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## FİRMALARIN İHRACATTA YAŞADIKLARI SORUNLARA İLİŞKİN ALGILARINDAKİ FARKLILIKLAR: GAZİANTEP ÖRNEĞİ

### ÖZET

Günümüz zorlu rekabet ortamında firmaların varlıklarını devam ettirebilmeleri için yalnızca iç pazarlar yeterli olmamaktadır. Bu nedenle firmaların dış pazarlara açılması bir zorunluluk haline gelmiştir. Bu nedenle ihracat firmalarının varlıklarını devam ettirmelerindeki en önemli örgütsel faaliyetler arasında yer almaktadır. Firmalar ihracat yaparken pek çok sorun ile karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Bu sorunlarla mücadele edebilen firmalar avantajlı hale gelmekte ve dolayısıyla da daha başarılı olmaktadır. Firmaların ihracatta yaşadıkları sorunların tespit edilmesine dair çok fazla çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Bu çalışmada farklı bir yaklaşımla firmaların ihracatta yaşadıkları sorunlara ilişkin algılarındaki farklılıklar incelenmiştir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Gaziantep ilinde ihracatla uğraşan toplam 146 firma yetkilisiyle görüşülmüştür. Çalışmada veri toplama aracı olarak anket yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmadan elde edilen veriler SPSS 22.0 paket programıyla analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizler neticesinde firmaların en fazla sorunu “yerli paranın devalüasyonu” ve “prosedürel karmaşıklık” konularında karşılaştıkları görülmüştür. İstatistiksel analizler neticesinde küçük firmaların ihracat fiyatlandırma kısıtlamaları, dış kaynaklı lojistik sınırlılıklar, ulusal ihracat politikası konularında daha az sorun yaşadığı, büyük firmaların ise yerli paranın devalüasyonu konusunda daha az sorun yaşadığı görülmüştür. Çalışma neticesinde aynı zamanda ihracat konusunda daha deneyimli olan firmaların ihracatla ilgili bilgi/piyasa ile iletişim ve yerli paranın devalüasyonu konularında daha az sorun yaşadıkları tespit edilmiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İhracat, Firma Sorunları, Gaziantep Ekonomisi

## PERCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES AMONG COMPANIES IN TERMS OF EXPORT DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED: AN EXAMPLE FROM GAZİANTEP

### ABSTRACT

Today's highly competitive environment makes it difficult for companies to survive while only catering to their domestic markets. It has now become a necessity to engage with foreign markets too. For this reason, exporting is amongst the most important organizational factors that will enable the survival of a company. Nevertheless, companies encounter many problems in doing exports, and those who can cope with them, gain the advantages which will bring success. There are many studies which aim to determine the problems that companies encounter when exporting. Taking a unique approach, this study focuses on the perceptual differences among companies in terms of difficulties that are encountered when exporting. For this purpose, officials from 146 companies in Gaziantep province were interviewed. A survey was used as a data collection tool in the study. Data obtained in this study was analyzed using SPSS 22.0 package software. The analyses conducted on the data indicated that most problems encountered were in the areas of “devaluation of domestic currency” and “procedural complexity”. Statistical analyses showed that while small-scale companies experienced less problems in terms of export pricing restrictions, external logistic limitations and national exports policies, larger scale companies have less problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation. The study also revealed that companies with greater export experience encounter less problems in terms of knowledge on exports, market communication and domestic currency devaluation.

**Keywords:** Exports, Company Problems, Gaziantep Economy

## **Introduction and Purpose**

The 21st Century brought forth rapid and unbelievable developments in science and technology, together with significant dynamism and growth in economy. These developments and changes have rendered factors, such as competitive power and competitive advantage much more critical than before, both in the business world and, in terms of competition between countries. The very reason for this is the fact that companies, and countries alike, need to be economically stable in order to preserve their existence. This propels companies to open up to the world and globalize, towards the purpose of extending their market share.

When opening up to foreign markets, exporter companies carry the same purposes and implement the same operations, however the work environment exhibits some differences. Today, all marketing is done on a global scale. One of the most sensitive elements to consider when entering the global market is how much of the market or production will be controlled. The particular characteristics of countries/regions, should be consulted when selecting foreign markets in order to specify the best ways of entrance. The most widely preferred way to enter a foreign market is through exports. This is largely because exports do not pose significant market and political risks and do not require large capital amounts. In this way, exporting is of vital importance for international companies, as well as for national economies. On the other hand, there are more unknowns in foreign markets compared to domestic, which necessitates thorough research in developing optimal strategies before dedicating to exports. In order to become successful, or in other words, continue in a foreign market, a company should be ready for all sorts of setbacks that might be encountered during export operations. Exporter companies also need to tackle many problems which originate from their countries.

This study aims to investigate the perceptual differences among companies in terms of difficulties encountered in exporting. Towards this aim, a number of business companies operating in Gaziantep were surveyed.

### **1. Literature Review**

In a 1985 study, Bauerschmidt vd. researched the effects of devaluation on domestic exporter companies. The study concluded that devaluation has a negative effect on exporting companies.

In a study on Differences in Perceptions of Exporting Problems Based on Firm Size and Export Market Experience (1994), Constantine S. Katsikeas and Robert E. Morgan interpreted their research in the light of certain quantitative data. For the desired outcome, the operational criteria of export market experience was insufficient as the sole indicator. In addition, this study suggests that the scope of experience in certain export markets and the extent of company experience is also relevant and important.

Çavuşgil's (1984) study indicates that domestic exporters have difficulties due to financial problems such as domestic currency devaluation. In addition, This study shows that SMEs with high technology levels have better export performance

The Julian, CC and Ahmed, ZU (2005) study investigates the impact of certain obstacles on export operations. A study was carried out in Queensland, Australia, to measure exporter companies' market performances. A self-managing mail survey was conducted with the general managers of 689 exporter companies. The findings were classified as the features of export entrepreneurship management and general marketing performance effectiveness against the obstacles of exporting to foreign markets.

Conducted by Predrag D. vd. (2014), this study aimed to deconstruct the perceptions of Serbian exporters in terms of company attributes, the historical length of exporting experience, capital ownership, export obstacles and industry type. Many export obstacles refer to the domestic business environment and there is a correlation among them. For example, company size, historical length of export experience and capital ownership all pose as exporting problems.

A study conducted by Glen Hornby, vd (2002) stresses the importance of the Internet in marketing the products of small-scale enterprises, and exporters in terms of overcoming cultural differences when addressing the global market.

In 1994, Katsikeas and Morgan reported that larger scale companies are likely to encounter more problems in terms of exports pricing restrictions, however the difference between scale groups is not statistically significant. It was determined that small-scale companies, with only a few years of commercial experience. are likely to be sensitive to many potential export obstacles.

In 1994, Katsikeas and Morgan reported that larger scale companies are likely to encounter more problems in terms of exports pricing restrictions, however the difference between scale groups is not statistically significant. In addition, the export pricing constraints posed the biggest obstacle in the export initiation process. In particular, it was concluded that firms with small and relatively few years of trade experience had a tendency to perceive many of the proposed export barriers.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **2.1. Purpose of the Study**

This study aims to determine the perceptual differences among companies in terms of difficulties encountered while exporting. To achieve this aim, a number of business companies operating in Gaziantep were surveyed.

### **2.2. Study Population and Sample**

The target population of the study are exporting companies operating in the province of Gaziantep. Since it's not possible to contact all of the exporter companies in the province, a total of 146 companies were interviewed using random sampling method.

### **2.3. Data Collection Instruments**

The survey, developed in the Katsikeas and Morgan (1993) study was used as the data collection instrument. The survey consists of two parts. There are 16 questions in the first part which aims to determine the various characteristics of participants and companies. The 24 questions in the second part are intended to determine the problems that exporter companies are likely to encounter. The questions in the second part are established in Likert scales of five and are to be assigned a score between 1-5. The exports problems scale consists of eight sub-dimensions, which are named "Knowledge on exports/market communication", "Product adaptation", "Export pricing restrictions", "Adaptation of marketing organization", "External Logistic Limitations", "National Export Policy", "Procedural complexity" and "Domestic currency devaluation". The results acquired from the reliability analysis conducted on the scale are presented below.

**Table 1. Results of the reliability analysis**

	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
Knowledge on export/market communication	.744
Product adaptation	.470
Export pricing restrictions	.615
Adaptation of marketing organization	.644
External Logistic Limitations	.543
National Export Policy	.670
Procedural complexity	.529
Domestic Currency Devaluation	.658

### **2.4. Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the study was analyzed using SPSS 22.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) package software. Descriptive statistics were given as mean values, standard deviations, and the frequency distribution in percentages. The t test was used for independent variables in comparisons related to parametric binary variables, one-way variance analysis (One Way ANOVA) was used for comparisons related to multiple variables and the Mann Whitney U test was used for non-parametric binary variables. The results obtained were evaluated at a 95% ( $p < 0.05$ ) significance level.

### 3. Findings

The survey form which was used to determine the difficulties that companies encounter in exports consisted of 24 questions and eight sub-dimensions. The average scores obtained from each of these dimensions are presented in Table 2. It was determined that the difficulties which companies encounter the most were “domestic currency devaluation” and “procedural complexity”, while the least were “knowledge on exports/market communication” (Table 2).

**Table 2. Average scores obtained from the scale and its sub-dimensions**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Ss (<math>\pm</math>)</b>
Knowledge on export/market communication	146	2.6153	.57254
Product adaptation	146	3.0023	.59177
Export pricing restrictions	146	3.7055	.67318
Adaptation of marketing organization	146	3.4612	.69620
External Logistic Limitations	146	3.5479	.62849
National Export Policy	146	3.3425	.78511
Procedural complexity	146	4.1712	.75758
Domestic Currency Devaluation	146	4.3904	1.02636

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the average scores the surveyed companies achieved based on their size, are presented in Table 2. The companies were categorized according to the number of employees. Accordingly, it was observed that companies with 51 or more employees (larger scale companies) encountered significantly more problems in terms of export pricing restrictions, external logistic limitations and national exports policy, while companies with 1-50 employees (smaller scale companies) encountered significantly more problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 3. Comparison of scores obtained from company size scale**

	Company Size	N	Mean	Ss (±)	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	1-50	104	2.6362	.54007	.694	.489
	51 and more	42	2.5635	.65015		
Product adaptation	1-50	104	2.9647	.53551	-1.208	.229
	51 and more	42	3.0952	.71107		
Export pricing restrictions	1-50	104	3.5913	.64992	-3.334	.001*
	51 and more	42	3.9881	.65321		
Adaptation of marketing organization	1-50	104	3.4103	.66054	-1.396	.165
	51 and more	42	3.5873	.77147		
External Logistic Limitations	1-50	104	3.4199	.56887	-4.078	.000*
	51 and more	42	3.8651	.66283		
National Export Policy	1-50	104	3.2404	.73729	-2.517	.013*
	51 and more	42	3.5952	.84995		
Procedural complexity	1-50	104	4.1587	.75126	-.315	.753
	51 and more	42	4.2024	.78133		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	1-50	104	4.5000	.96542	2.053	.042*
	51 and more	42	4.1190	1.13056		

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, carried out to determine whether there are differences among the surveyed scores of companies, based on the length of export history, are presented in Table 3. As seen in the Table, companies with 1-15 years of export history are encountering more problems in terms of “Knowledge on export/market communication” and “Domestic Currency Devaluation”. It was determined in the statistical analysis that companies with 1-15 years of export history are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation” ( $p < 0.05$ ) and that the difference in terms of other criteria are not as significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 4. Comparison of scores obtained from the length of export history**

	The Length of Export History	N	Mean	Ss (±)	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	1-15 years	108	2.6636	.52753	1.730	.086
	longer than 15 years	38	2.4781	.67358		
Product adaptation	1-15 years	108	2.9907	.56821	-.396	.693
	longer than 15 years	38	3.0351	.66119		
Export pricing restrictions	1-15 years	108	3.6574	.68153	-1.460	.146
	longer than 15 years	38	3.8421	.63783		
Adaptation of marketing organization	1-15 years	108	3.4414	.66796	-.579	.564
	longer than 15 years	38	3.5175	.77768		
External Logistic Limitations	1-15 years	108	3.5031	.60027	-1.460	.147
	longer than 15 years	38	3.6754	.69527		
National Export Policy	1-15 years	108	3.2824	.74656	-1.566	.120
	longer than 15 years	38	3.5132	.87369		
Procedural complexity	1-15 years	108	4.1620	.77287	-.246	.806
	longer than 15 years	38	4.1974	.72167		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	1-15 years	108	4.5000	.96189	2.204	.029*
	longer than 15 years	38	4.0789	1.14801		

The results acquired in the “one-way variance analysis” (One Way ANOVA), which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores of surveyed companies, based on the frequency of exports, are presented in Table 4. The study shows that in terms of export pricing, companies that frequently export, encounter significantly more problems compared to those who always export; in terms of marketing organization adaptation, companies that rarely export are encountering significantly more problems compared to companies which sometimes or always export; in terms of external logistic limitations, companies that rarely export are encountering significantly more problems compared to companies who always export; and, in terms of domestic currency devaluation, companies who rarely export are encountering significantly less problems compared to companies who rarely, frequently and always export ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the surveyed companies’ scores achieved on the scale, based on whether or not having knowledge about governmental support for exports, are presented in Table 5. As observed in the table, while companies with knowledge of governmental support for “product adaptation”, “export pricing restrictions” and “domestic currency devaluation” are encountering significantly more problems, however, those with no knowledge of governmental support for “marketing organization adaptation” and “national export policy” are encountering significantly less problems ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5. Comparison of scores obtained from the frequency of exports**

	Annual Exports Frequency	N	Mean	Ss (±)	F	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	Occasionally	21	2.5635	1.03074	.317	.813
	Sometimes	18	2.7130	.67834		
	Often	52	2.6378	.39152		
	Always	55	2.5818	.43730		
Product adaptation	Occasionally	21	2.8413	.75733	1.019	.386
	Sometimes	18	3.1667	.65927		
	Often	52	3.0256	.51912		
	Always	55	2.9879	.56278		
Export pricing restrictions	Occasionally	21	3.7024	.70542	3.097	.029*
	Sometimes	18	3.8194	.56102		
	Often	52	3.8798	.67062		
	Always	55	3.5045	.65879		
Adaptation of marketing organization	Occasionally	21	4.0476	.84515	9.815	.000*
	Sometimes	18	3.7778	.71401		
	Often	52	3.2821	.55379		
	Always	55	3.3030	.60271		
External Logistic Limitations	Occasionally	21	3.8889	.70185	4.203	.007*
	Sometimes	18	3.7407	.71907		
	Often	52	3.5192	.53388		
	Always	55	3.3818	.59979		
National Export Policy	Occasionally	21	3.5714	.96548	2.537	.059
	Sometimes	18	3.6667	.66421		
	Often	52	3.1731	.66336		
	Always	55	3.3091	.81928		
Procedural complexity	Occasionally	21	4.4048	.66368	1.805	.149
	Sometimes	18	4.0556	.99836		
	Often	52	4.0192	.70684		
	Always	55	4.2636	.73191		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	Occasionally	21	3.1429	1.31475	20.945	.000*
	Sometimes	18	4.0000	1.18818		
	Often	52	4.5962	.74780		
	Always	55	4.8000	.59004		

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores of surveyed companies based on utilization of KOSGEB support for exports, are presented in Table 6. As observed in the table, companies that are not utilizing the support of KOSGEB are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “exports pricing restrictions” and “external logistic limitations” and significantly less problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation” (p<0.05).



**Table 6. Comparison of scale scores achieved by having knowledge of governmental support for exports**

	Knowledge of governmental support	N	Mean	Ss (±)	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	Yes	128	2.6471	.49345	74.99	961.500	.253
	No	18	2.3889	.95657	62.92		
Product adaptation	Yes	128	3.0521	.57116	76.76	735.000	.012*
	No	18	2.6481	.63113	50.33		
Export pricing restrictions	Yes	128	3.7598	.67971	77.10	691.500	.006*
	No	18	3.3194	.48360	47.92		
Adaptation of marketing organization	Yes	128	3.3750	.66535	68.45	505.500	.000*
	No	18	4.0741	.61096	109.42		
External Logistic Limitations	Yes	128	3.5182	.60878	71.66	917.000	.155
	No	18	3.7593	.73924	86.56		
National Export Policy	Yes	128	3.3047	.75617	70.93	822.500	.041*
	No	18	3.6111	.94799	91.81		
Procedural complexity	Yes	128	4.1641	.76619	73.24	1119.000	.840
	No	18	4.2222	.71171	75.33		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	Yes	128	4.6172	.81445	80.80	217.500	.000*
	No	18	2.7778	.94281	21.58		

**Table 7. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of KOSGEB support for exports**

	Utilization of KOSGEB support	N	Mean	Ss (±)	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	73	2.5685	.63333	-.988	.325
	Yes	73	2.6621	.50459		
Product adaptation	No	73	2.9863	.65602	-.325	.745
	Yes	73	3.0183	.52379		
Export pricing restrictions	No	73	3.9110	.67876	3.861	.000*
	Yes	73	3.5000	.60524		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	73	3.4977	.80147	.633	.528
	Yes	73	3.4247	.57537		
External Logistic Limitations	No	73	3.6849	.60576	2.690	.008*
	Yes	73	3.4110	.62490		
National Export Policy	No	73	3.3219	.80091	-.315	.753
	Yes	73	3.3630	.77397		
Procedural complexity	No	73	4.0890	.76984	-1.314	.191
	Yes	73	4.2534	.74126		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	73	4.0822	1.21053	-3.792	.000*
	Yes	73	4.6986	.68079		



The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores of the surveyed companies based on utilization of the Exporters' Association's support for exports, are presented in Table 7. As observed in the table, companies that aren't utilizing the support of the Exporters' Association are encountering significantly more problems in terms of "domestic currency devaluation" and significantly less problems in terms of "Marketing organization adaptation" and "External Logistic Limitations" ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 8. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of Exporters' Association's support for exports**

	Utilizing the Exporters' Association's support	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	129	2.6447	.52099	74.81	927.000	.298
	Yes	17	2.3922	.85987	63.53		
Product adaptation	No	129	3.0233	.59685	74.84	924.000	.285
	Yes	17	2.8431	.54157	63.35		
Export pricing restrictions	No	129	3.7364	.68058	75.56	831.000	.103
	Yes	17	3.4706	.57881	57.88		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	129	3.3979	.66023	69.73	610.500	.003*
	Yes	17	3.9412	.79263	102.09		
External Logistic Limitations	No	129	3.5090	.60679	70.55	716.500	.019*
	Yes	17	3.8431	.72761	95.85		
National Export Policy	No	129	3.3372	.75819	72.79	1005.500	.564
	Yes	17	3.3824	.99262	78.85		
Procedural complexity	No	129	4.1705	.73020	72.79	1005.000	.567
	Yes	17	4.1765	.96730	78.88		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	129	4.5659	.86463	79.07	377.500	.000*
	Yes	17	3.0588	1.19742	31.21		

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores achieved by surveyed companies based on utilization of the Exim Bank's support for exports, are presented in Table 8. As observed in the table, there are no significant differences between the companies utilizing or not utilizing Exim Bank's support in terms of relevant variables ( $p > 0.05$ ).

The results acquired in the "independent variables t test", carried out to determine whether there are differences among the achieved scores of surveyed companies, based on the utilization of banking institution's support for exports, are presented in Table 9. As observed in the table, companies which are not utilizing bank supports are encountering significantly more problems in terms of "exports pricing restrictions" and significantly less problems in terms of "domestic currency devaluation" ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 9. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of Exim Bank's support for exports**

	Utilization of Exim Bank's support	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	125	2.6427	.57956	75.71	1036.500	.121
	Yes	21	2.4524	.51138	60.36		
Product adaptation	No	125	3.0293	.60020	75.48	1065.500	.161
	Yes	21	2.8413	.52302	61.74		
Export pricing restrictions	No	125	3.7100	.69372	73.88	1265.500	.792
	Yes	21	3.6786	.54854	71.26		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	125	3.4587	.70541	73.26	1283.000	.868
	Yes	21	3.4762	.65465	74.90		
External Logistic Limitations	No	125	3.5040	.60259	71.39	1048.500	.135
	Yes	21	3.8095	.72703	86.07		
National Export Policy	No	125	3.3120	.75312	72.00	1125.500	.278
	Yes	21	3.5238	.95494	82.40		
Procedural complexity	No	125	4.1640	.78488	73.69	1288.500	.891
	Yes	21	4.2143	.58248	72.36		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	125	4.3680	1.04369	72.68	1210.000	.483
	Yes	21	4.5238	.92839	78.38		

**Table 10. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of bank support to aid exports**

	Utilization of Bank's support	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	100	2.6300	.49780	.456	.649
	Yes	46	2.5833	.71384		
Product adaptation	No	100	2.9733	.50068	-.871	.385
	Yes	46	3.0652	.75562		
Export pricing restrictions	No	100	3.5300	.60227	-5.016	.000*
	Yes	46	4.0870	.66712		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	100	3.4000	.58794	-1.574	.118
	Yes	46	3.5942	.88027		
External Logistic Limitations	No	100	3.4900	.64867	-1.652	.101
	Yes	46	3.6739	.56869		
National Export Policy	No	100	3.3800	.79493	.851	.396
	Yes	46	3.2609	.76550		
Procedural complexity	No	100	4.1700	.76284	-.029	.977
	Yes	46	4.1739	.75438		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	100	4.6800	.73691	5.513	.000*
	Yes	46	3.7609	1.26815		

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the achieved scores of surveyed companies, based on utilization of the support from Ministry of Economy and Development for exports, are presented in Table 10. As observed in the table, companies which are not utilizing the support from the Ministry of Economy and Development are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “procedural complexity” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 11. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of support from the Ministry of Economy and Development for exports**

	Utilization of support from the Ministry of Economy and Development	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	142	2.6162	.57735	73.54	279.000	.952
	Yes	4	2.5833	.41944	72.25		
Product adaptation	No	142	3.0023	.59217	73.68	259.000	.761
	Yes	4	3.0000	.66667	67.25		
Export pricing restrictions	No	142	3.7042	.67937	73.45	277.500	.937
	Yes	4	3.7500	.45644	75.12		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	142	3.4601	.70541	73.38	267.000	.837
	Yes	4	3.5000	.19245	77.75		
External Logistic Limitations	No	142	3.5563	.62861	73.96	218.000	.422
	Yes	4	3.2500	.63099	57.00		
National Export Policy	No	142	3.3592	.76113	74.15	192.000	.251
	Yes	4	2.7500	1.44338	50.50		
Procedural complexity	No	142	4.2077	.70772	74.73	109.500	.032*
	Yes	4	2.8750	1.37689	29.88		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	142	4.4085	1.01167	74.02	210.500	.280
	Yes	4	3.7500	1.50000	55.12		

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the achieved scores the surveyed companies, based on utilization of R&D support for exports, are presented in Table 11. As observed in the table, companies which are not utilizing the R&D support, are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation” and significantly less problems in terms of “marketing organization adaptation” and “national exports policy” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores achieved by the surveyed companies, based on utilization of overseas exhibition participation support for exports, are presented in Table 12. As observed in the table, companies which are not utilizing support for overseas exhibition participation are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 12. Comparison of achieved scale scores based on utilization of R&D support for exports**

	Utilization of R&D Support	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	138	2.6353	.56656	74.94	353.500	.086
	Yes	8	2.2708	.60381	48.69		
Product adaptation	No	138	3.0048	.57803	73.44	543.50	.941
	Yes	8	2.9583	.84398	74.56		
Export pricing restrictions	No	138	3.7011	.67195	73.10	496.500	.631
	Yes	8	3.7812	.73724	80.44		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	138	3.4300	.67897	71.78	314.500	.039*
	Yes	8	4.0000	.81650	103.19		
External Logistic Limitations	No	138	3.5531	.60613	73.37	534.500	.879
	Yes	8	3.4583	.99103	75.69		
National Export Policy	No	138	3.3116	.73296	71.72	306.000	.028*
	Yes	8	3.8750	1.38229	104.25		
Procedural complexity	No	138	4.1739	.73904	73.25	518.000	.764
	Yes	8	4.1250	1.09381	77.75		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	138	4.4420	.99648	75.40	290.000	.006*
	Yes	8	3.5000	1.19523	40.75		

**Table 13. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of support for overseas exhibition participation for exporters**

	Utilization of Overseas Exhibition Participation Support	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	92	2.6123	.53458	-.082	.935
	Yes	54	2.6204	.63726		
Product adaptation	No	92	3.0326	.62324	.807	.421
	Yes	54	2.9506	.53556		
Export pricing restrictions	No	92	3.6413	.70253	-	.133
	Yes	54	3.8148	.61080		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	92	3.4348	.62652	-.597	.552
	Yes	54	3.5062	.80549		
External Logistic Limitations	No	92	3.4928	.60215	-	.167
	Yes	54	3.6420	.66620		
National Export Policy	No	92	3.2554	.72814	-1761	.080
	Yes	54	3.4907	.86051		
Procedural complexity	No	92	4.2065	.76371	.733	.464
	Yes	54	4.1111	.75026		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	92	4.5543	.86905	2.567	.011*
	Yes	54	4.1111	1.20794		

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores the surveyed companies achieved, based on utilization of tax, duty and legal fee exemption for exports, are presented in Table 13. As observed in the table, companies which do not utilize the tax, duty and legal fee exemption rights interestingly encounter significantly less problems in terms of “national export policy” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 14. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of tax, duty and legal fee exemption support for exports**

	Utilization of Tax, Duty and Legal Fee Exemptions	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	Mean Value of Rank	U	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	142	2.6174	.57351	73.80	241.500	.608
	Yes	4	2.5417	.61426	62.88		
Product adaptation	No	142	3.0164	.57984	74.30	170.500	.167
	Yes	4	2.5000	.88192	45.12		
Export pricing restrictions	No	142	3.7130	.67828	74.05	206.500	.350
	Yes	4	3.4375	.42696	54.12		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	142	3.4507	.70145	72.72	173.000	.178
	Yes	4	3.8333	.33333	101.25		
External Logistic Limitations	No	142	3.5305	.61522	72.58	154.000	.113
	Yes	4	4.1667	.88192	106.00		
National Export Policy	No	142	3.3063	.76225	71.76	37.500	.002*
	Yes	4	4.6250	.47871	135.12		
Procedural complexity	No	142	4.1585	.76346	72.83	188.500	.240
	Yes	4	4.6250	.25000	97.38		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	142	4.4155	1.01927	74.44	150.500	.050
	Yes	4	3.5000	1.00000	40.12		

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores achieved by surveyed companies, based on utilization of training support for exports, are presented in Table 14. As observed in the table, companies who do not utilize training support are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “Knowledge on exports/market communication” and “Domestic Currency Devaluation” and significantly less problems in terms of “Marketing organization adaptation”, “External Logistic Limitations” and “Procedural Complexity” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores of surveyed companies, based on utilization of market research support for exports, are presented in Table 15. As observed in the table, companies which are not utilizing the support for market research are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “procedural complexity” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 15. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of training support for exports**

	Utilization of Training Support	N	Mean	Ss (±)	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	116	2.6739	.39891	2.472	.015*
	Yes	30	2.3889	.97018		
Product adaptation	No	116	3.0345	.55843	1.296	.197
	Yes	30	2.8778	.70294		
Export pricing restrictions	No	116	3.7306	.69950	.886	.377
	Yes	30	3.6083	.55972		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	116	3.2931	.62191	-6.502	.000*
	Yes	30	4.1111	.58285		
External Logistic Limitations	No	116	3.4167	.53455	-.5428	.000*
	Yes	30	4.0556	.71161		
National Export Policy	No	116	3.2241	.61976	-.3738	.000*
	Yes	30	3.8000	1.13411		
Procedural complexity	No	116	4.1078	.74544	-2.012	.046*
	Yes	30	4.4167	.76658		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	116	4.6638	.76833	7.413	.000*
	Yes	30	3.3333	1.21296		

**Table 16. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of support for market research on exports**

	Utilization of Market Research Support	N	Mean	Ss (±)	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	44	2.6098	.68383	-.075	.940
	Yes	102	2.6176	.52106		
Product adaptation	No	44	2.9621	.59375	-.537	.592
	Yes	102	3.0196	.59300		
Export pricing restrictions	No	44	3.7045	.68682	-.011	.991
	Yes	102	3.7059	.67065		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	44	3.5606	.80622	1.134	.259
	Yes	102	3.4183	.64261		
External Logistic Limitations	No	44	3.6818	.70051	1.701	.091
	Yes	102	3.4902	.58906		
National Export Policy	No	44	3.5114	.99702	1.719	.088
	Yes	102	3.2696	.66627		
Procedural complexity	No	44	4.4205	.62824	2.665	.009*
	Yes	102	4.0637	.78561		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	44	4.1818	1.10544	-1.622	.107
	Yes	102	4.4804	.98232		

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine if there are any differences among the scores achieved by the surveyed companies, based on utilization



of support aimed at opening overseas stores for exports, are presented in Table 16. As observed in the table, companies which do not utilize support for opening overseas stores are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “export pricing restrictions” and “external logistic limitations” and significantly less problems in terms of “Procedural Complexity” and “Domestic Currency Devaluation” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 17. Comparison of scale scores achieved based on utilization of support for market research on exports**

	Utilization of Support for Opening Overseas Stores	N	Mean	Ss ( $\pm$ )	t	p
Knowledge on export/market communication	No	116	2.6135	.55586	-.074	.941
	Yes	30	2.6222	.64317		
Product adaptation	No	116	2.9799	.60639	-.899	.370
	Yes	30	3.0889	.53199		
Export pricing restrictions	No	116	3.7931	.64038	3.189	.002*
	Yes	30	3.3667	.70016		
Adaptation of marketing organization	No	116	3.4971	.69712	1.229	.221
	Yes	30	3.3222	.68639		
External Logistic Limitations	No	116	3.6178	.60951	2.698	.008*
	Yes	30	3.2778	.63778		
National Export Policy	No	116	3.3621	.75061	.592	.555
	Yes	30	3.2667	.91664		
Procedural complexity	No	116	4.0647	.77888	-3.467	.001*
	Yes	30	4.5833	.49276		
Domestic Currency Devaluation	No	116	4.2759	1.08416	-2.709	.008*
	Yes	30	4.8333	.59209		

### Discussion and Conclusion

It is a general belief that, for a company, exporting is one of the attractive expansion alternatives into foreign markets. The reason for this is that exports do not pose significant market and political risks and may not always require a large amount of capital either. Nevertheless, exporter companies encounter many different problems in their own right. These problems may arise in the country where the company is operating, as well as in the target country of exports. There are many unknowns in a foreign market for an exporter company and this may pose significant risks, threatening the company’s wellbeing. For this reason, exporting companies need to take diligent actions, produce optimal strategies for every case and stick to those strategies (Katsikeas and Morgan, 1994).

There are many conceptual and empirical studies on export and marketing and in related literature, it has generally been stated that the obstacles or problems perceived by corporate decision makers are examined in terms of their impact on exports marketing (Bilkey, 1978; Miesenbock, 1988; Seifert and Fort, 1989; Aaby and Slater, 1989). However, it is also a fact that many of these studies were centered on companies operating in the US (Katsiekas and Piercy, 1993). There are very few earlier studies in this regard, especially in Turkey. Determining the problems encountered in exports is vitally important for national economies. In the light of all these, this study aims to determine the perceptual differences among companies in terms of difficulties encountered in exports. To meet this aim, a number of company exporters in Gaziantep were incorporated into the study.

As a result of the surveys conducted on these companies, this current study reports that the problems most commonly encountered in exports are “domestic currency devaluation” and “procedural complexity”, and the least are “knowledge on exports/market communication”. Many of

the researchers who worked on this subject in the past stated that exporter companies usually had difficulties due to financial problems such as domestic currency devaluation (Cavusgil, 1984, Bauerschmidt vd., 1985).

104 (71.2%) of the companies which were included in this study, employs between 1 to 50 staff and 42 (28.8%) of them, employ 51 or more. At the conclusion of the statistical analysis, which was conducted as to determine whether there is any difference, based on the number of employees, among exporter companies in terms of perception on problems encountered in exports, it was observed that companies with 51 or more employees (larger scale companies) encounter significantly more problems in terms of “export pricing restrictions”, “external logistic limitations” and “national export policy”, while companies with 1-50 employees (smaller scale companies) encounter significantly more problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation”. In their study dated 1994, Katsikeas and Morgan reported that larger scale companies are likely to encounter more problems in terms of exports pricing restrictions.

This study also determines that the companies who had been exporting for 1 to 15 years encountered significantly more problems in terms of “knowledge on exports/market communication” and “domestic currency devaluation” than the companies who had been exporting for more than 15 years. Since the companies with a longer history of exports naturally accumulated more export knowledge and have probably encountered more problems over time, these kind of companies are more prepared for the export processes. This brings them a natural advantage in terms of the problems mentioned above. In their 1994 study, Katsikeas and Morgan discovered that more experienced companies encounter less problems in terms of knowledge on exports/market communication, but have more problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation.

Other conclusions in the study are summarized below;

The study shows that, in terms of export pricing, companies which frequently export encounter significantly more problems compared to those that always export; in terms of marketing organization adaptation, companies that rarely export are encountering significantly more problems compared to companies which sometimes or always export; in terms of external logistic limitations, companies that rarely export are encountering significantly more problems compared to companies who always export; and, in terms of domestic currency devaluation, companies who rarely export are encountering significantly less problems compared to companies who rarely, frequently and always export.

The results acquired in the Mann Whitney U test, carried out to determine whether there are differences among the surveyed companies in terms of the achieved scores based on whether or not having knowledge about governmental support for exports, are presented in Table 6. As observed in the table, while companies with knowledge of governmental support for “product adaptation”, “export pricing restrictions” and “domestic currency devaluation” are encountering significantly more problems, however, those with no knowledge of governmental support for “marketing organization adaptation” and “national export policy” are encountering significantly less problems ( $p < 0.05$ ).

It was determined that while companies with knowledge on governmental support are, interestingly, encountering significantly more problems in terms of product adaptation, exports pricing restrictions and domestic currency devaluation. Also, those with no knowledge on governmental support for “marketing organization adaptation” and “national export policy” are encountering significantly more problems.

The results acquired in the “independent variables t test”, which was carried out to determine whether there are differences among the scores the surveyed companies achieved, based on utilization of KOSGEB support for exports, are presented in Table 7. As observed in the table, companies that are not utilizing the support of KOSGEB are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “exports pricing restrictions” and “external logistic limitations” and significantly less problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation” ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The research concluded that, companies that are not utilizing KOSGEB aids are encountering significantly more problems in terms of “exports pricing restrictions” and “external logistic limitations” and conversely, significantly less problems in terms of “domestic currency devaluation”.

This study has determined that companies which aren't utilizing the Exporters' Association's supports are encountering significantly more problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation and significantly less problems in terms of marketing organization adaptation and external logistic limitations”.

The research reports that, companies which are not utilizing the banks' support are encountering significantly less problems in terms of export pricing restrictions and, conversely, significantly more problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation.

This study also reports that companies that do utilize the support provided by the Ministry of Economy and Development are encountering significantly less problems in terms of procedural complexity.

Another conclusion obtained from the study is that companies which utilize the R&D support are encountering significantly less problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation and more problems in terms of marketing organization adaptation and national export policies.

This study also reports that companies which utilize the support provided for overseas exhibition participation are encountering significantly less problems in terms of domestic currency devaluation.

Another outcome of the study is the observation that companies who utilize tax, duty and legal fee exemption for exports are, interestingly, encountering more problems in terms of exports policy.

The study demonstrates that, companies who utilize training aid and support are encountering significantly more problems in terms of knowledge on exports/market communication and domestic currency devaluation and less problems in terms of marketing organization adaptation, external logistic limitations and procedural complexity.

Through this study, it was determined that companies which utilize the support provided for market research are encountering significantly less problems in terms of procedural complexity.

Companies which do not utilize aids for opening overseas stores are encountering significantly less problems in terms of export pricing restrictions and external logistic limitations and more problems in terms of procedural complexity and domestic currency devaluation.

In the light of the study's findings and results, it can be said that business companies in Gaziantep are having more difficulties in the areas of domestic currency devaluation and procedural complexity, with little to no problems in terms of knowledge on exports/market communication.

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