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Effective Factors on Souvenir Purchase: The Case of Foreign Tourists' Viewpoint in Tehran City

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ABSTRACT

The present research aims to gain a better understanding of determinants on the souvenir-purchase behavior of inbound tourists, a vital factor affecting tourists' experience in destinations, yet scant attention has been devoted to this in the literature. Drawing on the Oh's travel expenditure model (2007), this study examines the influence of three types of variables: individual traveler characteristics; trip characteristics; and the perceived value of the souvenirs on tourists' spending on shopping. The results obtained, through an analysis of self-administered questionnaires gathered from a sample of 115 inbound tourists in Tehran city, showed that men tent to spend more on souvenir purchase than women; there is not a significant relationship in terms of shopping spending patterns between leisure tourists and business tourists; and design, traditional motifs, quality and portability of souvenirs affect purchase behavior considerably. Further analysis and other findings are also discussed, and recommendations for future research are put forth in this paper.

KEYWORDS:
Souvenir purchase, inbound tourists, Tehran city.

ECONLIT KEYS
L83; R19; O53.

1. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

Souvenir may remind us a place, an occasion or even a person (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Souvenir purchasing whether for others or one's personal use, either way, gives rise to the tangibility of the trip for the visitor to the point that encourages one's memory to remember the important events of his or her own lives known as 'Strategic Memory Protection' (Zauberman, 2009). There are of course a variety of motivating forces for buying souvenirs among tourists including purchasing a souvenir as a gift (Kim et al, 2001; Gordon; 1986), as a symbol (Gordon, 1986) or as a memento of the visit (Littrell et al. 1994; Swanson, 2004).

According to MacCannell (2002), purchase is viewed as one of the most important activities among tourists (MacCannell, 2002). Shopping souvenir is a behavior occurs during activities, including trips and other leisure times. In fact, not many people pass their holidays without shopping tangible objects (Littrell et al., 1994). The type of souvenirs is different from one person to another and from one experience to the other one. It may be a luxury and unique artwork or an ordinary item, a t-shirt or be a painted curtain or a poster with a different snow view. But what makes us study about souvenir shopping is that it covers a considerable part of purchase price in the tourism industry, as in previous researches about shopping, it seems that one third of travel expenses is allocated to purchasing (Littrell et al., 1994). Purchasing impulsively results from tourists' desires in the destination and is regarded as a good income source for retailers. Obviously, such unplanned purchases happen when buyers enter into indicating that they just feel like purchasing frivolously, rather than getting a specific item (Timothy, 2009).

Regarding the importance of tourism in the economic development, tourism policy makers strive to make the industry attractive both tourists and residents. In order to attract tourists and increase their length of stay, knowing deeply their shopping behavior is an important factor. Accordingly, the current study aims to investigate the determinants of souvenir-purchase behavior of inbound tourists to Tehran. In fact, the study examines the influence of three types of variables; individual traveler characteristics; trip characteristics; and the perceived value of the souvenirs on tourists'

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spending on shopping. Finally, the souvenirs purchased by foreign tourists in Tehran will be classified based on their popularity and tendency to purchase.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Shopping centers are not only considered as one of the main tourist attractions, but they have also, a significant link with the other tourist attractions in cities. Shopping centers have a leading role in bringing about a good atmosphere in the destination and among tourists as well to the point that some view them as one of the most attractive spot of the destination. In most urban tourism types, shopping is considered a secondary motivation, showing the tendency and motivation of tourists to pass their time shopping at trading centers in the visiting cities and its contribution to their tourism experiences. Therefore, tourism destinations try to plan for providing such environments for obtaining higher earnings (Saghaei et al., 2012). In order to better perceive about the current circumstance of souvenir purchase in city of Tehran, it is important to know the studies carried out in Iran (Table 1):

Researcher(s) and the time of study	Investigating Area
Yazdani (2007)	An Investigation on Influencing Factors on Tourist Shopping Attitude of Iranian Handmade Carpet in Isfahan city
Zargham & Atrsaee (2009)	The Relationship between Demography Factors and Handicraft Shopping Behavior of European Tourists in Isfahan city
Saghaei et al.(2011)	Analysis of The Role of Shopping Centers in Relation to Tourism and Pilgrimage in Metropolises (Case Study: Mashhad)
Karoubi et al. (2012)	Analysis of Route Selection Behavior by Tourists in Tabriz Historical Bazaar

Table 1: Studies on shopping and tourism in Iran. Own elaboration.

There are no studies regarding tourists entering Tehran yet. Since Tehran is the political capital and the largest city in Iran, plus the fact that it holds the *Imam Khomeini International Airport*, which is the largest international airport of Iran from which most

international passengers enter and exit the country, the present study has special importance.

In research conducted outside of Iran (Mok & Lam, 1997), upon the extension of Keown Model that includes studies on Taiwan tourists' shopping behavior in Hong Kong, a model is introduced that shows significant relationships among shopping models, the aim of the trip and age, as well as a very strong connection between earning and shopping costs. According to their findings, Mok and Iverson (2000) expressed that tourists' shopping behavior could be anticipated from four viewpoints: (i) tourist characteristics, such as culture, age, gender, income, education, family life circle; (ii) trip's characteristics, such as goal, type, e.g. either as tour or individual trip, trip length, fellow travelers, previous visitors; (iii) destination characteristics, such as types and diversity of goods, price privilege, retail sellers strategy, quality, services, show, place; and (iv) occasional characteristics, such as weather and time (like Christmas or Chinese New Year).

2.1) *INDIVIDUAL TRAVELER CHARACTERISTICS*

Iranian and foreign tourists' shopping behavior is different considering their age, gender and earnings, showing that personal characteristics of the tourists influence their shopping tendency and behavior. Lehto et al. (2004) argued that the aim of the trip, age and gender are the influencing factors on souvenir purchasing.

H1: Demographic factors have a positive influence on souvenir purchase amount.

2.1.1) *GENDER*

Investigating gender differences makes an important part of tourism behavior study (Swain, 1995). Researches show that women often tend to buy more souvenirs rather than men's (Anderson & Littrell, 1995). Findings about shopping motivations present important understandings about consumers' behavior. The role of souvenir as gift is more powerful among women.

H1a: Women's tendency toward souvenir purchase in Tehran is more than men's.

2.1.2)   AGE

Generally, age and aim of trip make considerable anticipations about consumer behavior. However, the findings about age and cost are somehow contradictory for example, Timothy (2005) mentions that age has not been known in tourist's shopping behavior yet. Literature shows that, souvenir priorities have changed the trip experience in lifecycle (Smith & Olson, 2001). Investigations show that people's age makes objects mean differently. Thus, generally, people show less interest to shopping goods and in turn they show more tendency to pay much money for family relationships and qualified experience by getting older (OH, 2007). Upon studying lifecycle of different families by considering a great population of New Zealand International Visitors, as well as considering tourist expenses, Lawson (1991) found out that among three groups - bachelors, young couples and solitary survivors -, solitary survivors pay more for shopping; therefore, their shopping is significant, they spend 41.4% of their trip cost for shopping (Lawson, 1991).

H1b: The older the people, the more their tendency toward souvenir purchase.

2.1.3)   HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND EDUCATION

Considering leisure time, researchers determine income as one of the most important characteristics of household for shopping model (Cai et al., 1995). According to Jang et al. (2004; 2005), there are some witnesses proving that household incomes, together with education levels, influence on consideration of holidays and consumption during the trip (Dardis et al., 1994). The effects of different families on recreation and entertainment have been investigated; they found out, income has an important role in determining family recreation and entertainment cost. In 1990, while investigating consumers' expenses, Cai et al. (1995) considered a consumption model for families' leisure time in food, housing, transportation and entertainment in USA. Findings show that income has a positive and significant influence in all four groups (Agarwal & Yochum, 1995). While fewer studies consider the influence of income on tourists shopping behavior, the results are somehow different (Lee, 2002).

In a festival tourism, Lee (2002) studies domestic tourists' consumption models in five different levels: residence, food and drink, shopping, transportation and other

entertainment costs. Among the population and social variables studied, Lee (2002) observes that household income just affects tourists' payment for souvenir and local special products shopping rather more than that of the others. Therefore, the present literature shows that income is a key index for the determination of the number of leisure time's trips. However, it is not clear that how family income influence on tourists shopping behavior.

H1c: People income has a positive influence on souvenir purchase amount.

H1d: Education has a positive influence on souvenir purchase amount

2.2) *TRIP CHARACTERISTICS*

In 2007, OH presented a model that shows that trip conditions affect shopping amount. In this study, the influence of trip characteristics on passenger's cost for shopping is studied. He mentions trip dimensions that include trip activities, fellow travelers, and other trip factors, such as trip season, trip type and transportation. Each of such dimensions will be discussed as follows.

H2: Trip Characteristics have a positive influence on souvenir purchase amount.

2.2.1) PURPOSE OF PURCHASE

Studies show that recreational travel tourists, spend more on trips in comparison with the other ones (who travel to visit their relatives, trade, festival, etc. (OH, 2007)). Therefore,

H2a: Trade tourists show fewer tendencies toward souvenir purchase.

2.2.2) TRIP REPEAT

Kim and Littrell (2001) found out that the more people travel to a specific destination, the more their perception toward the originality of souvenir shopping has changed. They showed that the more people travel to Mexico, the less they want to buy stereotype souvenirs, because the special souvenirs for tourists that is highly evocative of the destination have been purchased in the first visit. Smith and Olson (2001) express that knowing a destination through several visits may affect the meaning and types of

purchased souvenirs. Studies show that the first-time visitors of a place tend to shop inexpensive, stereotype, trade or symbolic souvenirs. Upon increasing of awareness about the destination in the next trips, they may change their minds and decide to purchase meaningful handicrafts or visit the craftsmen directly, or the like. (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Collins-Krenier & Zins, 2011).

H2b: The people who travelled to Iran previously show fewer tendencies toward souvenir purchase.

2.2.3) TRIP PARTY

Trip party may influence on buyers, whether leisure trips or business ones (Ng, 2003). Therefore, gender types of family members, friends, co-workers or youth members of the family may affect different methods of group shopping behavior. Tauber (1972, cited by OH, 2007) found out that, a social experience with friends is a social motivation that encourages shopping.

H2c: Tourists who travel alone shop less souvenir than those travelling with groups.

2.2.4) TRANSPORTATION MODE

Lee (2002) also observes that, travelers who travel with personal car, in comparison with the visitors travel with other transportation mode, like airplane, train, subway or bus, shop more. Pysarchik (1989, cited by OH, 2007), that air travelers have less capability for carrying goods when turning back, regarding the size, fragility and controllability. His findings express that transportation options and substructures are important factors that influence visitors' shopping behavior.

H2d: Transportation mode has a positive influence on souvenir purchase amount.

2.3) PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Scholars argue that both internal effects (consumer) and external ones (retail sellers) have a valuable effects on making shopping as a leisure. Internal factors generally are linked with issues like socializing, time scheduling, duty performing, knowing goods and financial sources. External factors or retail selling include methods like good selection,

special price, retail selling environment, and sellers who affect buyers' experience (Timothy, 2009). OH (2007) maintains that value perceived by tourists, uniqueness, attractiveness, and destination environment quality increase tourists feelings. Positive feelings make positive value that increase tourist buyers' enjoyment and excitement so that increases the relationship between people and sellers. Positive feelings make tourists spend more time and money on shopping.

H3: Perceived value of the environment increases souvenir purchase amount.

2.4) *SOUVENIRS OF TEHRAN PROVINCE*

The common handicrafts of Tehran province can be divided in three groups: urban, rural and nomadic ones. The main handicrafts of Tehran province include engraving on copper, turnery, basketry, incrustation, glass working, glass carving, Pile-less carpet weaving (Ziloo), painting leather, carpet weaving and pottery, mat-making, varni-weaving, hand-weaving, batik, tent textile weaving (Jajim), and kilim-weaving, cushion cover, gunny, dyeing and spinning (Zendedel, 1999).

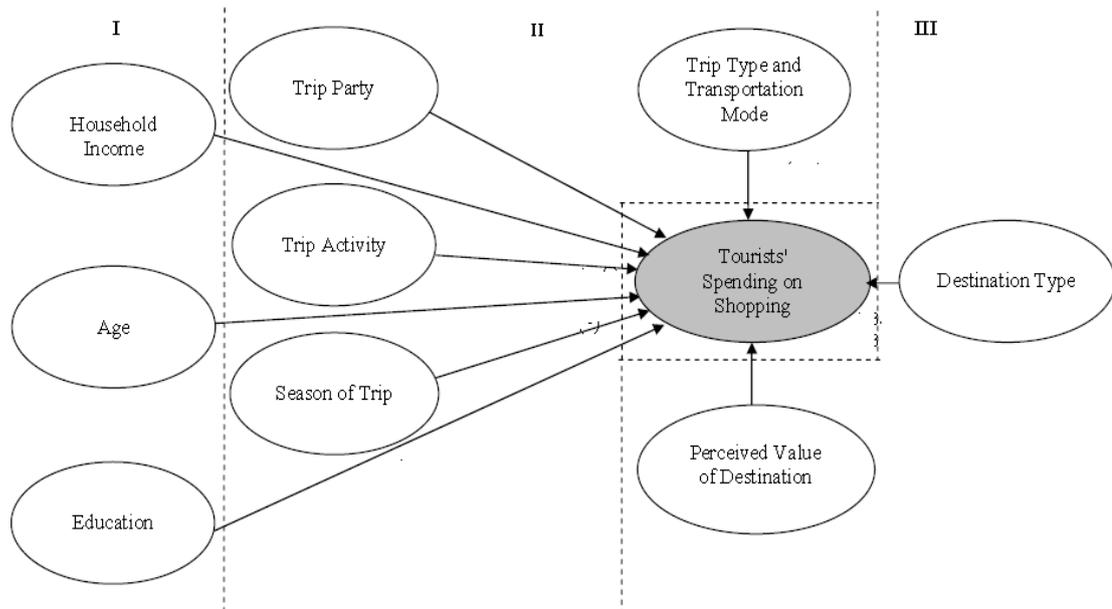The model used for this research is the one presented by OH in 2007 (Figure 1).

Fig.1: Conceptual Model of Tourists Payments.
Source: OH (2007).

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3. METHODOLOGY

The present research is a descriptive research and data were collected via a survey in *Tehran National Museum*. The statistical population was inbound tourists entering Tehran between November and December 2013. Data has gathered via a 21-item questionnaire including open-ended and close-ended questions, distributed to 200 tourists of the 200 questionnaire distributed, 115 were collected and 110 were complete and were able to be used. Data were analyzed by SPSS. Oh's Model 2007 was used; variables are classified in three parts including individual traveler characteristics; trip characteristics; and the perceived value of the souvenirs on tourists' spending on shopping. A Cronbach coefficient alpha test was conducted on the 8 items to determine the internal consistency of the scale used. The value of Cronbach alpha coefficient for perceived-value is 0.839, which is a good score.

Demographic and Personal Characteristics of the Sample: The following table shows collected data profiles by questionnaire.

Variables	Index	Level	Percent	Variables	Index	Level	Percent
Demographic Factors	Nationality	Hong Kong	12.06%	Trip Conditions	Trip Means	Airplane	90%
		Italy	11.7%			Train	1.8%
		China	909%			Personal Car	1.8%
		French	7.2%			Others	6.4%
		Germany	6.3%	Residence Days		1 day	3.6%
		USA	5.4%			2-4 Days	45.5%
		Australia	5.4%			More than 5 Days	50%
		Others	4.1%				
Gender	M		64.5%	Number of Trips		Once	74.3%
	F		35.5%			2-4 Times	21%
						More than 5Times	4.8%
Age		Less than 20	2.8%	Trip Party		Alone	28.4%
		20-30	30.6%			Family/Relatives	37.8%
		30-40	29.4%			Coworkers	8.1%
		40-50	22%			Friends	17.1%
		More than 50	15.6%			Others	6.3%
Salary		Less than 2000 USD	27.9%	Expenditure		Less than 200 USD	55.9%
		2000-3000 USD	17.1%			200-400 USD	18.9%
		3000-4000 USD	19.8%			400-600 USD	7.2%
		4000-5000 USD	15.4%			More than 600 USD	8.1%
		More than 5000 USD	5.4%			No Response	8.1%
		No Response	14.4%				

Shopping Center	Tax-exempted Shops	1.8%	Purpose of Trip	Recreation	74.8%
	Shopping Center	5.5%		Trading	8.1%
	Traditional Bazaar	47.3%		Visiting Relatives	7.2%
	Museums	11.8%		Recreation & Trading	8.1%
	Others	0.9%		Others	0.9%
	Museum with Historical Website	32.7%			
Education	High School	13.6%	Most Important Information Sources	Acquaintances	28.4%
	Bachelor's Degree	34.5%		Internet/Radio/TV	7.8%
	Master's Degree & PhD	54.8%		Guide Books	42.2%
				Hotel/Airlines	6.9%
				Tourism Guide	2.9%
				Other	5.9%

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Responses to their Favorite Souvenirs.

According to the collected data, purchased souvenirs by tourists are classified as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that inbound tourists in Tehran preferred to purchase pistachio, nuts, sweets, tea, herbal drink, and saffron in terms of food, and rug, woodwork, kilim, jewelry and miniature in terms of handicrafts. They paid a good attention to publications too such as CDs, books, and postal cards.

Frequency Distribution of Purchased Souvenirs by Tourists in Tehran	Frequency %	Frequency Distribution of Purchased Souvenirs by Tourists in Tehran	Frequency %
Pistachio & Dried Nuts	56.8	Silversmith	22.5
Sweets	54.1	Turquoise Inlaying	18.9
Publications (Books, Music, Greetings Cards)	50.5	Mosaic	16.2
Tea & Herbal Drinks	45	Pottery	16.2
Saffron	37.8	Copper Products	14.4
Carpet	36.9	Enamelwork	13.5
Leather	27.9	Glazed Pottery	13.5
Wood Products	26.1	Silk Brocade	11.7
Kilim	24.3	Metal Work	11.7
Tile & Ceramic	24.3	Relief	10.8
Jewelry	23.4	Plaything	10.8
Traditional Painting	22.5	Filigree Work	9.9

Table 3: Purchased souvenirs by tourists.

4. RESULTS

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4.1)   *ANALYTICAL STATISTICS*

This part is about inferential statistics of data. The hypotheses are tested by statistical tests and the results will be discussed. The hypotheses are firstly analyzed individually and then the research purposes will be considered.

H1a: Women's tendency for shopping souvenir in Tehran is more than men's

Independent T-test is used for this hypothesis. According to analysis, two states are considered for Independent T-test: supposing Equality of Variances and not-supposing Equality of Variances. Also, we have another test, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances.

Null hypothesis in this test is Equality of Variances that regarding a significant amount (P<0.05 & F= 5.39), this hypothesis was not confirmed at P<0.05; therefore, the Variances are not equal, and in order to do Independent T-test, we shall consider the state of not-supposing Equality of Variances. But, Null hypothesis for Independent T-test is Equality of Variances was not confirmed at 0.05 (P< 0.05 & T=2.24); thus, there is a difference between men and women regarding the tendency toward souvenir purchase (Table 4). Now, in order to determine which one has more tendencies toward souvenir purchase, we use T-test to compare, and expenditure mean for men is more than women, so, men tend to purchase souvenir more than women and this is the exact reverse of our hypothesis.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Var.		T-test for Equality of Means					Confidence Interval 95%	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2 tailed)	Mean Dev	Standard Error of Diff	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Souvenir Purchase	Supposing Equality of Variances	5.39	0.02	2.08	108	0.04	0.41	0.2	0.02	0.79
	Not Supposing Equality of Variances			2.24	96	0.03	0.41	0.18	0.05	0.77

P<0.05, P<0.1

Table 4: Independent T-test for Comparison Men's & Women's Souvenir Purchase.

H1b: The older the people, the more their tendency for shopping souvenir.

In order to test this hypothesis we use One Way ANOVA. Tables 5 and 6 are related to this test. According to table 5, Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances was confirmed at 0.05 (P> 0.05 & F=0.65); therefore, senior visitors are not necessarily willing to purchase more souvenirs upon getting older.

Variables Source	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean-square	F	Sig.
Intra-groups	2.62	4	0.65	0.65	0.628
Inter-groups	105.6	105	1		
Total	108.2	109			

P< 0.05, P< 0.1

Table 5: One Way ANOVA for the Comparison Souvenir Purchase among Age Groups.

H1c: People's income has a positive influence on purchase amount.

In order to test this hypothesis we use One Way ANOVA. The results show that Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances was confirmed at 0.05, however it fails at 0.1 (P=0.07 & F= 2.2); therefore, we fail Null hypothesis to the benefit of hypothesis one. Thus, souvenir purchasing amount is different among different income levels. Now, in order to find out which groups are different from each other, we use Paired-Samples T test and the results shows, we have two sub-groups for incomes, since souvenir purchasing amount in sub-group 2 is more, then this sub-group purchase souvenir more, therefore, incomes higher than 2000 USD buy souvenir more.

H1d: Education has a positive influence on souvenir purchase.

In order to test this hypothesis, we use One Way ANOVA. According to data extracted, Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances is not failed at 0.05 (P>0.05 & F= 0.175); therefore, education level has no effect on shopping.

H2a: Trade tourists show fewer tendencies for souvenir purchase.

In order to test this hypothesis, first we divide tourists to two trading and not-trading groups. Then we use Independent T-test. On result, we can say that Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances of souvenir purchase in two trading and not-trading groups was

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confirmed at 0.05 (with and without the hypothesis of Equality of Variances); therefore, trading tourists tend to buy souvenir more than non-trading ones.

H2b: The people who traveled to Iran previously, show fewer tendencies toward souvenir purchase.

In order to test above hypothesis, first tourists are divided to two groups: first-time traveler to Iran and several-time travelers to Iran; then, we use independent T-test. On result, Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances of souvenir purchase in two First-time & Several-time travelers groups was confirmed at 0.05 (with and without the hypothesis of Equality of Variances); therefore, both groups tend to buy souvenir equally.

H2c: Tourists who travel alone purchase less souvenirs than others.

In order to test above hypothesis, first, tourists are divided to two groups: the ones who travel alone and those who travel in group; then, we use independent T-test.

According to analysis, Null hypothesis that is Equality of Variances of souvenir purchase in two Tourists travel alone and Tourists not travel alone groups was confirmed at 0.05 (with and without the hypothesis of Equality of Variances); therefore, both groups tend to buy souvenir equally.

H2d: Transportation mode has a positive influence on purchase amount.

Regarding to Table 2, 90% of respondents entered the country via air borders; hence, this hypothesis may not be analyzed.

H3: Perceived value of the environment increases souvenir purchase amount.

In order to test this hypothesis, tourists were asked whether the characteristics of the purchased goods have influenced on selecting them as souvenir or not. 80% of answers were positive; then, they are asked to determine the characteristics which were important to buy the souvenir. The group who responded the question as negative are the ones who do not want to shop. Since the pertinent variables are ordinal, we used non-parametric tests. At first, we examined Kruskal–Wallis Test (Table 6) in order to see

if there is any significant difference between the factors. The two tables below are related to this test.

	Perceived Value
Chi-square test	106.248
Degrees of freedom	7
P-value	0

Table 6: Kruskal–Wallis Test for Equality of Means.

In table 6, test statistics in significant level less than 5% is meaningful. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not confirmed. Thus, there is statistically significant difference between Perceived Value factors for buying souvenir. Hypothesis in Kruskal–Wallis Test is non-directional, e.g., they only show the difference and not the direction for larger or smaller groups based on the mean. Then, we used the following order: initially we multiplied rank's average to 110 to achieve the general ranks, then calculated the below quantities to compare the groups:

Perceived Value Factors	Quantity	Ranks' Average
Price	110	438.88
Quality	110	520.24
Design	110	534.21
Application	110	354.76
Lucky	110	275.55
Local Colors	110	404.54
Portable	110	472.62
Traditional Motif	110	523.20

Table 7: Importance of Handicrafts Evaluation Indexes.

D = General Rank of one group - General Rank of the other Group

Then calculate: $(d - 0.8)/(N^{(3/2)})$

If Absolute value ≥ 9.94 (9.94 is dependent upon number of groups), then, the hypothesis of equality of these two means will be denied. The order program was written in R statistical software and the results are shown as pair comparison. Finally, upon using means and results of Paired-Samples test, the classification is achieved for Perceived Value factors in the importance of souvenir purchase:

Factors	Rank
Design	1
Traditional Motif	2
Quality	3
Portable	4
Price	5
Local Colors	6
Application	7
Lucky	8

Table 8: Priority of factors affecting Perceived Value according to tourists.

Therefore, Design, Traditional Motif, Quality & Portability are the most important factors in souvenir shopping. And Application &Luck are the less important ones.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify the key factors related to tourist's souvenir purchase expenditure and, more particularly, the effects of those factors on inbound tourists in Tehran. By means of Oh's travel expenditure model, this study examined the influence of three types of variables: individual traveler characteristics; trip characteristics; and the perceived value of the products on tourists' spending on souvenirs in Tehran. Based on the literature review, in each variable, subsets of the variables such as the gender, age, household income, the purpose of the trip, individual trip, souvenir's traits and types were included to be examined for their influence on the degree of souvenir purchase. Drawing on the Oh's travel expenditure model (2007), the hypothesized relationships were empirically tested. In this part, the findings from the hypothesis testing are discussed:

Demographic characteristics, this study attempted to examine individual traveler characteristics on shopping during the trip. In the current study, the variable was comprised of gender, age, household income and education. As for *gender of tourists,* based on previous studies that showed women's tendency toward souvenir purchase, the current study shows the opposite; that is, men had more tendencies toward souvenir purchase than women's. It was also found that there was no significant difference between the participants and the amount of souvenir expenditures in terms of age and the level of their education. But consistent with previous findings in tourism literature, the

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group with the higher household income - more than 2000$ - was found to be positively associated with spending on shopping.

Trip characteristics, this variable was comprised of the source of information, purpose of purchase, first or repeat visit, trip party, and transformation mood. As for the purpose of trip, results showed that there was not a significant relationship between leisure tourists and business tourists with the inclination to spending on souvenirs. That was similar results between those who visited Tehran city for the first time and those who revisited, and trip party as well. The findings of the current study suggest that the market of souvenir in Tehran is not able to stimulate inbound tourists' curiosity and motivation.

The perceived value of souvenirs, based on review of literature, this study further considered that perceived-value of the products as an important variable influences tourists' purchase behavior and as such increases the amount of purchase by tourists. According to Table 7, three factors of design, traditional motifs, quality received the rank's average more than five hundred respectively, showing foreign tourists' priorities in purchasing Persian souvenirs in Tehran. It is of course necessary to do the same research in other tourist destinations in Iran particularly in the cities of Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd being known for having many dexterous craftsmen as well as possessing a large number of shops selling local crafts so as to better examine the factors design and quality as the perceived value of the handicrafts. As for the other factors affecting perceived value of tourists, the factor price was interestingly placed at the 5th rank. This is a very important consideration in terms of price elasticity to those setting the price in souvenir's market. Price is not viewed as much importance as the factors including design and quality. We should also keep in mind that the foreign tourists in Iran spending more on souvenir purchase have a relatively high income; that is of course congruous with H1c of the article. This may also suggest that the Iranian souvenirs are relatively luxurious so that they cannot attract tourists with low income. Thus, it is suggested the destination may need to supply the products with a range of different prices so as to attract tourists with different household incomes. The findings of the research shows that most visitors to Iran have little information on the diversity and assortment of the souvenirs in Iran and in the same way there are not enough specific objects that served as reminders of the destination or a special event in Iran and not

enough souvenir shops as well. As Gordon (1986) proposed there are some types of souvenirs that might offer no reference to a particular place but they are inscribed with words which identifies them in place and time and can become a souvenir full of memories. Accordingly, the authors mention using traditional clothes of Iran marked with the name of the destination or cultural sites to make up for this kind of souvenir shortage.

Finally, the results showed that inbound tourists in Tehran preferred to purchase pistachio, nuts, sweets, tea, herbal drink, and saffron in terms of food, and rug, woodwork, kilim, jewelry and miniature in terms of handicrafts. They paid a good attention to publications too, such as CDs, books, and postal cards. Tourists visiting Iran are more independent and find it hard to carry many souvenirs with themselves and suffice to a number of light souvenirs. So, it is suggested that destinations may need to focus on portability of the souvenirs.

6. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Non-cooperation of hotel managers and tour leaders, as well as less foreign tourists entering Iran during November and December, are some of the limitations of this research. So many differences exist between the findings of previous researchers and the results of the present one. So, we can conclude that each destination and tourist may have different pattern to purchase souvenir. Also, since this research has been done in a definite time interval, we cannot examine and study the influence of season on shopping probability.

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

During data collection, so many tourists mentioned that they did not know Iran's handicrafts and souvenirs and they solely anything interesting for them while they had no decision for. Therefore, special intention is needed for constant and easy shopping when purchasing souvenir. Such shopping is suggested for next studies. Moreover, this research may be done in different seasons to determine the influence of season on

shopping. Regarding low numbers of tourists during November and December, it was not possible to divide tourists according to the original countries in this study. In case of having many tourists, we can do this research according to the original country. As table 2 shows 22% of the tourists in this study came from China and Hong Kong. As Hansen and Jangeresyed (2013) state tourists from these countries account for the highest degree of purchase in the destinations. Due to the importance of purchase and their good spending power, Chinese tourists' souvenir purchase behavior is recommended for the next study.

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