

Case Report

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The Role of Cultural Factors in Promoting National Standards in Food Products in Western Hormozgan Province

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Abstract

Improving performance to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in promoting and implementing standards has become a crucial goal for increasing the quality of domestic products. Adopting and following standards play a vital role in achieving higher efficiency. This study investigates the cultural factors influencing the adoption of national standards in the western region of Hormozgan province, particularly in the market. The research employs a descriptive methodology, focusing on ordinary citizens from three cities: Parsian, Bandar Lengeh, and Bastak. Data collection was performed by using a structured questionnaire in three sections: familiarity with the tasks of the National Standards Organization of Iran, understanding the concept of standards and the tendency to purchase Standard domestic products compared to foreign products. The gathered data were systematically analyzed. In general, less than 50% of consumers in the western Hormozgan province comply with established standards. Among the three cities, Bandar Lengeh exhibited the highest compliance rate (55%) in considering the standard mark when purchasing domestic food products, while the other two cities had been below average. The most important factor in reducing the score of standard is the lack of structured organizational policies, especially in cities without standardization infrastructure. Lack of cooperation and seriousness in promotion the standard by other market- related departments seem to be the main reason for this weakness. Therefore, establishing the necessary infrastructure and paying greater attention to the issue of standard by mass media is recommended.

Keywords Standard domestic products, Standard promotion, The culture of west of Hormozgan province

Introduction

Standardization, as a cornerstone of modern societal and economic frameworks, is far more than a technical endeavor; it is a cultural process that shapes quality, safety, and efficiency in products and services. Standard is a level of quality that is considered acceptable by general public [1].

The most important means of enhancing public culture in

general and promoting the culture of standardization in particular is public education [2], and standards provide solutions to problems and lead to increased productivity [3]. Historically, nations with advanced economies have prioritized standardization, embedding it in their educational curricula and societal norms. For instance, the integration of standards into high school and university programs in developed countries underscores the cultur-



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al significance of standardization as a key to economic growth and societal welfare.

In Iran, the establishment of the National Standards Organization has marked a significant step in enhancing the quality and safety of domestic products, particularly in sensitive sectors such as food production. The implementation of these standards ensure not only product quality but also fosters consumer trust and boost local industries' competitiveness on a global scale.

Western Hormozgan Province, with its distinct socio-economic and cultural characteristics, presents both challenges and opportunities for promoting national standards and serves as a compelling case study for examining the impact of cultural factors on the adoption and promotion of national standards. This region, home to diverse cultural traditions and unique consumption patterns, highlights the challenges of creating awareness about the importance of standards among local populations.

The benefits of standardization lie in fostering societal trust, enhancing product compatibility, and promoting resource efficiency [4]. Similarly, a successful standardization process requires precise goal-setting, community engagement, and adaptability to global changes [1]. These insights provide a foundational perspective for understanding how cultural dynamics in Western Hormozgan can shape public behavior and attitudes toward standardization. By analyzing these cultural dimensions, this study aims to explore how public awareness and trust can be improved to ensure better compliance with national standards, ultimately contributing to the socio-economic development of the region and the country at large.

2. Material and method:

The research adopts an applied research method, aimed at solving practical problems, specifically focusing on the impact of local cultural factors on promoting national standards in food products. The study employs a descriptive-survey method for data collection, using both field surveys and questionnaires to gather primary data.

The target population includes consumers in the western regions of Hormozgan province. From a total population of approximately 10,000 individuals, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Cochran's formula. The sampling method is simple random sampling, ensuring that each individual in the population has an equal chance of selection.

A questionnaire was the primary tool for gathering data. It was designed based on existing models and customized to fit the demographic and cultural context of the target population. Efforts were made to keep the questionnaire concise and easy to understand.

The questionnaire's validity was assessed through con-

tent validation, ensuring that questions effectively measure the intended variables. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, achieving a value of 0.8416, which confirms the tool's robustness for consistent results.

The data analysis was conducted using advanced statistical software, including SPSS, Stata, and SmartPLS, to ensure accurate interpretation and inference of the results.

3. Result and discussion

The findings revealed that less than 50% of consumers in western Hormozgan adhered to food standards; Bandar Lengeh as the highest level of attention to food standards during purchasing compared to other two regions. However, many residents in the area exhibited limited familiarity with the roles and responsibilities of Iran's National Standard Organization. The results indicate that successful implementation of national standards in Hormozgan requires addressing both cultural and institutional barriers. The results align with previous studies emphasizing the role of cultural awareness in enhancing the acceptance and implementation of standards. As in previous studies, the lack of awareness and trust in local products remains a barrier to promoting national standards [5]. However, this study extends the discussion by focusing specifically on western Hormozgan, a region influenced by unique cultural and social dynamics.

Among 261 survey respondents, 51% were male (133 individuals), and 49% were female (128 individuals). The majority of participants (45%) were aged between 25–35 years, followed by 29% under 25 years, 15% between 36–45 years, and smaller percentages in older age groups. Most participants (55%) were self-employed, 40% were homemakers, while other professions made up the remaining 5%. Around 62% participants lived in city centers, 28% in rural areas, and 10% in smaller towns. Key findings for subcultural influences indicates three factors: the cultural role in encouraging the use of standard products, the appropriate role of standard promotion in the purchase of products and services and the level of familiarity with standards: Ensuring the verification of the specification listed on the products.

This study showed that less than half of respondents were familiar with the concept of national standards. Awareness levels were the highest in Bandar Lengeh, attributed to greater exposure to standardization campaigns. Also, consumers exhibited a preference for foreign products due to perceived superior quality. Trust in locally standardized products was hindered by inconsistent enforcement and lack of visible compliance in markets. On the other hand, Local cultural norms prioritize price and tradition over product quality, limiting the adoption of standards. Resistance to change was observed in older

demographics, who viewed standardization as an external imposition. Participants showed varying levels of awareness about the importance of standardization. Some considered standard marks essential for quality assurance, while others were influenced by pricing as an indicator of authenticity.

Finally, limited collaboration between standardization authorities and community leaders, and insufficient use of local media and cultural events to promote standards, have also contributed to these results. A statistical logit model was used to analyze the likelihood of consumers choosing standardized domestic products over foreign ones. Results showed that effective promotion and local cultural acceptance significantly increased this preference.

4. Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of cultural factors in shaping the implementation of national standards in Hormozgan Province. By addressing cultural resistance and enhancing trust through community-focused strategies, national standards can be effectively integrated into regional practices. This will not only improve product quality but also foster economic resilience and consumer confidence.

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Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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