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## Introduction

Despite the fact that organic agriculture in Iran has significant potential in both production and consumption, aiming to improve sustainability and safety in the food sector, the progress of this sector in terms of the area and its share of total agricultural land has been negative. To the extent that the most recent report from FiBL & IFOAM (Willer et al, 2023) indicates that there has been no growth. As of 2021, only 7,053 hectares of the entire country are under organic farming practices, compared to 11,916 hectares, which accounted for 0.03 percent of all agricultural areas in the previous year (2020).

The main objective of the current research is to identify the barriers hindering the progress of the organic agriculture system in Iran, by conducting a systematic review to create a thematic hierarchical mapping.

## Method

The current study uses qualitative thematic analysis to examine the policies, strategies, and main constraints of organic farming development over the last two decades.

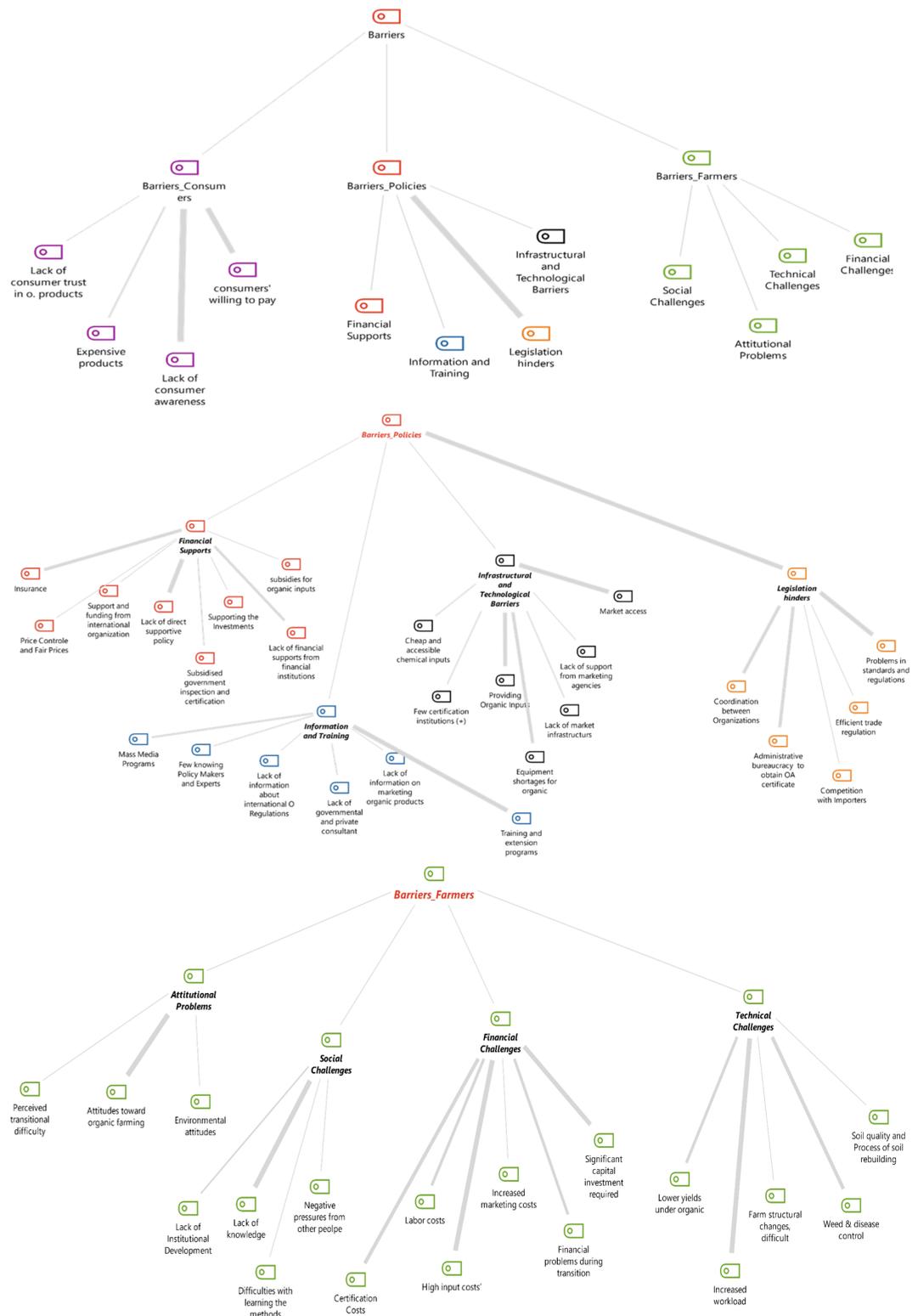
To discover appropriate and reliable articles to include in the thematic analysis procedure, the following steps were taken:

- 1- Choosing key terms to search in data bases
- 2- Searching for key words in 4 English as well as 3 Persian databases
- 3- Reviewing the articles' topics and abstracts, which published until **June 2022**
- 4- Checking the results to determine the accuracy of the articles (21 papers)
- 5- Examining the findings and identifying codes/themes from the articles
- 6- Using the themes in the process of thematic analysis to find the thematic network.

To organize and code the data in thematic analysis and design thematic map, the researchers used MAXQDA 2022 software, a program for computer-assisted qualitative data analysis.

## Results

The hierarchical thematic maps of the three main categories and their sub-categories



Steps in analyses employing thematic networks:

### ANALYSIS STAGE A: REDUCTION OR BREAKDOWN OF TEXT

#### Step 1. Code Material

- (a) Devise a coding framework
- (b) Dissect text into text segments using the coding framework

#### Step 2. Identify Themes

- (a) Abstract themes from coded text segments
- (b) Refine themes

#### Step 3. Construct Thematic Networks

- (a) Arrange themes
- (b) Select Basic Themes
- (c) Rearrange into Organizing Themes
- (d) Deduce Global Theme(s)
- (e) Illustrate as thematic network(s)
- (f) Verify and refine the network(s)

### ANALYSIS STAGE B: EXPLORATION OF TEXT

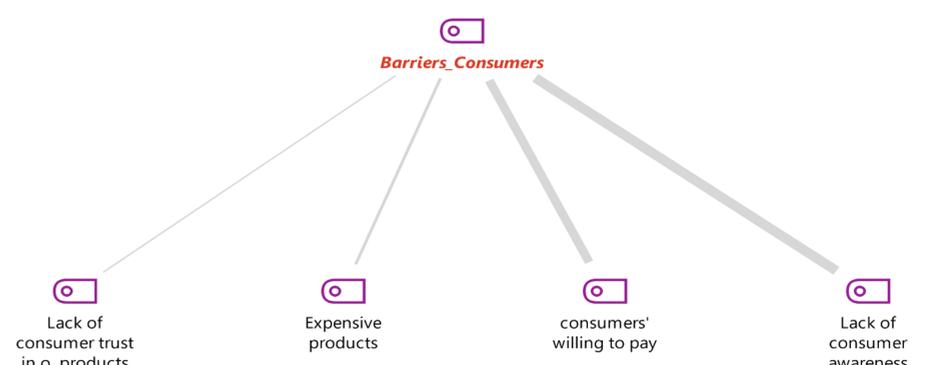
#### Step 4. Describe and Explore Thematic Networks

- (a) Describe the network
- (b) Explore the network

#### Step 5. Summarize Thematic Networks

### ANALYSIS STAGE C: INTEGRATION OF EXPLORATION

#### Step 6. Interpret Patterns



## Conclusion

The study identified key obstacles for developing Iranian organic farming, including certification, marketing, knowledge access, and input costs, exacerbated by a lack of structured policy-making. To support organic farming, informed policymakers should implement supportive policies, provide necessary infrastructures, and foster national and international collaboration.