Translators' Motivations for Title Selection in Iran: A Quantitative Study of the Role of Contextual and Professional Factors

Sima Ferdowsi[1*] iD
Saeed Ameri[2] iD

[*1]Assistant Professor of Translation Studies, Department of Foreign Languages, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Kerman, Iran
[2]Assistant Professor of Translation Studies, Department of English Language, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

E-mail: sima.ferdowsi@uk.ac.ir

ABSTRACT

This paper acknowledges the importance of translators' motivations in selecting titles for translation and argues that the interplay between their contextual and professional backgrounds and their decision-making processes regarding title selection has been relatively underexplored in translator studies. To address this notable research gap, the present quantitative research examines whether translators' contextual and professional backgrounds—such as the number of translated books, educational degrees and fields of study—significantly contribute to their motivations in selecting titles for translation in contemporary Iran. This study recruited 248 professional translators to complete a self-report questionnaire that gathered their professional demographics and assessed their preferences based on various book selection motivations, including socio-cognitive considerations, externally driven motivations, factors guaranteeing success, translators' authority and agency, internally driven motivations, and publishers' authority and agency. The results indicated that only translators' educational background, number of translated books, and field of study significantly influenced their book selection preferences. Further analysis provided insights into which specific book selection motivations are driven by these contextual and professional factors. Overall, the article highlights that translators' choices are shaped by a dynamic interplay of professional experience, academic background, and external market pressures, indicating that effective translator support demands consideration of both individual and systemic aspects.

KEYWORDS: Book selection; Translators; Sociology; Motivation; Professional experience;

1. Introduction

The sociological turn in translation studies marked a shift toward viewing translation as a socio-cultural activity. Sociology of translation, as (Chesterman, 2017) mentions, embraces three branches of the sociology of translation as a product, the sociology of translation as a process, and translators' sociology. Examining translators as social agents involved in the translation process highlights their roles, motivations, power relations and societal status (see also Chesterman, 2021). Different aspects of translators as social agents, such as agency (Kinnunen & Koskinen, 2010), identity (Yoo & Jeong, 2017), power (Tymoczko & Gentzler, 2002), ideology (Díaz-Cintas, 2012) and status (Dam & Zethsen, 2010) have been thoroughly examined in translation studies. Although translator-centered aspects have received scholarly attention over the past two decades from both sociological and

historical perspectives or a combination of the two, there are still some avenues of further research, which may help to gain deeper insights into translator decision-making processes. Indeed, the need for exploring translator-centered aspects among contemporary translators persists in the field. Issues surrounding book selection and how goals and motivations drive these selections have seen less scholarly interest insofar as Chesterman (2009) argues, in sociological studies, "the teloi [i.e., motivation or goal] of translators (and of course interpreters) might make worthwhile contributions to a better understanding of their attitudes and personal goals and ethics" (p. 17). For Buzelin (2007), the reason governing the selection of titles for translation is not straightforward but complex since "selection is always done according to the needs of the receiving polysystem" (Ben-Ari, 2013, p. 146).

This does not ignore past research that tried to understand this matter from a historical perspective. For example, some studies relying on archival data have explored translators' book selection goals/motivation at different periods in various regions (Poland, Iran & Finland) (Fornalczyk-Lipska, 2021; Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2014, 2015; Paloposki, 2007, 2009). Translator or publisher's motivation for book selection has also been well-studied when it comes to the issue of 'retranslation', as scholars have attempted to underpin reasons and motivations behind retranslations (Deane-Cox, 2014; Saeedi, 2020; Zanotti, 2015). Researchers of retranslation have aimed to offer insights into "why certain texts are repeatedly translated while others are translated only once" (Gürçağlar, 2020, p. 484). This deals with translators and publishers' goals and motivations behind retranslating certain works. Overall, researchers have attempted to historicize questions concerning translator motivation through various sources, including archives of correspondence. Indeed, Folaron (2018, p. 132) rightly asks "what values motivate translation (material, economic, or symbolic) and how do they create or inspire the genesis of communities of practice?".

Although countless factors have a role to play in the book selection process in translation, including translator's agency and power imbalances between languages, research has not empirically examined these factors and failed to understand whether these factors really encourage translators towards a particular choice or not. Interestingly, new lines of research in translation studies have investigated the influence of the translator's personality traits on their performance (e.g., Hubscher-Davidson & Lehr, 2021); however, the influence of professional factors in the book selection process in translation has remained virtually underexplored. The extant literature, therefore, does not offer a clear understanding of book selection criteria or motivations and goals behind the translator's choice, especially when it comes to contemporary translators. Therefore, this study was carried out to bridge this gap in the literature by exploring whether professional and contextual factors, such as university-level training or income affect translators' book selection motivations/goals. By identifying these associations, this research sought to enhance the understanding of the factors driving translators' book selection motivations, and provide valuable insights for both practicing and prospective translators, enabling them to make more informed and strategic choices. The study also provides valuable insights into the current mechanisms of title selection within the translation market, which can potentially mitigate the risk of poor and ill-advised decisions. Taken together, this paper addresses the following questions:

1. Is there a significant association between the number of translated books and various dimensions of book selection motivations?

2. Is there a significant association between the means of income and various dimensions of book selection motivations?

3. Is there a significant association between the publication status and various dimensions of book selection motivations?

4. Is there a significant association between the educational degree and various dimensions of book selection motivations?

5. Is there a significant association between the field of study and various dimensions of book selection motivations?

2. Multi-dimensionality of translator motivations/goals in title selection

2.1. A survey of motivation in translation studies

One way to conceptually understand why translators may choose a specific title for translation is probably to equate decision-making choices to *skopos* theory, introduced by Hans Vermeer. This is because *skopos* determines and guides the translator's choices, decisions and actions; yet, it is more concerned with the text (Chesterman, 2017). In the words of Nord, the goal of translation specifies translation procedures (Nord, 2011, p. 125); a similar critique can be seen in Schlager's views "skopos usually refers to more immediate levels such as a text or a translation task" (Schlager, 2021, p. 204). This has led to the introduction of a new concept called "telos" by Andrew Chesterman (Chesterman & Baker, 2008), emphasizing the overall purpose of the translator and describe "the personal motivation of translators [and] the reasons why they work in this field in general, and also the reasons why they translate a given text" (Chesterman, 2009, p. 11). Since the introduction of the concept, it received scant attention even though researchers have been working on translators' motivation in diverse domains, including training (Ameri & Ghahari, 2018), non-professional and voluntary translation (Lee, 2022; Olohan, 2014) and sociology (Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2015).

From a social perspective, motivations behind choosing and translating a title can be analyzed through the lens of two models developed within the translation studies discipline. Touching on the issue of agency—defined as "the ability to exert power in an intentional way" (Buzelin, 2011, p. 6)—Paloposki (2007) argues that translator motivations and criteria for choosing a title can be explored through 'extratextual agency' which is enabled through the study of translator's notes, drafts, personal diaries,

etc. Haddadian-Moghaddam (2015) criticizes this model as "it says little about agents' decisions in selecting texts for translation, their motivations, and the context that, for better or for worse, affects their agency" (p. 147). Being aware of the translator and publisher agency in choosing titles for translation, Haddadian-Moghaddam (2014) proposes a tree-tier model so as to compensate for the shortcomings of Paloposki's model which disregarded agents' motivations and decision-making. He links the motivations for translation to Bourdieu's capitals, namely, economic, symbolic, social and cultural. In other words, each translator, as a social actor, is seeking a specific or a combination of capitals when they decide which title—cultural goods in Bourdieu's words (Bourdieu, 1986)—is worth translating. All these choices are constrained by "various social problems or censorship" (Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2014, p. 26). Relevant to this matter are 'preliminary norms' in Gideon Toury's theory. It specifically deals with the translation policy and directness of translation. The former determines which texts and titles should be chosen for translation; in other words, translators and publishers' text selection criteria (Zwischenberger, 2020). For example, Kruger (2011) highlights the complex interplay of educational cultural and aesthetic factors that shape the selection norms in translating children's books in South Africa. Thus, as can be seen, the research has so far focused on past translating agents and has largely ignored contemporary translators.

2.2. Goal-framing theory

The concept of goal is not new in translation studies as it is known that functional approaches have discussed it in terms of '*skopos*', especially when it comes to Holz-Mänttäri's 'translatorial action' where translation is described as a goal-oriented activity (Nord, 2013). Once again, these theories have predominantly centered on the text itself, rather than on the goals or motivations of translators (Chesterman, 2009). The present paper builds on Lindenberg and Steg's (2007) 'goal-framing theory' to properly understand the motivations and reasons behind translator's decision-making behavior in choosing titles for translation. In other words, this study examines motives through the lens of goals, given that the potential of goals lies in their capacity to regulate and shape cognitive and motivational processes, as well as to influence individuals' interests. More specifically, goals serve as drivers of human behavior, shaping thought processes in specific contexts and, consequently, influencing individuals' reactions (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013).

With roots in cognitive social psychology (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007), the goal-framing theory suggests that goals direct "what people attend to, what knowledge and attitudes become cognitively most accessible, how people evaluate various aspects of the situation, and what alternatives are being considered" (Lindenberg & Steg, 2013, p. 49). As a matter of fact, this theory is based on three types of motives: hedonic, gain and normative.

Hedonic motives arise from the pleasure and positive emotions associated with a given task, such as translation, or from the avoidance of effort. The underlying goal is the attainment of pleasurable sensations or the satisfaction of personal needs. As a matter of fact, the agent would like to gain gratification and seek pleasure or avoid unnecessary efforts. Thus, they give priority to personal enjoyment and excitement resulting from the act of doing the activity (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013). In translation terms, the translator (or agent) chooses a specific title for translation as the book content or the author is more pleasurable and captivating. To give a real-life example, Maryam Meftahi, an Iranian literary translator, elaborates on her translation of *The Coral Island*—by the Scottish author R. M. Ballantyne—: "I will definitely translate a book that I enjoy reading, and since I read this book translated by Abbas Yamini Sharif in my teenage years and became very interested in the subject of the book, I decided to translate this book into a more modern language." (Bagheri, 2021, September 27).

In a gain goal frame, the actor is concerned with guarding and improving personal resources, such as monetary outcomes, social status or even power and knowledge (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013). The cost has always been a decisive factor in the translation industry; neither the publisher nor the translator cannot take financial risks by choosing and translating a book with little or no financial return; therefore, they prioritize economic motives but also consider their good and bad experiences with title selection in the past. Besides this, literary translation has often been associated with prestige, reputation, respect or credit. For Khojasteh Kayhan, who is well-known for her translation of Paul Auster and Virginia Woolf, Iranian (literary) translators "enjoy a high level of social prestige, higher than elsewhere, and this leaves no room for complaining" (Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2014, p. 170). In contrast, the findings of an empirical study on Iranian practicing translators show that two capitals, namely, "Income and Social Status"—which include social respect and salary— and "Improvement Opportunities"—which include any opportunities to gain new knowledge and skills—have not been well-received by the Iranian translators (Kafi et al., 2015). Relying on their empirical data, Kafi et al. (2018) claim that "translation is not recognised as an established profession [in Iran]" (p. 95).

Finally, normative motives concern the perceived appropriateness of actions, emphasizing the agent's tendency to behave in accordance with prevailing norms or a sense of obligation within a given context. Here, what is appropriate is subject to debate; however, the agent chooses the norm which is more advantageous in terms of gain (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, 2013). Both translators and publishers know that the acceptance or rejection of the translations by the regulatory forces depends on the content of the book; therefore, they should choose the title very carefully. They have to perform appropriate exemplary translation behavior, acting according to norms governing translation norms and conventions in society. To demonstrate the importance of this motive, we can refer to Khojasteh Kayhan's interview, who is well-known for her translation of Paul Auster

and Virginia Woolf. She cites censorship and cultural considerations as a motive for ignoring some works: "For example, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by D.H. Lawrence is one of the most famous literary works in the world and one of my favorite novels, but due to the current situation, I have refrained from translating it and I usually translate books that do not focus on eroticism. Because being faithful to the book and translating the spirit of the work are very important to me." (Karimi, 2005, October 12). Bahman Farzaneh, known for his Persian translation of novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, is of the same opinion and argues that Iranian translators should choose works which may not demand considerable censorship; for example, Henry Miller's novels which revolve around erotism, should not be translated into Persian (Karimi, 2005, October 12).

2.3. Book selection criteria in Iran

Despite the lack of any systematic local and international study on translators' goals and motivations for choosing titles for translation, this section briefly reviews Iranian translators' interviews in magazines and journals to contextualize the study. An issue worth discussing here is who is in charge of book selection in Iran. Our review of both empirical and magazine articles suggests that both publishers and translators can propose books for translation. For instance, the manager of Nashr Mahi, a prolific Iranian publisher specializing in translating foreign books, asserts that it is mainly the translator who chooses or proposes the title for translation even though it is not supersizing that the publisher may propose a title to a translator (Esmaieli, 2016). Emami (1999) is also of the view that this is the translator who has a significant role in selecting or proposing literary titles for the translation. A couple of case studies have also evidenced the primary agency of translators in selecting works for translation (Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2015).

Delzendehrooy et al. (2019), whose research focused on Iranian translators' agency in the late 1880s, however, report that translators had almost no role in picking up the books for translation, simply because "each and every book had to be approved by the Shah or it would be banned even if the translation had already been printed and distributed to bookshops" (p. 4). In the post-revolution era of Iran—which happened after the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1978—"large publishers with an institutional mechanism or smaller publishers with educated managers started to play a part in the selection of works" (Haddadian-Moghaddam, 2014, p. 119). This, however, does not negate the role of translators themselves in book selection; however, this process, as Haddadian-Moghaddam (2014, p. 119) maintains, appears to be regulated and governed mainly by the publisher. Perhaps because, as Wolf (2007) argues, translation "is inevitably implicated in social institutions, which greatly determine the selection, production and distribution of translation and, as a result, the strategies adopted in the translation itself" (p. 1).

As far as translators' goals and motivations in book selection are concerned, Amini's interviews with a couple of well-known Iranian literary translators show that various factors contribute to the selection of books for translation, which in addition to translators' personal judgment and values, may include if the writer is already famous in Iran or not (Amini, 2005). In another writing titled "Translators and Criteria for Selecting Books for Translation", Abdollah Kowsari, a renowned Iranian translator, enumerates reasons for *not* translating a literary title:

- the translator's disinterest in the book

- the socio-political issues revolving around translation (say, censorship)

- the title being deeply rooted in the original culture, which demands considerable footnotes and hinders readers' flow in the text

- the target society needs and expectations (Kowsari, 2005)

The manager of *Nashr Mahi* also maintains that they do not have any written policy concerning book selection for translation and a combination of factors comes to play a role. For example, they are not interested in handling Western best-sellers since many other Iranian publishers quickly start translating them to earn substantial revenues. They also assert that sales figures are not a primary selection criterion for this publisher (Esmaieli, 2016).

To complement these, the celebrated Iranian translator Daghighi (2022) is of the opinion that when choosing a title for translation, the translator should consider the taste of their audience in translation so as to fulfill their expectations thoroughly. She also argues how the socio-political issues of society can affect the translator criteria for choosing a book. Thus, certain norms—be it governed by personal judgement or imposed by the socio-political constraints of society—are at work in selecting titles for translation. In his study of the selection of feminist literary works for Persian translation, Bolouri (2017) concludes that this process is by no means random and arbitrary since the socio-political climate of the society are at work and have the final say in book selection. For Buzelin (2007), the reasons governing the selection of titles for translation are not straightforward but complex, and "selection is always done according to the needs of the receiving polysystem" (Ben-Ari, 2013, p. 146).

This survey of the scant literature on title selection reveals the myriad personal and professional factors contributing to translators' motivations in choosing books to translate. Despite the multidimensionality of professionalism and extensive

research on this topic (Liu, 2021), the relationship between various aspects of professionalism (e.g., university-level training or past experience) and translators' motivations for title selection remains largely unexplored. Empirical research specifically addressing translators' motivations and goals in title selection is notably scarce, particularly concerning contemporary translators. While historical and sociological studies have explored these issues in past contexts, the present paper focuses on the professional and contextual factors influencing book selection motivations among contemporary Iranian professional translators.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design and participants

This paper comes to fill in a gap of knowledge by investigating book selection motivations and the influence of professional and contextual factors among contemporary Iranian translators, using an online questionnaire survey. This study is quantitative and followed a 5 (independent variables) × 6 (dependent variables) factorial design. More specifically, the dependent variables are the factors derived from the questionnaire, developed and validated in Ferdowsi et al. (2023), while the independent variables are the professional and contextual factors of the sample (Table 1).

Table 1. Variables of the study

Independent variables	Dependent variables
Number of translated books	Socio-cognitive considerations
Means of income	Externally driven motivations
Publication status	Success guarantee factors
Educational degree	Translators' authority and agency
Field of study	Internally driven motivations
	Publishers' authority and agency

A total of 251 Iranian translators voluntarily participated in the present study. The translators were chosen based on a combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The inclusion criteria were that they must have published one written translation, irrespective of its genre or text type. Persian must be one of the language pairs they typically work in; for example, this can be Persian-English, Russian-Persian, etc. Translation directionality was not considered. To increase the sample size, those who attended the study were asked to assist the researchers in identifying other potential translators. After data screening for outliers and missing values, three participants were removed, and 248 (146 females, M_{age}=37.61) remained for further analysis. Of the participating translators, 88.7% reported translating between Persian and English. The remaining (10.3%) sample translated either between Persian and other languages (i.e., French, German, Spanish, Italian, Turkish, Kurdish, and Russian) or a combination of three languages.

3.2. Instruments

A researcher-made 34-item questionnaire was used to gather the data. A detailed description of the questionnaire's construction and validation, along with the identified subconstructs affecting Iranian translators' book selection, is reported in another publication (Ferdowsi et al., 2023). The questionnaire, named the *Translators' Book Selection Criteria* (TBSC) scale, consists of two parts (See Ferdowsi et al., 2023). The first part includes 34 items, which are responded to on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), measuring translators' book selection criteria and motivation. The second part covers 14 items addressing demographic information, such as age, gender, translation experience, educational degree, means of income, etc. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated to be .74, which is acceptable. The six subconstructs of the TBSC checklist are:

- **Subscale 1:** socio-cognitive considerations
- **Subscale 2:** externally driven motivations
- **Subscale 3:** success guarantee factors
- **Subscale 4:** translators' authority and agency
- **Subscale 5**: internally driven motivations
- **Subscale 6**: publishers' authority and agency

3.3. Data collection and analysis

The researchers decided to use an Iranian survey platform (https://survey.porsiline.ir/) to create a web-based questionnaire to reach broader respondents. The time required for questionnaire completion was not longer than 20 minutes and it was in Persian matching the respondent's mother tongue. Additionally, a progress indicator was included in the online questionnaire to indicate how much more time it might take to finish the survey. Potential translators were invited through various social media networking platform (WhatsApp groups, Telegram channels, Instagram pages and Email correspondences). The data were imported into SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistics. The reliability analyses were performed in SPSS and multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were analyzed to address the research questions. Several one-way between-groups MANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences across the five independent variables and the six dependent ones. MANOVA is a test comparing two or more groups' mean scores on a set of dependent variables. As it allows for the inclusion of multiple dependent variables, it is preferred over ANOVA to minimize the possibility of inflated Type 1 error. The reason is that by performing several simple analyses, it is more likely to arrive at significant, yet false or fake, differences in the groups (Type 1 error). Moreover, the present data met the critical assumption of MANOVA, which requires the existence of some logical and conceptual association among the dependent variables (as they are all the subscales of the same checklist here). In what follows, the detailed analysis and interpretation of the findings are offered.

4. Results

4.1. Preliminary analyses

Before the primary analysis, the preliminary tests were conducted to check for multivariate outliers, linearity, multicollinearity, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices and equality of variances.

4.1.1. Multivariate normality

In order to examine the occurrence of any strange pattern of scores across the dependent variables, Mahalanobis distance analysis was performed. The comparison of the obtained Mahalanobis values with the chi-square value of 22.46 (critical value in studies with six dependent variables) resulted in removing three participants from the data pool due to incomplete or extremist responses.

4.1.2. Linearity

MANOVA assumes a linear or straight-line relationship between each pair of dependent variables. The assumption was examined using legacy dialogs and generating a matrix of scatterplots between each pair of variables. Since the plots did not show any evidence of non-linearity, the assumption of linearity was satisfactorily met.

4.1.3. Multicollinearity

One of the critical assumptions of MANOVA is multicollinearity, requiring that the dependent variables be highly correlated. In cases where there are low correlations among them, separate univariate analyses of variance should be run for the dependent variables (i.e., singularity). As all the dependent variables here were the subscales of the same checklist, and consequently, highly correlated, univariate analyses were unnecessary and the multicollinearity assumption was satisfied.

4.1.4. Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices

The assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was examined by conducting Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices. As the significance values of all the independent variables were larger than .001 (Table 2), it was concluded that the assumption was not violated in the whole data set.

Table 2. Results of box's test of equality of covariance matrices

	Variables	Box's M	F	df	P value
1	Number of translated books	77.30	1.13	63, 18994.63	.21
2	Means of income	21.52	.99	21, 143544.87	.46
3	Publication status	22.43	1.04	21, 221476.19	.40
4	Educational degree	78.74	1.07	63, 2886.24	.32

5	Field of study	31.52	1.46	21,218223.30	.07

4.1.5. *Equality of error variances*

Finally, Levene's test of equality of error variances was performed per variable in order to examine the assumption of equality of variance. As the results displayed no significant values for the variables, equal variances were assumed.

4.2. Primary quantitative findings

4.2.1. *MANOVA results*

Since the data did not show any serious violations in sample size and normality, Wilks' Lambda in multivariate tests table was a robust statistic to be reported. Moreover, as Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) recommend, Bonferroni adjustment was applied in interpreting between-subjects effects in order to reduce the chance of Type 1 error. By so doing, the effects were considered significant only if the p-value was less than .008, instead of the conventional .05. In Table 3, multivariate tests results of the five independent and six dependent variables are summarized. This suggests that *Number of Translated Books*, *Educational Degree*, and *Field of Study* significantly influence translators' title selection motivations. Importantly, the partial η² values, which indicate the effect size, help to understand the magnitude of these relationships. According to Cohen's (1992) guidelines, partial η² values of around .01 represent small effects, .06 medium effects, and .14 large effects. Based on these benchmarks:

- Number of Translated Books (partial η^2 = .04) falls within the small-to-medium effect range, implying a modest influence.

- Educational Degree (partial η^2 = .05) reflects a medium effect, suggesting a medium influence on title selection.

- Field of Study (partial η^2 = .08) represents a medium-to-large effect, indicating a stronger impact compared to Educational Degree.

Table 3. Summary of the multivariate tests results

		Value	F	df	P value	Partial η^2
1	Number of translated books	.86	1.94	18,676.47	.01	.04
2	Means of income	.96	1.66	6,241	.13	.04
3	Publication status	.98	.48	6,241	.81	.01
4	Educational degree	.84	2.38	18,676.47	.00	.05
5	Field of study	.91	3.66	6,241	.00	.08

4.2.2. *Number of translated books*

To address the first research question, the number of translated books was measured based on the total books participants had translated at the time of data collection. This factor served as an indicator of their professionalism, with a higher number of translated books reflecting a stronger professional identity. It was categorized into four levels: 1 book (12.5%), 2–3 books (27.01%), 4–5 books (8.46%), and more than 6 books (52.01%). The multivariate test results indicated that the number of translated books had a significant effect on translators' book selection motivations ($F(18, 676.47) = 1.94$, $p = .01$; $\Lambda = .86$; $\eta p^2 = .04$), explaining 4% of the variance, which represents a small effect size. When the between-subjects effects were examined (Table 4) with the Bonferroni adjustment applied ($p < .008$), a significant association emerged between the subscale 3 (success guarantee factors) and the number of translated books, accounting for 8% of the variance, which indicates a large effect size. Although the subscale 2 initially showed a significance ($p = .009$), it did not meet the stricter Bonferroni-adjusted threshold and was therefore not considered statistically significant.

Table 4. The results of tests of between subjects effects for number of translated books (df=3)

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P value	Partial η^2

	Subscale1	6042.84	2014.28	1.19	.313	.01
	Subscale2	68184.41	22728.13	3.93	.009	.04
Number of translated books	Subscale3	139494.53	46498.17	7.73	.000	.08
	Subscale4	8433.01	2811.00	.42	.738	.00
	Subscale5	51068.36	17022.78	2.25	.083	.02
	Subscale6	6718.30	2239.43	.43	.725	.00

The results of the one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Scheffé test indicated significant differences in success guarantee factors based on the number of translated books. Specifically, significant differences were observed:

- Between translators with 1 book and those with more than 6 translated books ($MD = 45.47$, $p = .03$), and

- Between translators with 2–3 books and those with more than 6 translated books ($MD = 49.70$, $p < .001$).

The estimated marginal means showed that translators with more than 6 translated books ($M = 371.18$, $SE = 6.82$) were substantially and significantly less concerned with success guarantee factors when selecting books compared to those with 1 book ($M = 416.66$, $SE = 13.92$) and those with 2–3 books ($M = 420.89$, $SE = 9.47$).

4.2.3. Means of income

To answer the second research question, through a dichotomous question, the participants were asked whether or not translation was their only means of income. For 94 of them (37.9%), translation was the only paid job, whereas for the remaining 154 (62.09%) it was not. Thus, the number of those for whom translation was not the only income source almost doubled that of those who earned a living through translation only. As Table 3 shows, means of income did not significantly affect the two groups' choice of books for translation ($F (6, 241) = 1.66$, $p = .13$; $\Lambda = .96$; $\eta p^2 = .04$).

4.2.4. Publication status

As to the third research question asking whether all their translations were published or not, the responses of 121 translators (48.79%) were positive and those of the remaining 127 (51.2%) were negative. The multivariate tests results in Table 3 displayed no significant differences between the two groups in their book selection motivation ($F (6, 241) = 0.48$, $p = .81$; $\Lambda = .98$; $\eta p^2 = .01$). Given the balanced sample distribution, these results appear reliable. However, as this was beyond the scope of the present study, future research is encouraged to further investigate translators' publication profiles and their impact on selection criteria and choices.

4.2.5. Educational degree

To address the fourth research question, the participants were divided into four groups of B.A./B.Sc. (26.61%), M.A./M.Sc. (52.82%), Ph.D. (16.93%), and others (3.62%). As Table 3 reveals, this factor had a significant effect on the translators' book selection motivations ($F (18, 676.47) = 2.38$, $p < .001$; $\Lambda = .84$; $\eta p^2 = .05$). It accounted for 5% of the variance, which is viewed as a medium effect size. When the results were considered per dependent variable and the Bonferroni adjustment was applied ($p < .008$), it was indicated that subscales 2, 3 and 6 were significantly different across the four educational levels, accounting for 6%, 7%, and 6% of the variance, respectively, all with a moderate effect size (Table 5). Other subscales (1, 4, and 5) did not reach statistical significance after applying the Bonferroni correction, indicating that educational degree does not significantly influence these factors.

Table 5. The Results of Tests of Between Subjects Effects for Educational Degree (df=3)

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P value	Partial η^2
	Subscale1	18950.13	6316.71	3.86	.010	.04
	Subscale2	98998.08	32999.36	5.84	.001	.06
Type of contracts	Subscale3	126217.94	42072.64	6.93	.000	.07
	Subscale4	25051.96	8350.65	1.26	.287	.01
	Subscale5	12289.13	4096.37	.53	.662	.00
	Subscale6	75550.16	25183.38	5.22	.002	.06

The one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Scheffé test for the subscale 2 (externally driven motivations) revealed significant differences between B.A./B.Sc. translators and those with other degrees ($MD = 77.41$, $p = .04$), as well as between M.A./M.Sc.

translators and those with other degrees (MD = 93.06, p < .001). The estimated marginal means table showed that both B.A./B.Sc. (M = 336.14, SE = 9.25) and M.A./M.Sc. (M = 351.79, SE = 6.56) translators were significantly more externally motivated than those with other degrees (M = 258.73, SE = 25.04).

For the subscale 3 (success guarantee factors), significant differences were observed between B.A./B.Sc. (M = 383.33, SE = 9.58, MD = 88.88, p = .01), M.A./M.Sc. (M = 408.39, SE = 6.80, MD = 113.95, p < .001), and Ph.D. (M = 386.50, SE = 12.01, MD = 92.06, p = .01) groups, compared to those with other degrees (M = 294.44, SE = 25.95). The estimated marginal means table revealed that participants with these three degrees were significantly and comparably more concerned with success guarantee factors when selecting books for translation.

Finally, the results of the one-way ANOVA, Post Hoc tests, and marginal means table for the subscale 6 (publishers' authority and agency) indicated a significant difference between B.A./B.Sc. (M = 405.05, SE = 8.54) and M.A./M.Sc. (M = 443.51, SE = 6.06) translators, with M.A./M.Sc. translators being more inclined to respect or reserve publishers' authority and agency (MD = 38.46, p < .001).

Overall, these findings suggest that educational background plays a critical role in shaping the motivations and decision-making processes of translators in choosing titles, with those holding higher degrees generally placing greater emphasis on external factors, success guarantees, and publishers' authority. However, as the sample distribution was relatively unbalanced across the educational degrees, the results must be interpreted with caution.

4.2.6. Field of study

Field of study was another independent variable, treated as a dichotomous categorical variable, distinguishing between translators with a major in translation and those with a major in other fields. Of the participating translators, 118 (47.58%) had studied translation as their university major, while the remaining 52.41% had majored in various other disciplines, including Information Technology, English Literature, Cinema and Theatre, Art, Linguistics, Engineering, Political Science, English Teaching, and several other fields.

According to Table 3, the field of study had a significant effect on translators' book selection motivations (F (6, 241) = 3.66, p < .001; Λ = .91; ηp^2 = .08), explaining 8% of the variance, indicating a medium effect size. After applying the Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons, the results of the between-subjects effects tests (Table 6) revealed a significant association between the subscale 2 (external motivating factors) and the translators' field of study, accounting for 5% of the variance (small effect). The estimated marginal means table showed that translators who majored in translation (M = 357.99, SE = 6.92) were significantly more externally motivated than those who majored in other fields (M = 320.76, SE = 6.59). Given that the two groups were balanced in sample size, this result can be considered reliably significant.

Table 6. The Results of Tests of Between Subjects Effects for Field of Study (df=1)

Source	DV	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P value	Partial η^2
	Subscale1	7344.05	7344.05	4.40	.037	.01
	Subscale2	85694.25	85694.25	15.15	.000	.05
	Subscale3	36617.08	36617.08	5.74	.017	.02
Field of study	Subscale4	33089.49	33089.49	5.07	.025	.02
	Subscale5	5993.45	5993.45	.78	.378	.00
	Subscale6	22167.47	22167.47	4.43	.036	.01

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study aimed to enhance the understanding of how professional and contextual factors influence Iranian translators' book selection criteria and motivations. The results suggested that various factors significantly shape translators' title selection preferences or criteria. Specifically, it was found that the number of translated books, educational degrees and fields of study play a key role in determining the criteria and motivations behind translators' title selections. Additionally, while the number of translated books shows some influence, educational degree and field of study stand out as more substantial factors, with the latter having the strongest impact on translators' title selection preferences.

The analysis of the number of translated books in relation to translators' book selection motivations revealed that a large proportion of participants (52.01%) had translated more than six books, indicating a highly experienced group. The number of translated books significantly influenced translators' book selection motivations, albeit with a small effect size, implying that factors other than experience may also play a role in affecting how translators select titles. Further analysis suggested that this professional factor significantly contributed to factors ensuring success. However, it was observed that more

experienced translators—those who had translated more than six books—were less concerned with success-assurance factors in their book selection compared to their less experienced counterparts. Success-assurance factors include considerations such as consulting with experts or prioritizing the translation of newly published books (Ferdowsi et al., 2023). This finding suggests that their professional identity and confidence in their abilities may enable them to make more independent choices when selecting books for translation. It is important to note that success-assurance factors are only one aspect of the broader picture. As discussed in the sociology of translation, translators enter the field with various forms of capital (competitive assets) and compete with other translators or agents for a prominent position (Hanna, 2016). Consequently, translators with substantial competitive assets may place less emphasis on success-assurance factors, as their assets are likely to play a decisive role in the success of their translations. This aligns with the idea that, as experienced translators, their professional identity and the capital they have built (such as reputation or social networks) offer them more freedom in decision-making. They no longer need the assurance that less experienced translators may require, such as ensuring a book's success by following familiar norms or consulting with others. In light of goal-framing theory (Lindenberg & Steg, 2013), with experience, these experienced translators may feel more confident in their ability to ensure success on their own, allowing them to pursue projects that might be more personally meaningful or challenging rather than focusing on traditional markers of success.

The analysis of educational degrees in relation to translators' book selection motivations sheds light on the significant role that academic background plays in shaping their decision-making processes. This means that translators with different degrees tend to have different reasons for choosing the books they translate. The study identified three specific factors that were significantly influenced by educational degree, external motivations, success guarantee factors and publishers' authority. In fact, translators with a master's or bachelor's degree were more inclined to consider external motivations when selecting titles for translation, potentially driven by the need for commercial success with award-winning books or books highly recommended in the original and receiving culture (Ferdowsi et al., 2023). This aligns with both gain and normative goal frames because the translators are making decisions that are expected to result in tangible rewards. By following established success markers (e.g., choosing award-winning books or those that are widely recommended), these translators are likely adhering to the norms of the industry or professional expectations.

Also, translators with higher educational degrees tended to place more weight on factors that signal a higher likelihood of success, such as translating newly published books or books with established reputations across different cultures. It was also found that translators with a master's degree may be more likely to follow publishers' guidelines or defer to their expertise when making translation decisions, potentially viewing publishers as key authorities in the book selection process.

When it comes to the field of study as an independent variable, it was found that it plays a significant role in shaping translators' book selection motivations, with a particular focus on external motivating factors. Translators with a major in translation were found to be significantly more externally motivated in their book selection titles compared to those with a major in other fields. This suggests that translators who specialize in translation at the university level are more influenced by external factors, such as translating award-winning books or the payment or books recommended in the original and receiving cultures. Therefore, translators with other degrees showed a comparatively lower level of external motivation, and translators with specialized training in translation may be more sensitive to such factors when choosing titles for translation. Translators with a translation degree may be more attuned to the professional demands of the field. They may be more aware of market trends, client expectations, and the need to be competitive in the translation industry. This could lead them to prioritize external factors when selecting books to translate.

These findings also underscore the importance of educational background in shaping the decision-making processes of translators and highlight the different ways in which external motivations can impact their book selection choices. These findings, explained through self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and goal-framing theory (Lindenberg & Steg, 2013), suggest that Iranian translators, driven by extrinsic motivational factors and a desire to gain advantages in the translation market, sought external rewards such as increased publications, fame, and recognition. To fulfill their need for social connection within the translation market, they adopted controlled behaviors in their book selection.

Finally, the non-significant results regarding *means of income* and *publication status* can be attributed to the greater influence of other factors, such as educational background and professional experience, which likely overshadow any subtle effects these variables might have. Additionally, book selection may be driven more by intrinsic motivations, such as personal interest and intellectual challenge, rather than extrinsic factors like income or publication success. For many translators, passion for the subject matter and its cultural significance may outweigh financial considerations or the desire for publication. Ultimately, to gain deeper insight into translators' motivations behind selecting books, an array of political, cultural and logistical factors, as Pugsley (2005) notes, should be examined.

This paper explored whether various dimensions of book selection motivations are associated with professional and contextual factors; however, the study suffers from certain limitations, which can pave the way for more research in this area. First, considering the small sample size, the results should be cautiously generalized. The translation genre was neither investigated nor controlled in the present study. However, researching translators' material selection in different genres or areas would be a promising area for further research. Moreover, since motivating factors are determined by "biological, social and

cultural conditions" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 3), the present findings are limited to the social context of translation in Iran. However, it could be a starting point to explore translators' book selection motivation in other cultures and contexts to see how translators' decision-making is affected by "varied types of motivational regulation and the condition that foster them" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 4). Future studies can also address translators' selection of books within different periods in the same country. On a final note, extensive research is essential to gain a deeper understanding of how translators' professionalism influences book selection motivations. To achieve this, qualitative and case studies are necessary to offer in-depth insights.

6. References

Ameri, S., & Ghahari, S. (2018). Developing a motivational framework in translation training programs: a mixed methods study following self-determination and social capital theories. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *12*(2), 227-243. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2018.1465678

Amini, M. (2005). Translation and the difficulties of choice. *Azma*, *35*, 26-27.

Bagheri, R. (2021, September 27). I translate a book that I enjoy reading/ The necessity of re-translating classic works for the new generation. *Saba*.

Ben-Ari, N. (2013). An open system of systems: Itamar Even-Zohar and the polysystem theory. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of translation studies* (pp. 144-150). Routledge.

Bolouri, M. (2017). The effects of women policies adopted by two administrations on the selection and non-selection of feminist literary works for translation into Persian. *Language and Translation Studies (LTS)*, *50*(3), 29-47. https://doi.org/10.22067/lts.v50i3.63487

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood.

Buzelin, H. (2007). Translations "in the making". In M. Wolf & A. Fukari (Eds.), *Constructing a sociology of translation* (pp. 135-170). John Benjamins.

Buzelin, H. (2011). Agents of translation. In Y. Gambier & L. v. Doorslaer (Eds.), *Handbook of translation studies* (Vol. 2, pp. 6-12). John Benjamins

Chesterman, A. (2009). The name and nature of translator studies. *Hermes*, *42*, 13-22.

Chesterman, A. (2017). *Reflections on translation theory: Selected papers 1993 - 2014*. John Benjamins.

Chesterman, A. (2021). Translator studies. In Y. Gambier & L. van Doorslaer (Eds.), *Handbook of translation studies* (Vol. 5, pp. 241-246). John Benjamins.

Chesterman, A., & Baker, M. (2008). Ethics of renarration: Mona Baker is interviewed by Andrew Chesterman. *Cultus*, *1*(1), 10-33.

Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, *112*(1), 155-159.

Daghighi, M. (2022). A conversation with Mojdeh Daghighi about the challenges of translation with translators.. *Radio Zamaneh*. https://www.radiozamaneh.com/714729/

Dam, H. V., & Zethsen, K. K. (2010). Translator status: Helpers and opponents in the ongoing battle of an emerging profession. *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies*, *22*(2), 194-211.

Deane-Cox, S. (2014). *Retranslation: Translation, literature and reinterpretation*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Delzendehrooy, S., Farid, A. K., & Khoshsaligheh, M. (2019). Despotism and translation in Iran: The case of Naseri House of Translation as the first state translation institution. *Intralinea*, *21*.

Díaz-Cintas, J. (2012). Clearing the smoke to see the screen: Ideological manipulation in audiovisual translation. *Meta*, *57*(2), 279-293. https://doi.org/10.7202/1013945ar

Emami, K. (1999). The role of publishers in the ups and downs of literary translation. *Motarjem*, *31*, 8-20.

Esmaieli, N. (2016). The relationship between the translator and publisher. *Motarjem*, *25*, 39-44.

Ferdowsi, S., Hadipour, H., & Razmi, M. H. (2023). Developing and validating translators' book selection criteria scale: The case of translators in Iran. *Translation & Interpreting*, *15*(1). https://doi.org/10.12807/ti.115201.2023.a08

Folaron, D. A. (2018). Circulation and spread of knowledge. In L. D'hulst & Y. Gambier (Eds.), *A history of modern translation knowledge: Sources, concepts, effects* (pp. 135-142). John Benjamins.

Fornalczyk-Lipska, A. (2021). Translators of children's literature and their voice in prefaces and interviews. In K. Kaindl, W. Kolb, & D. Schlager (Eds.), *Literary translator studies* (pp. 183-198). John Benjamins.

Gürçağlar, Ş. T. (2020). Retranslation. In M. Baker & G. Saldahna (Eds.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies* (pp. 484-489). Routledge.

Haddadian-Moghaddam, E. (2014). *Literary translation in modern Iran*. John Benjamins.

Haddadian-Moghaddam, E. (2015). Agency in literary translation: the case of women translators in Iran. In A. Ankit & S. Faiq (Eds.), *Agency and patronage in Eastern translatology* (pp. 143-172). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Hanna, S. (2016). *Bourdieu in translation studies: The socio-cultural dynamics of Shakespeare translation in Egypt*. Routledge.

Hubscher-Davidson, S., & Lehr, C. (2021). *Improving the emotional intelligence of translators: A roadmap for an experimental training intervention*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Kafi, M., Khoshsaligheh, M., & Hashemi, M. R. (2015). Typology of capitals expected and received by Iranian translators. *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation*, *9*(1), 26-43.

Kafi, M., Khoshsaligheh, M., & Hashemi, M. R. (2018). Translation profession in Iran: current challenges and future prospects. *The Translator*, *24*(1), 89-103. https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2017.1297693

Karimi, M. (2005, October 12). Why and how do literary translators living abroad publish books in Iran? *ISNA*.

Kinnunen, T., & Koskinen, K. (2010). *Translators' agency*. Tampere University Press.

Kowsari, A. (2005). Translators and criteria for selecting books for translation. *Azma*, *35*, 18-19.

Kruger, H. (2011). Preliminary norms in the selection of children's books for translation in South Africa. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, *29*(3), 293-311. https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2011.647492

Lee, J. (2022). Quantitative research on what motivates Korean TED translators to translate. *Perspectives*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2022.2074798

Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2007). Normative, gain and hedonic goal frames guiding environmental behavior. *Journal of Social Issues*, *63*(1), 117-137. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2007.00499.x

Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2013). Goal-framing theory and norm: Guided environmental behavior. In H. C. M. v. Trijp (Ed.), *Encouraging sustainable behavior* (pp. 37-54). Routledge.

Liu, C. F.-m. (2021). Translator professionalism in Asia. *Perspectives*, *29*(1), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2019.1676277

Nord, C. (2011). Functionalist approaches. In Y. Gambier & L. v. Doorslaer (Eds.), *Handbook of translation studies* (Vol. 1, pp. 120-128). John Benjamins.

Nord, C. (2013). Functionalism in translation studies. In C. Millán & F. Bartrina (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of translation studies* (pp. 201-211). Routledge.

Olohan, M. (2014). Why do you translate? Motivation to volunteer and TED translation. *Translation Studies*, *7*(1), 17-33. https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2013.781952

Paloposki, O. (2007). Translators' agency in 19th century Finland. In Y. Gambier, M. Shlesinger, & R. Stolze (Eds.), *Doubts and directions in translation studies. Selected contributions from the EST Congress, Lisbon 2004* (pp. 335-346). John Benjamins.

Paloposki, O. (2009). Limits of freedom: Agency, choice and constraints in the work of the translator. In J. Milton & P. Bandia (Eds.), *Agents of translation* (pp. 189–208). John Benjamins.

Pugsley, P. C. (2005). Literary text as cross-cultural exchange: The selection of Australian Literature for the Chinese book market. *Asian Studies Review*, *29*(4), 383-394. https://doi.org/10.1080/10357820500398333

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 68-78. https://doi.org/10.1037110003-066X.55.1.68

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Publications.

Saeedi, S. (2020). New perspectives on retranslation: the case of Iran. *TranscUlturAl: A Journal of Translation and Cultural Studies*, *12*(1), 27-46.

Schlager, D. (2021). Translators' multipositionality, teloi and goals. In K. Kaindl, W. Kolb, & D. Schlager (Eds.), *Literary translator studies* (pp. 212). John Benjamins.

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Experimental designs using ANOVA*. Brooks/Cole

Tymoczko, M., & Gentzler, E. (2002). *Translation and power*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Wolf, M. (2007). Introduction: The emergence of a sociology of translation. In M. Wolf & A. Fukari (Eds.), *Constructing a sociology of translation* (pp. 1-36). John Benjamins.

Yoo, T., & Jeong, C. J. (2017). Consolidating the professional identity of translators: The role of citizenship behaviors. *Target. International Journal of Translation Studies*, *29*(3), 361-387.

Zanotti, S. (2015). Analysing redubs: Motives, agents and audience response. In R. B. Piñero & J. Diaz-Cintas (Eds.), *Audiovisual translation in a global context* (pp. 110-139). Palgrave Macmillan.

Zwischenberger, C. (2020). Norms. In M. Baker & G. Saldanha (Eds.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies* (pp. 375-380). Routledge.