



What are the Entrepreneurial Marketing Characteristics and Practices of Street Food Vendors in Tehran, Iran?

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the research was focused on attempting to appraise, assess and diagnose the entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices of street food vendors in Tehran, Iran. The research was qualitative, abductive, systematic, exploratory and descriptive in nature. It was based on two researches and reviews of literature and sources of secondary data and information, firstly in English and then in Persian. This was followed by two videographic researches, also provided first in English and then in Persian. Further, a pictographic research was conducted on street food vendors in Tehran. Moreover, semi-structured and unstructured interviews were implemented with street food vendors in Tehran. The analysis of the findings provided that eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices were identified, providing that there was a tendency, to a degree, for street food vendors to practice entrepreneurial marketing. However, what may be termed generically as classic marketing characteristics and practices, were also found. This implies that street food vendors practice both entrepreneurial marketing and classic marketing, but tend to use, more entrepreneurial marketing practices. These findings suggest to further research street food vendors' entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices in Iran, but also within other countries, so as to continue within the realm of such a research stream. However, and interestingly, what also seemingly emerged from this research was that the 'mix' of entrepreneurial and classic marketing characteristics and practices identified may be seemingly specific to street food vendors only. This also suggests further research in attempts to identify if such marketing characteristics and practices are effectively specific to street food vendors or not.

Keywords: marketing; entrepreneurial marketing, street food vendors' marketing, street food vendors entrepreneurial marketing, street food, Tehran, Iran.

1. Introduction

This research is a continuation of the research stream conducted in the realm of agri-food marketing in developing countries. Pervious researches, for example, covered: the agri-food micro, meso and macromarketing components in developing countries (see Hilmi, 2022a); urban and rural agri-food marketing in developing countries (see Hilmi, 2022b); the characteristics of agri-food marketing in developing countries (see Hilmi, 2022c); the practice of agri-food marketing in developing countries (see Hilmi, 2023); and, of particular pertinence to this current research, street food¹ vendors' entrepreneurial marketing practices in 12 countries (see Hilmi, 2020). The countries covered in Hilmi (2020) were Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Ghana, India, Nepal, Niger, Republic of South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, and Zimbabwe. One of the outcomes of the research, was in fact, to conduct follow-up researches in the same realm of street food vendors' entrepreneurial marketing practices, by still focusing on a country-case basis.

¹ A previous research had also been conducted on the subject matter of street and snack foods (see Fellows & Hilmi, 2012).

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in this regard, this current research focused on Iran and in particular the city of Tehran. The focus on Iran derived from: the call for further research in entrepreneurship in Iran, for example, by Bagheri & Akbari (2019); the interesting Iranian agri-food sector, which is mainly public sector run, with some minor role played by the private sector; the well-known Persian cuisine² with its rich and long historical heritage, for example, see Hekmat (1961), Batmanglij (1986), Niknamian (2016) and Lauden (2015), and thus its relevance to street foods and street food vendors; the consequential inherent diversity of street foods available and related street food vendors' enterprises; the availability also of street foods that are not of Persian origin, but derived from other countries; the fusion of street foods from Iran and from other countries (fusion street foods); the abundance of street foods vendors within Iran, and in particular in Tehran; the corresponding author's previous experience of conducting empirical research in the agri-food sector in country; and the accessibility and availability for conducting empirical work in country, in specific in Tehran, for this research in particular, provided by an in-country researcher-interviewer.³ Further, Tehran in specific was chosen as per: budget constraints implied by the research; the abundance, variety and availability of differing street food vendor enterprises that are commonly found in urban centres; the differing typologies of street foods available; and the ease of access to street food vendors.

Research aim

The main aim of the research was to attempt to appraise, assess and diagnose the entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices of street food vendors in Tehran, Iran.

Background

The Iranian context

Iran, as a country, is in the lower-middle income bracket (DFAT, 2023). Its economy is run mainly by the public sector which accounts for about 80 percent of the entire economy, via state owned enterprises and foundations, for example, and 20 percent of the economy is in private sector hands (DFAT, 2023). Being under sanctions for decades, and with the re-instatement of sanctions since 2018, as per the withdrawal of the USA from the nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action [JCPOA]), has caused the formal economy to strain⁴ (DTI, 2022). But, interestingly, over the past three years there has been overall economic growth, but at a slow pace (World Bank, 2023a). Sanctions, drops in oil prices, access restrictions to export markets, lack of access to technology and foreign investments have all contributed to such slow growth (World Bank, 2023a). This has been further enhanced by the removal of subsidies for some food staples and the instability of the currency which have also caused another round of high inflation, with peaks of 50 percent, increasing unemployment and all impacting, mostly lower-income households (DFAT, 2023; EIU 2023; World Bank 2023b). Inequality, even though moderate, compared to other countries, persists and is growing: urban centres provide for large concentrations of wealth, with rural areas having far lesser concentrations of wealth and increases in inequality⁵ (Kuznar, 2019; World Bank, 2023b). Poverty has also been increasing overall⁶ (World

² Chehabi (2003) provides that as per the geographic location of Iran, inevitably, its cuisine has been influenced by other cultures, for example, China, Russia, and Armenia, and far more recently by Western style cuisines. In fact, 'Iranian culinary habits today are far more influenced by Western patterns of consumption than before the revolution, and a larger percentage of Iranians partake of that partially westernized culinary culture than before the revolution' (Chehabi, 2003).

³ The in-country researcher-interviewer (Amanda Malekazari [MSc.], psychologist, independent researcher) conducted, in Persian: a literature research and review; a research and review of sources of secondary data and information; videographic and pictographic observations; and 20 interviews with street food vendors in Tehran (see Methods section below).

⁴ The sanctions have caused, among many other matters, also increasing inequality within Iran (Kuznar, 2019).

⁵ Inequality is also rising as per climate change. Climate change does not only showcase existing social and economic inequalities as per its higher impacts on middle- and low-income countries, like Iran, but deepens and propagates inequalities (Castells-Quintana & McDermott, 2023; Cevik & Jalles, 2022; Paglialunga *et al.*, 2022). For example, as climate vulnerability rises, income inequality increases (Cevik & Jalles, 2022).

⁶ The poverty rate has pushed, circa 11 million people below the poverty line and estimates provide that one in every three Iranians are in absolute poverty, with Iran, in 2022 having a Gini coefficient of 0.38 (Katiraie, 2023).

Bank, 2023b). According to BTI (2022), Iran has been impaired by economic mismanagement, corruption and the reinforcement of the centralized state and its security apparatus, this including also the furthering of public sector intervention in the economy. However, over the decades, Iran has adapted and developed a strong resilient economy (Ferro *et al.*, 2023) that being based also on an informal economy and exports (Casarano *et al.*, 2023).

Iran has a current population of circa 84 million (UNPF, 2023), with 60 percent being composed of people under the age of 30 (DFAT, 2023). The population of Iran is highly urbanized, around 77 percent, and concentrated in the north, northwest and west (DFAT, 2023). In fact, Iran has had a fast urbanization path over the past decades as per natural demographic growth, rural-urban migration and the expansion of urban centres into villages (UN HABITAT, 2023). Tehran is the most populated city in Iran, has the largest concentrated urban population, accounting for over nine million residents, and circa 16 million residents in the larger metropolitan area (Macrotrends, 2024), with 969 people per square kilometre (UN HABITAT, 2023). Tehran, much like the rest of Iran is multiethnic, as Iran is composed of Azeris, Kurds, Lur, Baluch, Bakhtiari, Arab and Turkic and is predominantly Muslim (Shi'ia), with religious minorities of Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians and Bahais (DFAT, 2023). The Persian majority of Iran, what is termed by Rashidvash (2013) as the 'pan-national group,' reflects also diversity within.

According to TCCIMA (2022), agriculture accounts for circa 11.6 percent of GDP, with an expected annual growth rate of 4 percent for the next decade, employs 18 percent of the work force, exports US\$10.9 billion worth of agricultural products, and thus plays an important role in the Iranian economy. The main objective of the sector has been for decades, to attempt to reach self-sufficiency, and as such is supported by numerous public policies (Motamed, 2017). The agricultural sector is thus regulated, for example, via price guarantees for agricultural products, which have actually increased, but the sector has also seen the removal of agricultural input subsidies (World Bank, 2023a), which along with other challenges, for example, water scarcity, has increased production costs, thus impacting agricultural production and consequently entailing matters with food security, and has also contributed to food price inflation and its related uncertainties (World Bank, 2023a). In Iran, about 20 million households are food insecure⁷ (Joulaei *et al.*, 2023). The reasons for this are based on overall household poverty, international sanctions, the pandemic, unemployment, lowering incomes and purchasing power as well as rural to urban migration (Joulaei *et al.*, 2023). There has also been a rise in imports due to such matters, as for example, demographic growth, the impact of inflation on incomes, climate change, lack of mechanized usage in farming and outdated farming practices (MFAD, 2017; Motamed, 2017).

The composition of the agri-food sector is based mainly around unprofitable small-scale farms, that commonly work collectively, but have to face numerous challenges in agricultural marketing, as per the differing distribution options prior to arriving at retail markets (MFAD, 2017). Some of the main challenges, as pointed out by Najafabadi (2011), are: the lack of market information; lack of standards and grading; numerous middlemen; price volatility; lack of adequate storage and transport facilities; difficulty in accessing finance; and literacy. In terms of food processing there are circa 11,200 units, of which 56 percent are small-scale (DD, 2022) and at the retail level there are many micro, small, medium and large food outlets, ranging from individual street food hawkers, to family run street food vending enterprises, to small food stores to large supermarkets to bazars to supermarket chains⁸ and to online supermarkets. Consumers, according to Statista (2024), prefer buying local agri-food products that are also organic, and like to focus on quality and also on nutritional value.

⁷ This all within the background of the National Food Assistance Program (NFAP) of 2014, the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation (IKRF) and the State Welfare Organization (SWO) which are intended to support low-income households. For example, the NFAP provides electronic cards to target recipients, so as to enable the acquisition of specific and approved food products from authorized retail outlets (Pourghaderi *et al.*, 2022). Such social assistance programmes, though, have had their real value eroded over the years as per the persistent high inflation (World Bank, 2023b).

⁸ Interestingly though, large supermarkets and their chains, represent only about 10 to 15 percent of consumer preference in where to buy food (Vira, 2024).

Urban agri-food marketing⁹ and street food vendors in developing economies

As countries develop, some trends start to emerge, for example, the rise and rapid growth of urbanization, increased migration from rural areas to urban areas and notable demographic increments (FAO, 2008). These growing trends have implications on agri-food marketing, as for example, more food needs to be sent to growing urban centres, but rural areas depopulate as per the increase in rural and urban migration, hence there is a lack of labour for conducting marketing activities (FAO, 1997a). However, urban agri-food markets, being commonly large and providing for constant food demands, offer many opportunities, but such do require a series of dynamic, differing, and adaptable agri-food marketing activities (Wiskereke, 2015). This occurs as per the nature of urban centres and not only, which are usually, but not always, provided by food coming from rural areas, but also from peri-urban areas, urban areas and imports (World Bank & FAO, 2018).

This implies that urban agri-food marketing systems evolve rapidly, with overlaps occurring between traditional and modern food distribution systems, including overlaps between informality and formality (World Bank & FAO, 2018). Such urban agri-food marketing systems portray such characteristics and practices of, for example, complex functions of storage, handling, processing, packing, transporting, wholesaling and retailing (FAO, 2023; FAO, 2008). These all provided by multiple stakeholders, both formal and informal, coming from public, private, and NGO organizations, in varying institutional arrangements, and moving small quantities of agri-food products frequently (FAO, 2023; FAO, 2008), as per the inherent nature of urban consumer demand, that tends to be restricted as per poverty,¹⁰ in the majority of cases (Todaro & Smith, 2020). Hence all such urban agri-food marketing systems need to be adaptable, innovative, flexible, variable, versatile, agile, relational, social and localized (Hilmi, 2023; FAO, 2023; FAO, 2008). Moreover, all such agri-food marketing activities are implemented within contexts where there are inadequate infrastructures, including market infrastructure, lack of law implementation, thus the rise of formal-informal regulations as well as the lack of other marketing facilities and services (FAO, 2008).

Indeed, in urban centres, informal agri-food marketing systems do tend to prevail, also overlapping with formal agri-food marketing systems, but develop, commonly, into insular and isolated systems, which have their own culture (Mathur *et al.*, 2019). Such informal agri-food marketing systems do develop networks, social and relational, are effective and do enable and facilitate rural and urban linkages, via, for example, the 'exchanges of food items and services within or outside the family or through direct sale by producers; enable and facilitate intermediation: supply and distribution of unprocessed products (transporters, retailers, including street vendors); and enable and facilitate processing and sale of ready-to-eat food: street food and small catering' (FAO, 2003).

Overall, such urban informal agri-food marketing systems do tend to provide for the required, the distribution of food, as the economic incentive of poverty-stricken consumers, who tend to spend most of their income on consumer goods, such as food, for example, provides a large opportunity and incentive for eager food suppliers and sellers. Most consumers in such urban poverty contexts, for their daily food subsistence do, in fact, rely on informal street food vendors (World Bank & FAO, 2018). This is because, for example, such consumers lack access to urban mobility, which does not give them many alternatives, but to choose what is brought to them directly or in their vicinity (World Bank & FAO, 2018). Further it is also the lack of consumers being able to prepare foods, as per the cost of cooking gas, refrigeration, and time, for example (World Bank & FAO, 2018; Sharma 2016) that increases demand for street foods.

However, informal urban agri-food marketing systems do not only cater for the less fortunate consumers, as it also furnishes agri-food products to middle- and high-income consumers (Krishnamacharyulu & Ramakrishnan, 2011). In fact, marketing, in general, does tend to focus on urban demand, where there is a high concentration of consumers, who are fairly easily reachable, and with various incomes levels and thus also various purchasing power possibilities (Bhanot, 2017; Mathur *et al.*, 2019), which inevitably can attract the most attention (Hammad, 1990) also by the informal urban

⁹ Urban agri-food marketing is not the same as rural agri-food marketing, as both are distinctive disciplines and practices, but both, and inherently, do have their commonalities, overlaps and interrelations (Himi, 2022b).

¹⁰ In fact, urban poverty has increased, also because of the increase in inequality (Brown *et al.*, 2014).

agri-food marketing system. Further seeing the intensive coverage such agri-food marketing systems can offer, also attract the attention of the public sector, both national and international NGOs sectors, faith-based organizations as well as IGOs as in fact, and for example, government run food assistance programmes have been developed using such agri-food marketing systems, including also community dining rooms and food distribution points (food banks) (World Bank & FAO, 2018).

In urban areas there is also the growing trend of urban agriculture to produce one's own food, but also for selling (World Bank & FAO, 2018). Numbers vary considerably in the amount of people involved in urban agricultural and short proximity urban agri-food marketing systems (Moustier & Renting, 2015), but offer many advantages, for example, availability of food, accessibility of food, reduced marketing costs, freshness, etc., (Moustier & Renting, 2015; FAO, 2012; FAO, 1999). Such an approach also offers urban group or community agri-food marketing systems to be set up (World Bank & FAO, 2018). In fact, over the last years more and more 'initiatives with several types of innovative collective businesses for the direct sales of food products to consumers and other urban markets parties have been observed' (Moustier & Renting, 2015).

The urban informal agri-food marketing system, operates in what Sirkeci (2020) refers to as the street economy: the public places (streets, squares) where the exchange of many differing types of goods and services take place, provided by street vendor entrepreneurs , with their micro-enterprises. Kasim (2020) refers to the street economy as one of the main domains of the core economy, along with local marketplaces and bazaars. It is estimated that globally street vendors are circa two billion, the activity offers employment opportunities to the poor, making them active economic participants, entrepreneurs, who in turn fulfil the demands of circa five billion people globally, value-adding US\$24 trillion dollars to the global economy, and overall contributing US\$80 trillion dollars to the global economy (Elbeyoğlu & Sirkeci, 2020).

A street vendor is broadly defined as 'a person who offers goods for sale to the public without having a permanent built-up structure, but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall (or headload). Street vendors may be stationary by occupying space on the pavements or other public/private areas or may be mobile in the sense that they move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets or on their heads, or may sell their wares in moving trains, bus, etc., ' (Jhabvala, 2010). The street economy is populated by both formal and informal street vendors, concentrated in urban areas mainly, most often marginalized, who operate in natural markets, where there is an implied propensity to assemble as per customer purchasing convenience, who operate in hundreds of differing sub-sectors, selling a multitude of differing products and services which have social and cultural meaning, including the implied economic importance of exchange, and have also developed into digital and virtual street vending (Sirkeci, 2020; Graaff & Ha, 2015; Bhowmik, 2010).

In terms of street food vendors, in specific, they offer a number of services: multiple sales points; intensive distribution networks; food security; food diversity enabling access to diversified nutrients; freshness; and high degrees of customization (Sharma, 2016; FAO, 2003; Tinker, 1997). In particular, most of such services are offered by stationary and/or mobile or both, street food vendors, who commonly run micro-scale agri-food enterprises, that are most often family business, thus involve women, may employ non-family members and can be permanent or seasonal enterprises (Hilmi, 2020; Fellows & Hilmi 2012; Tinker, 1997). Fellows & Hilmi (2012) define street foods as being 'ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors and hawkers especially in streets and other similar public places.' Street foods are generally 'minimally processed to highly processed foods that are sold on streets and other public places, consumed on the spot and/or ready to take home or delivered to the workplace, including catering' (Fellows & Hilmi, 2012). FAO & WHO (2022) provide that 2.5 billion people in the globe eat street food on a daily basis. Usually, street foods, tend not to be expensive, are convenient, are prepared based on traditional knowledge, can thus have unique flavors, can be nutritional, can follow the seasonality of agricultural production and are usually widely available on many urban streets as well as in rural areas (FAO & WHO, 2022; Fellows & Hilmi, 2012). Most street food vendors in terms of marketing opt for 'customer friendly practices to cultivate loyalty: extra portions at no charge and the provision of credit' (FAO, 2003; FAO, 1999). In this regard, Hilmi (2020) found that street food marketing practices, were in part defined as entrepreneurial marketing practices characterised by: networks, knowledge of market demand, risk-taking, self-confidence (calculated risk-taking), low production costs (resource constrained), customer-relationships, and value creation.

Marketing, entrepreneurial marketing and micro and small-scale enterprise marketing

Solomon *et al.*, (2020) provide that marketing, at its core, attempts to satisfy consumer needs, taking account also of sellers' needs to earn a profit. White (2020) defines marketing as creating, promoting, and delivering 'products or services that enable commercial objectives to be met through the customer value they generate,' while Kotler & Armstrong (2018) define marketing as 'the process enterprises engage customers, build strong relationships, and create customer value in order to capture value from customers in return.' Thus, marketing implies activities, institutional organizations and coordination, and processes for 'creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large' (Solomon *et al.*, 2020). This typology of marketing is commonly referred to as traditional or classic marketing and, for example, is characterised by: strategies, plans, coordination, integration, market segmentation, etc, (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). This typology of marketing is in fact formal, structured, and planned and is most commonly, but not always, found in medium to large-scale enterprises. Such a formalized, structured, and planned approach has, to a degree, de-emphasized the more creative and entrepreneurial dimensions of marketing (Bjerke & Hultman, 2002).

This creative and entrepreneurial orientation of marketing though is found most often in micro and small-scale enterprises, where resource scarcity, for example, needed to invest in marketing is limited and thus implies a more creative and entrepreneurial stance taken to confront marketing activities. In this regard, what is termed entrepreneurial marketing is defined as 'the proactive identification and exploitation of opportunities for acquiring and retaining profitable customers through innovative approaches to risk management, resource leveraging and value creation' (Cacciolatti & Lee, 2015). Some of the characteristics of entrepreneurial marketing are, for example, being proactive, growth oriented, risk taking, innovative, and opportunity oriented (Sadiku-Dushi *et al.*, 2019). Between marketing and entrepreneurial marketing, even though being somewhat distinct, there are similarities and overlaps. However, commonly, and as found by Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, for example, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, then classic marketing characteristics and practices, even though both may be used.

Methods

The research, being a continuation of the research conducted by Hilmi (2020), was qualitative, abductive, systematic, exploratory and descriptive in nature. The research took mainly an abductive approach, but placed an accent on being inductive. The research was provided in four stages: the first stage was exploratory and was concerned with identifying and defining key search terms; the second stage was systematic, exploratory and descriptive and comprised a literature research and review, a research and review of sources of secondary data and information, and within sources of primary data and information, which included videography; the third stage was the same as the second stage, but conducted in Persian; the fourth stage was based on field work, subdivided into two phases: the first being based on observation (pictography) and the second phase being devoted to conducting informal semi-structured and unstructured interviews with street food vendors in Tehran.

The first stage of the research¹¹ involved searching for and developing key search terms. The online search engines used were four: CORE, Google Scholar, RefSeek and ResearchGate. This enabled to generate the following key search terms: Agri-food marketing in Iran; Iranian agri-food marketing; agri-food marketing in Tehran; Tehran agri-food marketing; Iranian street food vendors; Street food vendors in Iran; Iranian street food sellers; Street food sellers in Iran; Tehran street food vendors; Street food vendors in Tehran; Tehran street food sellers; Street food sellers in Tehran; Iranian street food vendors marketing practices; Street food vendors marketing practices in Iran; Iranian street food sellers marketing practices; Street food sellers marketing practices in Iran; Tehran street food vendors marketing practices; Street food vendors marketing practices in Tehran; Tehran street food sellers marketing practices; Street food sellers marketing practices in Tehran; Iranian street food vendors entrepreneurial marketing practices; Street food vendors entrepreneurial marketing practices in Iran; Iranian street food sellers entrepreneurial marketing practices; Street food sellers entrepreneurial

¹¹ This first stage was conducted in October 2023.

marketing practices in Iran; Tehran street food vendors entrepreneurial marketing practices; Street food vendors entrepreneurial marketing practices in Tehran; Tehran street food sellers entrepreneurial marketing practices; Street food sellers entrepreneurial marketing practices in Tehran.

Within the realm of searching for and developing key search terms for sources of secondary data and information, and searching for primary sources of data and information within, a focus was provided on videography. This implied using only four key search terms from the above list: Tehran Street food vendors; street food vendors in Tehran; Tehran Street food sellers; and street food sellers in Tehran. The videographic research focused on using the search engine YouTube.

The second stage of the research¹² involved searching for literature and sources of secondary data and information using the key search terms developed in the first stage of the research. This second phase of the research used 10 online search engines: AGRICOLA; AGRIS; Business source complete (EBSCO); CORE; Emerald full text; FAO Publications; Google scholar; JSTOR business collection; Refseek; and ResearchGate. However, from the very early research stages of the literature and sources of secondary data and information research, what emerged was the very scant number of literature and sources of secondary data and information found that covered street food vendors marketing and entrepreneurial marketing practices in Iran and in specific in Tehran. The very scant literature and sources of secondary data and information actually found provided only indirect reference to the key search terms and the overall research aim. However, in terms of primary sources of data and information, within the realm of sources of secondary data and information, there were seven videographic primary sources of data and information found.

As per the above, the third stage of the research¹³ implied a further research for literature and sources of secondary data and information, using the same key search terms developed in the first stage of the research. The research was conducted in Persian, by the researcher-interviewer¹⁴ in Iran. This meant not just translating the key search terms, but adapting them to the Persian language and importantly context in conducting the research for literature and sources of secondary data and information. Online sources that were used, among the many, were for example: the Iranian Journal of Agricultural Economics and Development; Agricultural Economics; Quarterly Journal of Agricultural Economics and Development; the web pages of the Ministry of Agriculture-Jihad, Ministry of Health and Medical Education, Ministry of Industry Mine and Trade, the Islamic City Council of Tehran, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, etc. However also here, at the very early stages of the research, the number of literature and sources of secondary data and information found that directly covered street food vendors marketing and entrepreneurial marketing practices in Iran and in specific in Tehran were very scant, if not inexistant.¹⁵ However, in terms of primary sources of data and information, within the realm of sources of secondary data and information, there were two videographic primary sources of data and information found.

In terms of the research based on videography¹⁶ the primary data and information found was based on purposive sampling of online videos and focused on Tehran, like the primary pictographic research (see below). The videos that were reviewed were nine. In much the same manner as the pictographic research (see below), the videographic research was based on the aim of the research and also on context, and both behavioural and non-behavioural observations. Non-behavioural observation involved, for example, focusing on physical condition, process and activity flows, while the behavioural observation, for example, considered non-verbal behaviour, linguistic behaviour, extralinguistic behaviour, spatial relationships, interactions, etc. The videographic observations were guided by a general content specification, the who of the observation process; their context, location,

¹² The second phase of the research was conducted in November 2023.

¹³ This third stage of the research was conducted between December 2023 and January 2024.

¹⁴ Amanda Malekazari (MSc.), psychologist, independent researcher.

¹⁵ Seeing the scant outcome of both researchers for literature and sources of secondary data and information, implied not only to implement primary research, but also make further reference to the previous research conducted by Hilmi (2020). However, it also implied to attempt to keep up as far as possible, seeing the situation, and within the context of qualitative research, what Sekaran & Bougie (2016) refer to as the hallmarks of scientific research: purposiveness, rigor, testability, replicability, precision and confidence, objectivity, generalizability, and parsimony.

¹⁶ The videos derived from YouTube were available in the public domain.

physical sales points, the typologies, their interactions, their work processes and flows, their behaviours and non-behaviours, the what and where of the observation process; and the use of videography for documenting the observations, the how of the observation process. The videographic analysis was qualitative, systematic, focused on sequential and content analysis that was provided in a structured way and with a process of coding, categorizing and theming. The analysis was conducted¹⁷ as data and information was coming in and was iterative in nature. This analytical focus, for example, considered context, physical location, events, people, behaviours both manifest and latent, interactions, roles, spoken and non-spoken languages, etc. The findings were then compared to Table 1 below.

The second and third stages of the research, to a good degree, implied to further the research efforts via conducting field work in Iran, in specific in Tehran. This fourth stage of the research¹⁸ was subdivided into two phases. The first phase involved observational research of street food vendors in Tehran using pictography, while the second phase was provided by informal semi-structured and unstructured one to one informal interviews conducted with street food vendors at their selling locations around Tehran.

In terms of the observation research it focused on photographic research. In terms of the photographic research in Tehran, it was based on the aim of the research and involved purposive sampling of street food vendors.¹⁹ It was provided in a structured manner, based on realism, in terms of entering the street food vendors arena directly, covertly, non-participatively, and being based on both context, places, objects, people, and actions and recorded via a pictographic instrument of photography.²⁰ Non-behavioural observation involved focusing on physical condition, process and activity flows, while the behavioural observation considered non-verbal behaviour, extralinguistic behaviour and spatial relationships. The photographic observations were guided by a general content specification, in terms of observing (photographing) and recording street food vendors in their selling locations, the who of the observation process; their context, location, physical sales points, the typologies, their interactions, their work processes and flows, their behaviours and non-behaviours, the what and where of the observation process; and the use of photography to document the observations, the how of the observation process.

The analysis of the photographs was qualitative, systematic, guided overall by the main aim of the research and interpreting the meaning of such visual images within the social, cultural and economic context in which such were generated, and taking full consideration of the possibility of multiple meanings that could be derived. In specific each photograph was analysed systematically by focusing on their content, via firstly denotation and then secondly connotation, in terms of, for example, settings, objects, individuals, groups, categorization, etc. The analysis was conducted²¹ as the data and information was coming in and was iterative. The findings were then compared to Table 1 below.

For the interviews, an interview guide was developed. This was first developed in English, then translated into Persian, taking account of the needed adaptations so as to provide for transfer of meaning. However, the interview guide had to be changed as per the inherent need to convey meaning and this was carried out by the in-country researcher-interviewer. This also implied that the informal interviews be first 'tested,' on a purposive sample basis on three street food vendors,²² so as to enable to better focus, target and improve the interview guide for later interviews. This, in fact did occur, as the interview guide was changed and provided for far better guidance during the interviews conducted later on. As provided previously the interviews were informal, conducted in the manner of a conversation, this reflecting the semi-structured and more so unstructured nature of the intended interviews. The information from the interviews was written down and then the main points, referring to the interview guide, were summarised in interview reports. A report was provided for each of the 20 interviews

¹⁷ The analysis was conducted between January and February 2024.

¹⁸ This fourth stage of the research was conducted between January and February 2024.

¹⁹ The street food vendors focused on in the observation research were not the same as those which would be later interviewed.

²⁰ A total of 26 photographs were taken.

²¹ The analysis was conducted between January and February 2024.

²² This providing for triangulation of the interview guide.

conducted in total. The interviews conducted²³ were based on purposive sampling and conducted in Tehran and were conducted with street food vendors at their premisses at various hours of the day. In terms of the interview analysis, it was based on a qualitative approach of content analysis: coding, categorizing and then theming. This was done in an iterative and sequential process as the information was coming in from the interviews.²⁴ The findings from the interviews were then compared with the validated entrepreneurial marketing characteristics that derived from Hilmi (2020)²⁵ and can be seen in Table 1 here below.

Table 1: Validated entrepreneurial marketing characteristics

Proactive
Growth-Oriented
Risk taking
Calculated risk taking
Risk management
Innovative
Opportunity oriented
Opportunistic
Creative
Resource leveraging
Resource constrained
Customer focused
Customer intensity
Value creation
Relationships
Opportunity driven
Market immersion
Intuitive
Networks

(Source: Hilmi, 2020)

Overall, from the field research conducted in Tehran, a total of 48 street food vendors were covered: the observational (pictographic) research provided for 26 street food vendors, while the informal interviews provided for 20 street food vendors.

Findings

Findings from the analysis of literature and sources of secondary data and information review

As noted previously, in the methods section, the research and review of literature and sources of secondary data and information, provided only for very scant findings, that in most cases did not address the aim of the research directly, but had some minor relevance to the research aim. Jafari *et al.*, (2016) consider market segments for prepared foods in an urban area, as per the changing dietary habits commonly associated with development, urbanization and foreign influences. Jafari *et al.*, (2016) identify five segments that, interestingly, do not buy and consume prepared foods in a similar way. Agheli & Emamgholipour (2016) consider fast food consumption in urban areas and find that economic considerations related to relative prices of fast food and incomes are important explanatory factors. The findings provide that the higher the income, the more is spent on fast food, but also find that fast food

²³ The interviews were conducted in February 2024.
²⁴ The interview analysis was conducted in February 2024.
²⁵ The validated entrepreneurial marketing characteristics in the research by Hilmi (2020) were based on an extensive literature and sources of secondary data and information research and review on entrepreneurial marketing as per micro and small-scale enterprises, but also considered the underlying orientations of customer, market, entrepreneurial and innovation orientations of entrepreneurial marketing. Validation was provided by Hilmi (2020) in that if an entrepreneurial marketing characteristic was found at least two times in the literature and sources of secondary data and information it would be considered a valid characteristic.

consumption has been ‘socialized via imitative behaviour by other income classes in urban areas’ (Agheli & Emamgholipour, 2016). In fact, Chehab (2003) provides that all social classes consume fast food, including the more popular areas of southern Tehran. Further, the findings also reveal that the increase of urbanization and more women entering the work force has reduced food preparation and consumption time availability, hence increases in fast food consumption (Agheli & Emamgholipour, 2016).

Literature and sources of secondary data and information that had some direct relevance, to a rather minor degree, to the research aim, were also found. Razavi & Kalabi (2012) look at the entrepreneurial strategies in marketing of food small and medium-scale enterprises. The findings provide that innovative strategies enable food small and medium scale enterprise to be competitive (Razavi & Kalabi, 2012). In particular the innovative strategies were found to be related to: marketing, markets, customers, processes, flexibility, differentiation, uniqueness and all being provided on a continuous basis. Kolabi *et al.*, (2021) consider the development of the entrepreneurial marketing mix in top small and medium food enterprises in Iran. The findings from Kolabi *et al.*, (2021) provide for a new element in the entrepreneurial marketing mix, that of the ‘P’ for person (the owner/manager of the enterprise), but also find that the other main elements of the marketing mix, price, place, product and promotion are also far more entrepreneurial, then the classic marketing mix commonly provides for. Soltani *et al.*, (2015) considered marketing innovation in small-scale food enterprises in the rural Tehran area. The findings provided that marketing innovation was, in general terms, weak (Soltani *et al.*, 2015). Mehrabadi & Mohammadzadeh (2014) cover women working in street vending of perishable foods in an urban area. The findings provide that many are illiterate, entered street food vending as a way to support their families, and subdivide the rest of their labour in food production (vegetables) for family use and selling, motherhood and housekeeping (Mehrabadi & Mohammadzadeh, 2014).

Findings from the analysis of videographic observations

From the nine videos what emerged was the following:

- Urban context;
- Pedestrian street mainly, with some car and motorbike traffic;
- Mainly streets with car traffic;
- Completely pedestrian streets;
- High pedestrian traffic on each of the street typologies;
- Clusters of street food vendors;
- Use of bright colours for street food vendors’ sales stores;
- Use of bright lights within and outside the street food vendors’ sales stores;
- Use of large photographs of food and large sized menus;
- Few street food vendors sales stores have luminous signs on top of street food sales stores;
- Mainly fixed street food sales stores: stands;
- Minor street food sales stores were mobile with wheels;
- Water sprays from top of street food vendor sales point for cooling customers;
- Street food vendors wearing uniforms;
- Most street food vendors in food and beverage preparation wearing gloves;
- Few street food vendors wearing protective masks while preparing food and beverages;
- Clean premises of street food vendors stores, focus on hygiene and making it clear to customers;
- Ingredients for food and beverage preparation shown to be hygienic as per packaging;
- Food and beverage preparation in front of customers;
- Some street food vendors provide a show in food and beverage preparation;
- Some street food vendors use traditional pots, implements, etc., for food and beverage preparation;
- Diverse types of foods offered deriving mainly from Iran, but also from other countries;
- Street foods offered at varying prices: lowest prices for some traditional Iranian foods;
- Payments made with debit, credit cards and cash;
- Some street food vendors well known for their food specialities;
- Condiments available for customer self-service;

- Street food vendors promoting food orally outside of stores and offer tasting samples;
- Street food vendors offering sample tastes of food from inside street food stores;
- Few street food sales stores have promotional material on the street;
- Some street entertainment provided by artists in costumes, music and dancing;
- Customers mainly young, but also adults and families with little children;
- Street food vendors social, relational and conversational with customers;
- Mostly take away foods, eat while walk, but also possible to sit down at table and on traditional Iranian couches.

Findings from the analysis of pictographic observations

From the 26 photographs what emerged was the following:

- Set in an urban context;
- The context of street food vendors stores was in most cases set in streets with high people traffic;
- Location for the street food stores was set on pavement or on the side of a road or on specifically allotted spaces;
- A minority of street food vendors were located in front of permanent retail food outlets, for example, restaurants and small supermarkets;
- Most street food vendors stores were mobile, had wheels, some that were stationary also had wheels, while the minority were fully stationary;
- Street food vendors' stores varied from traditional push carts to traditional bazar style premises to modern caravan style stores to modern looking food trucks;
- Street food vendors were in most cases selling food and beverages next to other street food vendors, in a form of cluster of street food vendors, and only very few street food vendors, were not in such clusters of street food vendors;
- In the majority of cases bright colours for street food vendor stores were used, plenty of photographs of the food that was being sold were on display, including menus and a small minority used traditional Persian designs on cloth to adorn the street food stores;
- Bright lighting was used not only within the street food stores' premises, but also on the outside of the street food stores' premises;
- Most of the street food vendors had all their ingredients, foods and condiments in full display;
- Most of the street food stores looked clean both inside and outside;
- Food on offer was diverse, for example, from traditional Iranian food and beverages, to food from Italy (pasta and Pizza), from Latina America (Burrito), from USA (hamburgers, similar hotdogs), to vegetarian only foods;
- Preparation of food was done, in most cases, in front of the customer;
- Food and beverage preparation could be simple, for example, based on barbequing maize cobs, and preparing juices, to more elaborate preparation of kebab and traditional tea;
- In only two cases were traditional pottery and utensils used for food and beverage preparation;
- Condiments to food were in the majority of cases available for customer self-service;
- Most street food vendors provided only for take away food (eat while you walk), a minority offered eat while you stand and only a further minority still offered only a few tables and chairs to sit at to eat;
- A minority of street food vendors wore protective masks and gloves;
- A minority of street food vendors wore uniforms;
- Street food vendors appeared to be, in the majority of cases, social, relational and interactive (smiling, laughing, talking with customers, etc.).

Findings from the analysis of the interviews

From the 20 interviews what emerged was the following:

- Street food vendors mostly in fixed location;

- Some street food vendors are mobile, but usually always in same location;
- Some street food vendors are mobile as per police checks and move them on;
- Some street food vendors have licences, most others do not;
- Locational importance;
- Street food vendor clusters;
- Some streets are well known for street foods;
- The well know location for street foods is like an advertisement for street food vendors in the location;
- A few street food vendors use social media and even less websites;
- Locations with high people traffic;
- Few street food vendors are the only vendors on the street;
- Location effects customers' buying;
- Freshness effects customers;
- Food safety, quality and healthiness is important for customers;
- Good attitude is important with customers;
- Good relations with customers is important;
- Consumer demand changes according to season;
- Various food typologies sold, from traditional Persian to Western-style fast food;
- Speciality foods from defined geographical areas of Iran;
- Sell also basic prepared foods that follow seasonal patterns;
- Food not prepared in front of customer, but prepared beforehand and heated upon sale;
- Part of food prepared at home and then finished cooking at street food store;
- Food prepared in front of customers directly;
- Standard food portions are usually provided;
- Food is usually customized;
- Special and unique sauces prepared to go with food;
- As per small profit margins usually cannot allow for food taste sampling with customers;
- Opening hours for some street food vendors are based on customer traffic;
- Opening hours are fixed for some street food vendors;
- Some street food vendors only open for breakfast and lunch;
- Sell food at low prices;
- Prices are usually fixed and not negotiable;
- Small profit margins;
- Some street food vendors for friends usually do not make them pay for food and if they do pay, food is prepared on their specifications;
- Street foods have competitive prices compared to restaurants;
- Some consumers are regular and loyal customers;
- Lower part of the city enables to sell more but at low prices;
- Upper part of the city some street foods are not very popular;
- Appearance of street food vendor is usually important;
- Hygiene of street food store and vendor is important.

Discussion

Discussion on the literature and sources of secondary data and information findings

From the analysis of the literature and sources of secondary data and information, the findings that relate to the research aim directly are somewhat scant. These are as follows:

- Fast foods are consumed usually by consumers with higher incomes;
- Fast food consumption has been socialized via imitative behaviour;
- Urbanization and more women entering the labour force have reduced time available for food preparation, which has resulted in an increase in fast food consumption;

- Five segments were identified in the fast-food market that showed that not all bought and consumed fast foods in the same way;
- Innovative strategies for food SMEs were found, including innovative marketing, market, customer and uniqueness strategies, for example, but were mostly weak in terms of innovation;
- Still for food SMEs, the entrepreneurial marketing mix added in another element, that of Person (owner/manager of enterprise) to the marketing mix, but also that the other elements of the entrepreneurial marketing mix (price, place, product and promotion) were found to be more entrepreneurial;
- Women street food vendors provided for the sale of perishable foods so as mainly to support their families and were also involved in growing vegetables.

As can be provided from the above, generally, as per rapid urbanization, and more specifically women entering the labour force, there has been an increase in prepared foods consumption as time available for food preparation has been reduced. This seemingly has facilitated an increase in fast food consumption, which also has been socialized, mainly by higher income urbanites, and others following as per imitative behaviour.

In terms of food-based SMEs, one new characteristic was found in the entrepreneur marketing mix, that of person, but also that generally the marketing mix was in fact more entrepreneurial. Still in food-based SMEs, innovation was found in marketing, market, customer and uniqueness strategies, but this innovation tended to be weak. In specific, and related to street food vendors, it was found that women would not only produce vegetables, but sell them, with the aim of contributing to family support. What emerges from above in terms of the aim of the research is somewhat scant. The findings provide for why fast-food consumption, in other words already prepared foods, are on the rise. This being based on urbanization, people with higher incomes typically consuming more fast foods, thus may imply an increase in people with higher incomes, socialization of fast foods, and women entering the labour market, thus reducing the time available for food preparation. In terms of women street food vendors, findings did not provide what entrepreneurial marketing practices may be used. The entrepreneurial marketing practices found, were related to food-based SMEs, and not street food vendors in particular, but the person 'P' in the entrepreneurial marketing mix may have some relevance to street food vendors' entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices. This could be much the same in terms of innovative marketing, market, customer and uniqueness strategies found, even though, overall, innovation was found to be weak in nature.

Discussion on videographic findings

In terms of the findings from the videographic analysis, and comparing them with Table 1, what emerges, interestingly, is the following eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics that were found:

1. Market immersion;
2. Customer focused;
3. Customer intensity;
4. Relationships;
5. Innovative;
6. Value creation;
7. Creative;
8. Proactive.

Out of the 19 entrepreneurial marketing characteristics in Table 1, eight characteristics were found. This means that circa 42 percent of the pertinent entrepreneurial marketing characteristics from Table 1, were found from the videographic research. In fact, what emerges from the analysis is that street food vendors in Tehran were immersed in the market, were very focused on customers, had a high intensity of customer focus, were focused on creating value for customers in what food and beverages they provided, thus being innovative, including being proactive, for example, with offering food and

beverage tasting samples and overall sought relations with customers. Thus, and seemingly, street food vendors have some entrepreneurial marketing practices, but less than 50 percent.

However, from the videographic findings, other characteristics do emerge that are interesting in terms of marketing, but may, seemingly not be classified as being strictly entrepreneurial marketing characteristics per se as per Table 1. The first characteristic to emerge is the clustering of street food vendors all selling in a specific location. Even though the street food vendors are competing against each other, seemingly, they are all in the 'same boat' of marketing their food and beverages. This implies a form of group marketing, but which is community-based in nature, as it considers all the street food vendors together as in a community.²⁶ Thus what emerges as a practice is that of street food vendors' community marketing. The second characteristic to emerge, and related to the first, is that of location and its importance. Being located, for example, in streets with high customer traffic is obviously important for marketing. Thus, the emergence of location as a marketing practice.

The third characteristic to emerge is that of focusing on food safety and related hygiene. This was emphasized by most of the street food vendors preparing food in front of customers, some wearing uniforms, most wearing gloves while preparing food, some wearing face masks, and the ingredients being used coming from packages of various kinds. This was further supported by the cleanliness of street food vendors' sales points. All this was seemingly done not only to reassure customers about street food safety and hygiene, but to provide a form of transparency with the customers on what food and beverages were being prepared and how they were being prepared. Seemingly a focus on food safety and quality and using this as a marketing practice. The fourth characteristic to emerge was that of marketing communications, which were mainly physical, visual, oral, but also sensory. The physical communication was, for example, provided by the event which was artistic and show like when street food vendors prepared food in front of customers and at the same time talking with them. The marketing communications were also visual in the sense of bright colours used in the street food stores' decorations, some street food vendors having the same colour uniform as the street food vendor's store's decorations, the lighting used both inside and outside of the street food vendors' store and the large photos²⁷ of food and beverage used, the menus and the illuminated signs on some street food vendors' stores. The other matter was the sensory perfume of the food and beverages being prepared that communicated also with customers. Further, there was the oral and sensory matters associated with taste samples where the street food vendor would orally communicate with customers, but also enable sensory communication to take place via the tasting samples. Thus, what emerges is the use of physical, oral, visual, sensory and event communications as a marketing practice. The fifth characteristic to emerge was that related to the pricing of food. This provided for a range of prices, the lowest prices, commonly for traditional Iranian food, and going upwards, as street foods were diversified into more international typologies of food. This characteristic was also intermingled with method of payment that was customer-oriented, offering options of payment in cash, debit and credit card. This was interesting as it seemingly signals that not all street food vendors may be operating informally, as is commonly presumed when it comes to street food vendors.

From the above, what then emerges are five street food vendors' marketing practices, in terms of:

1. Street food vendors' community marketing practice;
2. Street food vendors' locational marketing practice;
3. Street food vendors' food safety and quality for customer reassurance marketing practice;
4. Street food vendors visual, physical, oral, event and sensory marketing communications practice;
5. Street food vendors differing pricing range and payment typology marketing practice.

Seemingly from the above what emerges overall is that street food vendors do carry out entrepreneurial marketing practices, but to a lesser degree (42 percent). However, street food vendors also do carry out other marketing practices which may be, and seemingly, classified as classic

²⁶ This is interesting as it coincides with what Stock (2021) suggests in the realm of street food marketing in developed economies: being part of a community that fosters appeal and customer loyalty as per the locational inferences implied by being within the community.

²⁷ This also interestingly is provided by Stock (2021) in the realm of street food marketing in developed economies: the use of photography as a marketing practice for street foods.

marketing practices, but tend to focus on particularities of street food vendor marketing practices, like for example, the customer reassurance marketing practice of focusing on food safety and quality. This coupling of street food vendors' entrepreneurial marketing practices and classic marketing practices, seems to confirm, to a degree what was provided previously in Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, that micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, eight characteristics found, then classic marketing characteristics and practices, five characteristics found, even though there are overlaps between the two. However, some of the so-called classic marketing practices found seemingly are specific to street food vendors, even though they can be related to such typologies of marketing as, for example, retail marketing, group marketing, relationship marketing and social marketing.

Discussion on pictographic findings

In terms of the findings from the pictographic analysis, and comparing them with Table 1, what emerges are six entrepreneurial marketing characteristics:

1. Market immersion;
2. Customer focused;
3. Customer intensity;
4. Relationships;
5. Value creation;
6. Creative.

This means that out of the 19 entrepreneurial marketing characteristics found in Table 1, six characteristics were found, corresponding to circa 31 percent of the pertinent entrepreneurial marketing characteristics. What emerges is that street food vendors were immersed in the market, were focused and intense on customers, sought relationships and provided value and to be creative. Thus, and seemingly, street food vendors have some entrepreneurial marketing practices, but set at 31 percent. However, and much like the videographic findings, other characteristics from the pictographic findings emerge that seemingly portray classic marketing practices. Interestingly, the first two characteristics to emerge are that of street food vendors' cluster and locational marketing. In other words, social community marketing practices and locational marketing practices. The third interesting characteristic to emerge is that of food and beverage product diversity offerings from the street food vendors found in the cluster. This provided for not only diverse Iranian foods, but food from other parts of the world, this offering a wide range of products to choose from in the street food vendors' social community marketing practice. Thus, providing for the practice of product diversification in marketing practice. The fourth characteristic to emerge which is related to the locational marketing practice was that of the mobility of most of the street food vendors' stores as per wheels found. This characteristic enabled, seemingly, street food vendors to diversify their locational marketing practices and hence take advantage, seemingly, of multiple locations. This thus providing for location diversification as a marketing practice. The fifth characteristic was that of physical and visual marketing communications. Most street food vendors sales stores were decorated with bright colours, with bright lights both inside and outside the street food vendors' stores, provided for large photos of food and beverages on sale and in some cases menus as well as preparing the food in front of consumers. Thus, what emerges is physical and visual communication in marketing practice.

Thus, what emerges from the above are five marketing practices of street food vendors, in terms of:

1. Street food vendors' community marketing practice;
2. Street food vendors' locational marketing practice;
3. Street food vendors' community product diversity marketing practice;
4. Street food vendors' locational diversity marketing practice;
5. Street food vendors' visual and physical marketing communications practice.

Interestingly, and like the previous findings from the videographic analysis, these marketing characteristics are very similar to them, expect for the street food vendors' food safety and quality for customer reassurance marketing practice. However, there was also, in the case of the findings from the pictographic research, far more emphasis on the community and locational marketing practices as per the product diversity and locational diversity. This, seemingly emphasising the far more social nature of such community marketing practices and in the case of locational diversity, far more reach in terms of access to customers in differing parts of the urban centre.

Like with the videographic findings, the five practices found seemingly are classical marketing practices, but with a seeming focus on the peculiarities of street food vendors' marketing practices. Here though, and as per Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, that micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, six characteristics were found, but five classic marketing characteristics and practices, were found, providing for a near parity between entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices and classic marketing characteristics and practices. Thus, it seems that the findings from the photographic research provided for a somewhat balance between entrepreneurial and classic marketing practices provided by street food vendors. Also here, and much like the videographic findings, the classic marketing practices, seemingly relate to such typologies of marketing as, for example, retail marketing, group marketing, relationship marketing and social marketing.

In terms of the entrepreneurial marketing characteristics that derive both from the videographic and pictographic findings are the same. However, in the videographic findings these provided for eight characteristics that were found, while in the pictographic findings six characteristics were found. This is interesting, as like, the classic marketing practices found, those of entrepreneurial marketing are the same and only diverge as per two characteristics. Thus, and seemingly from the two sets of findings, what is starting to emerge is validity and reliability of the findings as both the videographic and pictographic findings are similar, if not the same.

Discussion on interview findings

In terms of the findings from the interviews, and comparing them with Table 1, what emerges are the following eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics:

1. Market immersion;
2. Customer focused;
3. Customer intensity;
4. Relationships;
5. Innovative;
6. Value creation;
7. Creative;
8. Proactive.

These eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics interestingly are the same as those that emerged from the videographic findings, and six characteristics that emerged from the pictographic findings. In terms of the eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics these represent circa 42 percent of the entrepreneurial marketing characteristics found in Table 1. What emerges from the analysis of the interviews is that there is market immersion of street food vendors, there is an intensity and focus on customers, relationships are important with customers, and creating value and being not only innovative in this, but also being proactive is also seemingly important. This all implies that street food vendors do have some 42 percent of their marketing activities that are entrepreneurial in nature.

Interestingly, and much in line with the videographic and pictographic findings, what emerges from the interview findings are other marketing characteristics and practices that are seemingly classic marketing in nature. The nine practices found are:

1. Street food vendors' community marketing practice;
2. Street food vendors' locational marketing practice;
3. Street food vendors' locational diversity marketing practice;

4. Street food vendors' community product diversity marketing practice;
5. Street food vendors' geographical speciality product marketing;
6. Street food vendors' product seasonality marketing;
7. Street food vendors' food safety and quality for customer reassurance marketing practice;
8. Street food vendors visual, physical, oral, and sensory marketing communications practice;
9. Street food vendors' low price marketing.

The above classic marketing characteristics and practices are much the same as those in the videographic and pictographic findings, save for three practices: low pricing marketing practice, seasonality product marketing practice and the geographic speciality product marketing practice. Interestingly, these nine practices provide that street food vendors practice more classic marketing practices than eight entrepreneurial marketing practices identified previously. Further, and still in terms of classic marketing practices from the interview findings, such are more classic marketing practices than those from the videographic and pictographic findings, even though there are similarities between all the findings. Moreover, the entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices from the interview, videographic and pictographic findings are much the same and only vary in the number found as per the pictographic findings provide for only six characteristics and practices. Interestingly from the interview findings this does not confirm what was provided previously in Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, that micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, than classic marketing characteristics and practices, but still both typologies are provided.

Overall discussion on the findings

From the above findings what emerges is that the eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices found were:

1. Market immersion;
2. Customer focused;
3. Customer intensity;
4. Relationships;
5. Innovative;
6. Value creation;
7. Creative;
8. Proactive.

Hilmi (2020) found seven entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices as provided here below:

1. Networks;
2. Knowledge of market demand;
3. Risk-taking,
4. Self-confidence (calculated risk-taking);
5. Low production costs (resource constrained),
6. Customer-relationships;
7. Value creation.

Interestingly in comparing the eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices found in this research to those found in Hilmi (2020) what emerges is that only two characteristics and practices are the same:

1. Customer-relationships;
2. Value creation.

The rest are different and thus, imply, that by combining the findings of this research with those of Himi (2020) provides for the following 13 entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices as provided by street food vendors:

1. Market immersion;
2. Knowledge of market demand;
3. Networks;
4. Risk taking;
5. Self-confidence (calculated risk taking);
6. Low production costs (resource constrained);
7. Customer focused;
8. Customer intensity;
9. Relationships;
10. Innovative;
11. Value creation;
12. Creative;
13. Proactive.

In terms of all the classic marketing characteristics and practices found by the research and all added together, provide for 10 characteristics and practices found. These being as follows:

1. Street food vendors' community marketing practice;
2. Street food vendors' locational marketing practice;
3. Street food vendors' locational diversity marketing practice;
4. Street food vendors' community product diversity marketing practice;
5. Street food vendors' geographical speciality product marketing;
6. Street food vendors' product seasonality marketing;
7. Street food vendors' food safety and quality for customer reassurance marketing practice;
8. Street food vendors visual, physical, oral, and sensory marketing communications practice;
9. Street food vendors' low price marketing;
10. Street food vendors differing pricing range and payment typology marketing practice.

In general terms, from the above, seemingly street food vendors practice less entrepreneurial marketing (eight characteristics) and more classic marketing (10 characteristics). However, considering in detail the findings from the videographic and the pictographic research provides that entrepreneurial marketing practices are provided more than classic marketing practices and only in the findings from the interviews do street food vendors classic marketing practices find to be slightly more, by one practice, over entrepreneurial marketing practices. This confirms overall, that in a good majority of cases, street food vendors practice more entrepreneurial marketing than classic marketing. This confirming what was provided previously in Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, that micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, then classic marketing characteristics and practices. However, this should not undermine the fact that effectively both typologies of marketing practice are provided for by street food vendors and that both practices intermingle and overlap. Moreover, such practices as per the findings above are conducted mostly in informal urban agri-food marketing system to a good degree, even though some street food vendors were found to be formal i.e., have licenses. This provides much to confirm also that in the street economy, urban agri-food marketing systems tend to be informal, but also have a degree of formality, thus implying the intermingling and overlaps between the informal and the formal urban street economy.

What also emerged from the research was that in terms of eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices found were the same. This possibly implies that these could be specific to street food vendors. Much the same emerged from the findings in terms of classic marketing characteristics and practices, which also seem to be specific to street food vendors. Such findings may, seemingly, start to identify marketing characteristics and practices that are indeed a mix of entrepreneurial marketing and classic marketing characteristics and practices, but are specific to street

food vendors. For example, in terms of entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices street food vendors are immersed in markets, focus heavily and intensely on customers and seek customer relationships. In terms of classic marketing, for example, this implies locational marketing considerations (retail marketing), group marketing (street food vendors' clusters), relationship marketing (street food vendors' relational stance with customers) and social marketing (marketing street food vendor community food products). Thus, and seemingly, these marketing characteristics and practices by street food vendors seem to be specific to such typologies of agri-food enterprises.

Conclusions

From the above findings and discussions, it can be thus concluded that street food vendors provide for slightly more characteristics and practices of entrepreneurial marketing, than classic marketing, but the two typologies of marketing characteristics and practices intermingle, overlap and are both used. In regard specifically to entrepreneurial marketing characteristic and practices found, these were effectively confirmed via the triangulation of the interviews, the videographic and pictographic findings. Thus, the resulting eight entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices are validated and are:

1. Market immersion;
2. Customer focused;
3. Customer intensity;
4. Relationships;
5. Innovative;
6. Value creation;
7. Creative;
8. Proactive.

In terms of the classic marketing characteristics and practices what emerges from the interviews, the videographic and pictographic findings are overall ten characteristics and practices and these being:

1. Street food vendors' community marketing practice;
2. Street food vendors' locational marketing practice;
3. Street food vendors' locational diversity marketing practice;
4. Street food vendors' community product diversity marketing practice;
5. Street food vendors' geographical speciality product marketing;
6. Street food vendors' product seasonality marketing;
7. Street food vendors' food safety and quality for customer reassurance marketing practice;
8. Street food vendors visual, physical, oral, and sensory marketing communications practice;
9. Street food vendors' low price marketing;
10. Street food vendors differing pricing range and payment typology marketing practice.

Thus, and as per the findings above, it can also here be concluded with a good degree of confidence that as provided previously in Hilmi (2020) and Hilmi (2022c), for example, that micro and small-scale enterprises, like the enterprises of street food vendors, tend to, by degree, demonstrate more entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, than classic marketing characteristics and practices, but still both typologies are provided. However, in this research, there was far more of a balance between the two typologies of characteristics and practices.

Overall, in terms of entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, the research has augmented the validated characteristics and practices found in Hilmi (2020). Thus, the validated street food vendor entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices found overall are:

1. Market immersion;
2. Knowledge of market demand;
3. Networks;
4. Risk taking
5. Self-confidence (calculated risk taking);

6. Low production costs (resource constrained),
7. Customer focused;
8. Customer intensity;
9. Relationships;
10. Innovative;
11. Value creation;
12. Creative;
13. Proactive.

The above combined 13 entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, from this research and Hilmi (2020), provide for 68 percent of the characteristics when compared with Table 1. Thus, it seems that when further research is conducted in the realm of country-based cases, more street food vendor entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices are found. This means that street food vendors tend to practice more entrepreneurial marketing than classic marketing practice.

In regard to the above, thus, more research is suggested still in the realm of street food vendors' entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices, focusing on Iran, but also on other countries. This so as to further and possibly ascertain more validated entrepreneurial marketing characteristics and practices as carried out by street food vendors. Such research, should though, also consider identifying other typologies of marketing characteristics and practices that may emerge, like for example, those of classic marketing. Further, what also emerged from this research, was a preliminary identification of marketing characteristics and practices that may be seemingly specific to street food vendors only. This also suggests further research in attempts to identify if such marketing characteristics and practices are effectively specific to street food vendors or not.

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