	1.624	1.4045	1.3892	1.2641	7.153049
C5	1.2576	1.382	1.2007	1.3775	0.9655	6.183227
di	8.016	8.81	7.609	8.502	6.839	

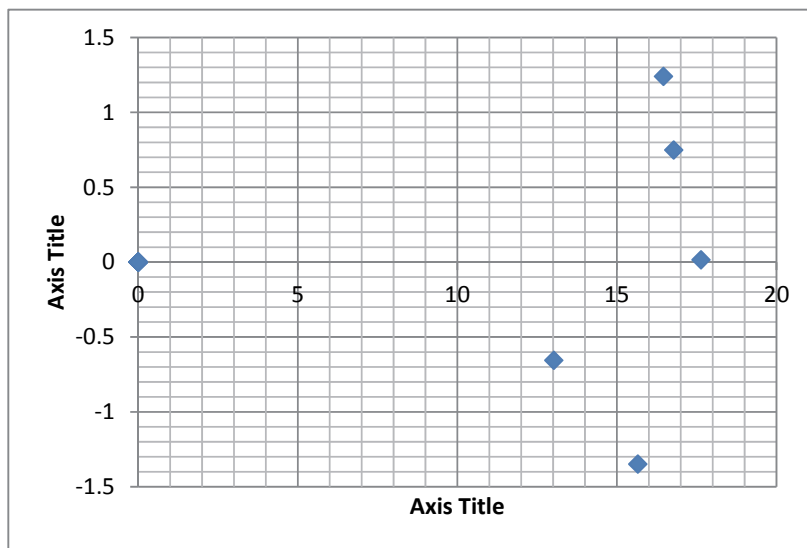$$T = \lim_{m \to \infty} (D + D^2 + \dots + D^m = D(1 - D)^{-1}$$

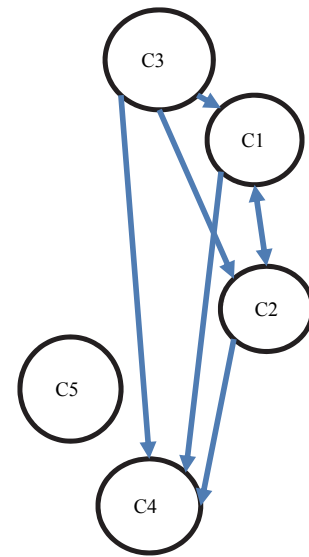Step 4: Set a threshold value and obtain the impact-relations-map

It is necessary to set a threshold value for separating some unimportant influence in the matrix T to describe the structural relation among the factors. The decision-maker in charge has to set a threshold when the factors of matrix T give information about the effect of each one on the other. This is performed in order to reduce the complexity of the structural relation model used by matrix T. Only some factors, whose affects in the matrix T are greater than the threshold value, should be chosen and shown in an impact-relations-map.

Table 10
Threshold value

	Criteria	ri + di	ri - di	Priority
C1	Quality	16.78	0.7485	2
C2	Price	17.635	0.0151	3
C3	Packaging	16.459	1.2402	1
C4	Promotion and phantasm	15.655	-1.349	5
C5	place	13.022	-0.655	4

Fig. 1. Influence map (IRM map)

6. Discussion

In Iran, a large numbers of new products come to market quickly, by the establishment of food producing companies which are equipped with advanced production lines. The primary success of new products lies on its capacity in meeting major consumers' needs, while new products are likely to fail (Atuahene-Gima, 1995; Kahn, 2001). Various studies have considered consumer's acceptance of new food products, but not many of them searched in somewhere outside of European countries and the United States (Di Monaco et al., 2004; Gielens, 2007; Guerrero et al., 2009; Guerrero et al., 2009; Barcellos et al., 2010; Bartels & Reinders, 2010). As far as we know, no comparison has been carried out between Western and Asian countries. Hence one goal of our study was to examine consumers' willingness to buy new pasta products in Iran. Food is always enjoyable for people. Taste, appearance and smell are known as enjoyable characteristics of food. In terms of consumers' perception who participated in the focus groups, quality features of new pasta products was very important. However, the quality features were in the second place according to our survey. New packaging of products plays an important role in attracting more customers for the first lunching in experts' opinions. Previous studies have shown

that the characteristics of the packaging cause to grab customers' attention and end to purchase. However quality is proved as the main source of encouragement for customers to keep shopping (Di Monaco et al., 2004).

In Iran, pasta is known as a fairly cheap product and the rate of fluctuations is low. According to experts, price is the third customer's priority. Therefore, the new pasta products that are entering to the market with all the charm should have a competitive price compared with previous products for customers; otherwise, they will be deleted in long-term from consumption basket of household. Features of the location according to the experts are the fourth priority. Today, thanks to the broad distribution system, customers are provided with various range of products rather than in the past, they only had to buy independent small grocery. According to consumers' comments who participated in this research, the availability of the products and the features of the location that they can purchase the product maintain important impacts on the rate of new product purchase. This is consistent with previous studies (Pantano & Viassone, 2015). Previous studies revealed that the brand reputation, previous experience, health slogans and others recommendations have positive effects on customer choice (Di Monaco et al., 2004; Gielens, 2007; Khodayari, 2013), although the impact of advertising is different according to different countries (Gielens, 2017; Mahdavi Mazdeh et al., 2013).

7. Conclusions

In this study, we have tried to analyze the factors that persuade customers to buy a new pasta product. Analysis of a focus group has shown that a great number of participants believe that pasta is a traditional food and a lot of them cook it in Iranian way, only if they want to make a salad, they use pasta after rinsing. Quality parameters, especially the flavor, color and maintaining the shape after cooking, salt and fat requirements are important factors for consumers. Products, which have deformation and change in color, are likely to be omitted from household consumption basket.

The new packaging, beautiful designs and colors that make the product exclusive from the previous products have quickly attracted consumers' attention. Also using transparent cellophane enables consumers to see more apparent features of the product and using nutritional table with details let consumers buy with confidence.

All these efforts are useful when the new pasta product is available at an affordable price through distribution channels to consumers. In the current economic circumstances, the new pasta product with good price could be used by a wider spectrum of society. Advertising, promotions and prize items for a new pasta product should be applied with a detailed study of the reaction of consumers to avoid any adverse effects. The results of the previous studies have indicated that while consumers in central parts of Tehran had positive responses to advertisements, residents of northern Tehran with high earnings did not give any positive view about the media and environment advertisement (Mahdavi et al., 2013). According to consumer's opinions if a new pasta product is entered into the market by well-known brand, the chance of acceptance is much higher than the new brands. This result confirms the previous studies (Gielens & Steenkamp, 2007) and indicates the importance of brand reputation on the success of the new product. Selection of the advertising slogan, which could penetrate consumers' minds, especially children and young people will have positive impact on the acceptance of a new product pasta.

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