

Export Incentives in Turkish Textile Industry: A Research in Bursa Province

Türk Tekstil Endüstrisinde İhracata Yönelik Devlet Teşvikleri: Bursa İlinde Bir Araştırma

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Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türk tekstil endüstrisinde faaliyet gösteren işletmelerin ihracata yönelik devlet desteklerinden faydalanma durumlarını araştırmaktır. Bu amaçla Bursa'da tekstil endüstrisinde faaliyette bulunan 246 işletmeye anket uygulanmıştır. Araştırmanın analizinde tanımlayıcı istatistikler, One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Mann-Whitney U test ve Non-parametric Spearman's correlation test kullanılmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre, işletmelerin %31,7'si devlet desteklerden faydalanmaktadır. Örneklemin %13,4'ü devlet desteklerden faydalanırken ilk tecrübelerinde yüksek ya da çok yüksek düzeyde sorun yaşadığını; %33,3'ü sonraki tecrübelerinde sorun düzeylerinin azaldığını; %39,8'i devlet desteklerinin ihracat kararını olumlu yönde etkilediğini belirtmiştir. İşletmelerin %32,5'i devlet desteklerinin yeterli olduğunu; %37,4'ü etkili olduğunu ve %26,5'i adil ve şeffaf bir şekilde verildiğini düşünmektedir. İhracat yapan işletmeler, yapmayanlara kıyasla, devlet desteklerinden faydalanmak için çeşitli kurumlar tarafından verilen eğitim, seminer, danışmanlık hizmeti gibi faaliyetleri daha yüksek düzeyde faydalı olarak değerlendirmiş, devlet desteklerinin etkili olduğunu, şeffaf ve adil bir şekilde verildiğini daha yüksek düzeylerde ifade etmiştir. İşletmelerin ihracat oranı ile devlet destekleri konusunda katıldıkları etkinliklerin sayısı arasında pozitif yönlü orta dereceli, çeşitli kurumlardan aldıkları hibe ve proje desteği sayısı arasında pozitif yönlü zayıf ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Devlet Destekleri, İhracat Teşvikleri, İhracat Destekleri, İhracat, Tekstil Endüstrisi

Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the status of the companies, which operate in the Turkish textile industry, from the aspect of benefiting from the state's export incentives. For this purpose, a questionnaire was conducted on 246 companies operating in the textile industry in Bursa province. Descriptive statistics, One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Mann-Whitney U test, and non-parametric Spearman's correlation test were used in analyses in the present study. Given the results achieved in the present study, it was determined that 31.7% of the companies were benefiting from state incentives. While 13.4% of the sample reported that they have high or very high levels of problems while benefiting from state incentives, whereas 33.3% stated that the problems reduced in further experiences and 39.8% stated that state incentives positively affected their export decisions. Of companies, 32.5% emphasized that state incentives were sufficient, 37.4% reported that those incentives were effective, and 26.5% stated that those incentives were allocated fairly and transparently. In comparison to non-exporting ones, the exporting companies rated the services such as training, seminar, consulting, etc. offered by various institutions in order to benefit from state incentives more useful, they stated that state incentives were effective at a higher level, and they were distributed transparently and fairly more. Positive and medium-level relationships were found between the export ratio of companies and the number of activities, to which they attended regarding the state incentives, whereas there were positive and weak relationships between their export ratio and the number of grant and project supports they obtained from various institutions.

Keywords: State Incentives, Export Incentives, Export Supports, Export, Textile Industry

Introduction

Export can be considered to be a field of competition and opportunity in foreign markets for both companies and countries. At this point, there are various factors playing roles for companies to make export decisions. Koçak (1997: 468-476) defines making the decision to export as *“a complex process that emerges as a result of the effects of entrepreneur characteristics, organization characteristics, interactions between them, and external factors”*. This process results in companies exploring the idea of export, being aware of it, making market research, collecting necessary information, assessing them, and making the export decision at the end (Türko & Yellice, 2018: 586). Countries aiming to gain a share in foreign markets through governmental supports, maintain their current power, or acquire competitive advantage want to support companies in making export decisions in various ways (Eroğlu & Yılmaz 2015: 139; Atayeter & Erol, 2011: 2). Nowadays, the obstacles regarding the export are among the subjects that the studies examining the export decision focus on. The current grey economy – invisible obstacles regarding foreign trade can be considered as the costs of obtaining market knowledge, establishing connections with clients, and making regulations in compliance with national standards and regulations. In this case, reducing the obstacles requires a policy aiming to eliminate the obstacles to entry to foreign markets (Medin, 2003: 238; Türko & Yellice, 2020: 562).

In the present study, examining the companies operating in textile industry in Bursa province, it was aimed to investigate the level of benefiting from governmental incentives, determine the difference in the perception levels regarding these incentives among exporting and non-exporting companies, the problems faced while benefiting from the incentives, and investigate the relationships between various variables. For this purpose, a survey study was carried out with 246 companies.

1. Export-Oriented Governmental Incentives

In this period, in which the global competition rules apply rather than a closed economy approach, many developing and developed countries aim to encourage companies to export and become a part of international trade. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to increase the competitive power of companies and countries prefer supporting the companies to increase their competitive power (Eroğlu & Yılmaz, 2015: 139). At this point, the export and the concept of incentives to increase the export draw attention. Export incentives or supports refer to encouraging exporters during the process of production, marketing, and delivering the product, which will be exported, to the end user by making use of various methods prior to the production process (Çelik, 2007: 39). Export-oriented governmental incentives are important to support export, improve the international market, and increase the competitive power of companies opening to foreign markets (Atayeter & Erol, 2011). All countries make use of governmental incentives in order to increase the export revenues. Since supporting the export-oriented import-substitute industries would positively affect the balance of payment in the following periods, imports will decrease and exports will increase in countries supporting the exports (Akgündüz, 2010: 16).

In Türkiye in the post-1980 period, the systems projecting the cash payments for export or covering the expenses of exporting companies in public institutions by the government in order to support the export were established. Incentive policies include instruments such as export tax rebates, resource utilization support funds, fund-originated loans, interest rate difference refunds, and energy support. The export incentives implemented in Türkiye include export-oriented governmental incentives provided by the Ministry of Economy, incentives provided by KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization), inward processing regime, exemptions from taxes and other legal dues, VAT exemption, and incentives to fund exports (Köksal, 2001; Eroğlu & Yılmaz, 2015: 141).

In literature, there are studies examining the effects of governmental supports on exports and foreign trade. Although those studies generally emphasize the positive effects of those incentives, there also are studies reporting different results. Enabor (1976) determined that the export incentives increased the wealth in less-developed country groups, whereas Palma (1976) revealed that support policies increased their performance. In a previous

study, Balassa (1978) emphasized that the supports constitute an important variable for the international market. Similarly, Onaran & Öztürk (2008), Ersungur & Yalman (2009), Atayeter & Erol (2011), and Süzer (2019) stated in their studies that export supports positively affected economic growth together with export performance. In a study, Aktaş (2011) found that the export, which increased thanks to export supports, had an effect eliminating the external deficit. Gilaninia et al. (2013) reported similar results as Aktaş did. Ponom (2019), however, stated that trade skills improved thanks to the supports and positively contributed to the level of wealth through the increasing employment. Safari and Saleh (2020) export regulations and supports positively contributed to the companies establishing networks and collaboration with foreign actors. Takyi et al. (2022) determined that financial and non-financial governmental supports had a positive effect on internationalization.

Contrary to the studies emphasizing the positive results of supports, Avcı (2015) specified in a study that the supports were not sufficiently announced and thus the level of their effects was low. Similarly, in their study on Ethiopia, Gebreyesus & Demile (2017) showed that governmental supports fell short in encouraging the export and bureaucratic processes conducted during the implementation of supports were exhausting for company owners. Azak & Saner (2018) determined that more than half of the companies participating in the analysis were not aware of the export incentives and it was necessary to increase the announcements on this subject. Şık & Süygün (2021) found that the effectiveness of export supports varied depending on the educational level of company owner, company size, and economic performance.

2. Method

It was decided to carry out the field study on companies operating in textile industry and in Bursa province. In Türkiye, the textile industry is an industry that comes to the forefront in exports and is supported by incentives. As of July and August 2016, when the field study was carried out, there were 1,582 ready-made clothing and garment companies and 3,749 textile companies registered in the Bursa Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Thus, the universe of the present study was set to be those 5,331 companies operating in these two industries and the sample size was calculated to be 358 at the confidence level of 95% and the significance level of 0.05 (Survey System, 2017). In that period, the companies were abstaining from participating in the survey due to the extraordinary conditions in Türkiye. Although 478 companies were visited, the survey could be conducted only in 356 companies. Since 100 companies couldn't be included in the analyses due to different reasons, the survey was completed with 246 companies. The questionnaire used in the field study was conducted on companies in DOSAB, NOSAB, KESTEL, and GÜRSU organized industrial zones and BUTTİM business center in Bursa province by one of the researchers by conducting face-to-face interviews with company owners and executive managers (general managers, foreign trade managers, etc.).

3. Analysis

The descriptive statistics regarding the sample were presented using percentage (%), frequency (N), mean (M), and standard deviation (SD) values. The correlation analysis and the difference test to be used in order to determine if there was a significant difference between the exporting and non-exporting companies in terms of various parameters, the dataset was analyzed using the categorized variables One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. After determining if the variables had normal distribution, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in order to determine if there was a statistically significant difference ($p=0.00<0.05$) between the variables in terms of exporting. In order to simplify the table presentation, the exporter companies were categorized as "0" and non-exporting companies were categorized as "1". The rank mean values were presented in bold in cases of a statistically significant difference ($p<0.05$) between exporting and non-exporting companies.

The relationships between variables were analyzed using the non-parametric Spearman's correlation test. The analysis results were presented for the variables, between which the relationships were investigated. In cases of the significance levels of $p=.00<0.01$ and $p=.00<0.05$, it was considered that there were statistically significant relationships between the variables (Durmuş et al., 2013: 198). The thresholds used for Spearman correlation coefficient (r_s) analysis are as follows: .00-.19 "very weak", .20-.39 "weak", .40-.59 "moderate", .60-.79 "strong",

and .80-1.0 “very strong” (Statstutor, 2016).

In the sample consisting of 246 companies, there were 117 exporter companies and 129 non-exporting companies. The dataset was analyzed using SPSS 22 package software.

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Are You Benefiting from Governmental Incentives?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
No	168	68.3
Yes	78	31.7
Total	246	100.0

The results regarding the utilization of governmental incentives by companies are presented in Table 1. It can be seen that 31.7% (78) of companies stated that they were benefiting from the governmental incentives, whereas 68.3% (168) of companies stated that they were not.

Table 2: Governmental Incentives that Companies Benefit from

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Support for environmental costs	5	4.3
R&D Support	23	19.7
Employment Support	7	6.0
Participation to Foreign Expos	44	37.6
Supports for Expenses of Facilities and Promotion Abroad	15	12.8
Support for TURQUALITY®, Branding for Turkish products	11	9.4
Market Research and Market Penetration Support	21	17.9
Supporting the International Competitiveness	5	4.3
Other	1	0.9

The governmental supports that companies were benefiting from are listed in Table 2. Of companies, 37.6% were benefiting from supports for participation in expos abroad, 19.7% from R&D supports, 17.9% from market research and market penetration supports, 12.8% from supports for expenses of facilities and promotion abroad, 9.4% from support for TURQUALITY® (branding for Turkish products), 6.0% from employment support, 4.3% from support for increasing international competitiveness, and 4.3% from supports for environmental costs. Besides that, 0.9% of companies stated that they were benefiting from Eximbank loans.

Table 3: At Which Level of Problem Have You Ever Had with Your First Experience with Governmental Supports?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Never	67	57.3
2) Low	27	23.1
3) Indecisive	5	4.3
4) High	14	12.0

5) Very High	4	3.4
Total	117	100.0

The levels of problems, which exporting companies had in their first experiences with governmental incentives, are presented in Table 3. Of companies, 15.4% stated that they had high or very high levels of problems, whereas 23.1% stated that they had low level of problems. While 4.3% of companies emphasized that they were indecisive about this subject, 57.3% stated that they had no problem. Companies verbally stated that they have problems since they didn't have complete knowledge of the process for benefiting the incentives and there were many documentation processes. Those statements were in parallel with the results reported in the literature (Akgündüz, 2010; Yalçın, 2015; Büyükkakın & Özyılmaz, 2015; Eroğlu & Yılmaz, 2015; Atayeter & Erol, 2011).

Table 4: Did The Problems, Which You Had During Your Experiences with Governmental Incentives, Decrease in Their Next Experiences?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Absolutely No	64	54.7
2) No	7	6.0
3) Indecisive	7	6.0
4) Yes	33	28.2
5) Absolutely Yes	6	5.1
Total	117	100.0

The results regarding the decrease in problems, which exporting companies had during their following experiences with governmental incentives, are presented in Table 4. Given the analysis results, 33.3% of companies stated that the problems decreased in their following experiences, whereas 6% reported that they were indecisive and 60.7% reported that there was no decrease. Companies reporting a decrease in the level of problems in face-to-face interviews stated that the level of problems decreased because they learned the processes and they repeated the same processes during the next times they were benefiting from the incentives.

Table 5: Did Governmental Incentives Positively Affect Your Decision to Export?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Absolutely No	56	23.7
2) No	24	10.2
3) Indecisive	62	26.3
4) Yes	77	32.6
5) Absolutely Yes	17	7.2
Total	236	100.0

All the companies were asked if the governmental incentives positively affected their decisions to export and the responses are presented in Table 5. Of the companies, 39.8% stated that the incentives positively affected their decision to export, whereas 26.3% were indecisive and 33.9% stated that the incentives did not positively affect their decision.

Table 6: Finding the Services of Various Institutions Useful for Benefiting the Governmental Incentives

	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)

Chamber of Commerce	1.86	1.504
KOSGEB	1.83	1.443
Exporter Unions	1.76	1.328
Manufacturer Unions	1.52	1.094
Universities	1.34	0.795
Technology Transfer Offices	1.53	1.105
Industrial Zones	1.63	1.241
Development Agencies	1.36	0.896

Before or while benefiting from governmental incentives, companies receive services from various institutions such as training, briefing, technical support, consulting, etc. Companies were asked to assess the services of those institutions (1 very bad, 2 bad, 3 neither bad nor good, 4 good, and 5 very good) and the responses are presented in Table 6. Companies considered the services of Chamber of Commerce and Industry ($M=1.86$, $SD=1.504$), KOSGEB ($M=1.83$, $SD=1.443$), exporter union ($M=1.76$, $SD=1.328$), manufacturer union ($M=1.52$, $SD=1.094$), universities ($M=1.34$, $SD=.795$), TTO ($M=1.53$, $SD=1.105$), industrial zones ($M=1.63$, $SD=1.241$), and development agencies ($M=1.36$, $SD=.896$) good, respectively. It can be seen that the companies considered the services of all institutions to be useful at low levels.

Table 7: Do You Consider Governmental Incentives to be Sufficient?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Absolutely No	12	4.9
2) No	66	26.8
3) Indecisive	88	35.8
4) Yes	74	30.1
5) Absolutely Yes	6	2.4
Total	246	100.0

The companies were asked if they considered the governmental incentives to be sufficient and the responses are presented in Table 7. Of companies, 32.5% considered the incentives to be sufficient, 31.7% considered them to be insufficient, and 35.8% were indecisive.

Table 8: Do You Think that Governmental Incentives are Effective?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Absolutely No	10	4.1
2) No	62	25.2
3) Indecisive	82	33.3
4) Yes	85	34.6
5) Absolutely Yes	7	2.8
Total	246	100.0

Companies were asked if they consider the governmental incentives to be effective and the responses are presented in Table 8. Of the companies, 37.4% considered the incentives to be effective, whereas 33.3% were indecisive and 29.3% considered them to be ineffective.

Table 9: Do You Think that Governmental Incentives are Allocated Transparently and Fairly?

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
1) Absolutely No	18	7.3
2) No	60	24.4
3) Indecisive	103	41.9
4) Yes	55	22.4
5) Absolutely Yes	10	4.1
Total	246	100.0

The companies were asked if they think that governmental incentives were allocated transparently and fairly and the responses of companies are presented in Table 9. Of the companies, 41.9% were indecisive, whereas 26.5% considered them to be allocated transparently and fairly and 31.7% didn't consider this process to be transparent and fair.

Moreover, the companies were also asked about the grant and support programs they have benefited from. Of the companies, 0.8% achieved support from SAN-TEZ (Industrial Thesis Programme) (2 companies), 2.8% from development agencies (7 companies), 2.4% from TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye) (6 companies), and 9.8% from KOSGEB (24 companies).

Table 10: Number of Training, Seminars, and Events They Participated for Governmental Support regarding the Product Sales Regions

Variable 1	Variable 2	Direction and Strength of Relationship	r_s , n, p<
Number of Training, Seminars, and Events They Participated for Governmental Support	Ratio of Product Sales in the Province	No Relationship	$r_s = -.050$ n=246. p= 438>.01
	Ratio of Product Sales in the Region	No Relationship	$r_s = -.005$ n=246. p= 943>.01
	Ratio of Product Sales in the Country	No Relationship	$r_s = .033$ n=246. p= 606>.01
	Ratio of Product Sales Abroad (Export Ratio)	Medium (+)	$r_s = .579$ n=246. p<.01

The relationship between the number of training, seminars, and events, which companies have participated in order to benefit from governmental incentives, and the sales ratios of products in the regions of sales was analyzed using the non-parametric Spearman's correlation test and the results are presented in Table 10. No relationship was found between the number of training, seminars, and events, which companies have participated in order to benefit from governmental incentives, and the sales ratios of products in the province, region, and country. The ratio of selling the products abroad was found to have a positive and moderate-level relationship with the number of training, seminars, and events, which companies have participated in order to benefit from governmental incentives ($r_s = .579$ n=246, p<.01). The export ratio increased with increasing number of training, seminars, and events, which companies have participated in order to benefit from governmental incentives.

Table 11: Relationship between Sales Regions of Products and Total Number of Project Supports Received

Variable 1	Variable 2	Direction and Strength of Relationship	r_s , n, p<
Total Number of Project Supports from TÜBİTAK, Development Agencies, KOSGEB, and San-Tez	Ratio of Product Sales in the Province	No Relationship	$r_s = .106$ n=246. p= .098>.01
	Ratio of Product Sales in the Region	No Relationship	$r_s = .063$ n=246. p= .325>.01
	Ratio of Product Sales in the Country	Very Weak (-)	$r_s = -.132$ n=246. p<.5
	Ratio of Product Sales Abroad (Export Ratio)	Weak (+)	$r_s = .239$ n=246. p<.1

The relationships between the number of grants and project supports that the companies received from various institutions and the ratios of product sales in the regions of sales were examined using non-parametric Spearman's correlation test and the results are presented in Table 11. There was no significant relationship between the ratio of products sales in the province and in the region and the total number of grants and project supports received. However, there was a very weak and negative relationship between the total number of grants and project supports received and the domestic sales ratio ($r_s = -.132$ n=246, p<.5). Moreover, there was a weak and positive relationship between the total number of grants and project supports received and the export ratio ($r_s = .239$ n=246, p<.1). Export ratios increased with increasing number of grants and project supports received.

4. Differences Between Exporting and Non-Exporting Companies

Companies were asked to rate the services they received from various institutions in order to benefit from governmental incentives and if there was a statistically significant difference between exporting and non-exporting companies in terms of those variables were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U test. The analysis results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Differences in Rating the Services Received from Various Institutions

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	P Value
Chamber of Commerce	0	129	106.67	13760.50	5375.500	13760.500	-5.034 .000
	1	117	142.06	16620.50			
KOSGEB	0	129	106.09	13685.50	5300.500	13685.500	-5.208 .000
	1	117	142.70	16695.50			
Exporter Union	0	129	106.41	13727.50	5342.500	13727.500	-5.028 .000
	1	117	142.34	16653.50			
Manufacturer Union	0	129	110.57	14263.50	5878.500	14263.500	-4.262 .000
	1	117	137.76	16117.50			
Universities	0	129	113.79	14679.00	6294.000	14679.000	-3.507 .000
	1	117	134.21	15702.00			
Technology Transfer Offices	0	129	108.60	14009.00	5624.000	14009.000	-4.952 .000
	1	117					

	1	117	139.93	16372.00				
Industrial Zones	0	129	109.72	14154.50	5769.500	14154.500	-4.442	.000
	1	117	138.69	16226.50				
Development Agencies	0	129	113.71	14668.50	6283.500	14668.500	-3.648	.000
	1	117	134.29	15712.50				

There were statistically significant differences between the exporter and non-exporter companies in terms of rating the services received from Chamber of Commerce and Industry, KOSGEB, exporter union, manufacturer union, universities, technology transfer offices, industrial zones, and Development Agency. When compared to non-exporter companies, the exporter companies rated the services, which they received, higher for all the institutions. Exporter companies appreciated those services more.

Table 13: Comparison between Perception Levels of Exporter and Non-Exporter Companies regarding Governmental Incentives

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	P Value
Do you think that governmental incentives are sufficient?	0	129	116.14	14982.50	6597.500	14982.500	-1.787	.074
	1	117	131.61	15398.50				
Do you think that governmental incentives are effective?	0	129	105.17	13566.50	5181.500	13566.500	-4.459	.000
	1	117	143.71	16814.50				
Do you think that governmental incentives are allocated transparently and fairly?	0	129	107.78	13903.00	5518.000	13903.000	-3.835	.000
	1	117	140.84	16478.00				

Exporting and non-exporting companies were provided with different statements regarding the governmental incentives and it was examined if there was a statistically significant difference between exporting and non-exporting companies. The results are presented in Table 13. There was a statistically significant difference between exporter and non-exporter companies regarding the thoughts about effectiveness of governmental incentives and transparency and fairness of distribution. Exporter companies stated at a higher level that they thought that the governmental incentives were effective and that those incentives were allocated transparently and fairly. There was no statistically significant difference between the exporter and non-exporter companies regarding their thoughts that governmental incentives were sufficient.

Conclusion

The present study aims to investigate the level of benefiting from export-oriented governmental incentives among companies operating in the Turkish textile industry. For this purpose, a survey was conducted on 246 companies operating in the textile industry in Bursa and statistical analyses were carried out. Given the results achieved, 31.7% of all the participating companies were benefiting from the governmental incentives, 68.3% were not. Of the sample, 13.4% had high or very high levels of problems in their first experiences of benefiting from the governmental incentives, whereas 33.33% reported a decrease in the level of problems in their following experiences. During the field study, the companies benefiting from governmental incentives and having problem in their first experience stated that this was because they didn't know the procedures at all and there were many bureaucratic processes to be performed. These statements were in parallel with the results reported in the previous

studies (Akgündüz, 2010; Yalçın, 2015; Büyükakın & Özyılmaz, 2015; Yılmaz & Eroğlu, 2015; Atayeter & Erol, 2011). Companies having a problem while benefiting from governmental incentives stated that they learned the processes in their following transactions and that the level of problems decreased. Moreover, they also stated that they wanted to benefit from the incentives again. It suggests that increasing knowledge and experience of companies yielded positive outcomes regarding this process.

Of the sample, 39.8% stated that the governmental incentives positively affected their export decision, whereas 33.9% stated that there was no positive effect and 26.3% stated that they were indecisive. It suggests that, while preparing the export-oriented incentives, policymakers should both prepare the incentives in parallel with the necessities of the industry by establishing more relationships with companies and they should increase the effectiveness of incentives through training and briefing activities addressing the incentives. This result is in parallel with the results in the literature stating that no sufficient information is provided regarding the incentives and complexity of bureaucratic procedures negatively affect the benefit from incentives (Avcı, 2015; Gebreyesus & Demile 2017; Azak & Saner 2018, and Şık & Süygün 2021).

Of the companies, 32.5% stated that governmental incentives were sufficient and 37.4% stated that they were effective. It is interesting that companies gave similar responses to the questions about the sufficiency and effectiveness of governmental incentives. It suggests that effectiveness and sufficiency of incentives should be improved. Similarly, 26.5% of companies stated that incentives were allocated transparently and fairly and 41.9% stated that they were indecisive. It suggests that, in order to increase the trust of companies in incentives, it is necessary to allocate incentives more transparently and fairly and more information on the conclusion of procedures should be provided.

In this study, the companies were asked about the grant and support programs they benefited. Of companies, 0.8% stated that they benefited from supports provided by SAN-TEZ, 2.8% specified development agency, 2.4% specified TÜBİTAK, and 9.8% specified KOSGEB supports. The companies were also asked to rate the services they received from various institutions in order to benefit from governmental incentives (such as Chamber of Commerce and Industry, KOSGEB, Exporter Union, Manufacturer Union, Universities, Technology Transfer Offices, Industrial Zones, and Development Agencies) such as training, briefing, technical support, consulting, etc. Companies were found to consider the services of those institutions to be useful at a low level. In parallel with this conclusion, during the face-to-face interviews, companies stated that universities' activities were out of touch with the field. At this point, the collaboration between universities and industries should be improved.

During the analyses, it was determined that there was a positive and moderate-level relationship between the total number of training, seminar, and events, which companies participated in order to benefit from governmental incentives, and the export rates; the export rates increased with increasing level of participation in such activities. Moreover, the export ratios increased also with the total number of the project supports that companies have received. These findings are in parallel with the results in literature emphasizing the positive effects of governmental incentives on export decisions (Öztürk 2008; Ersungur & Yalman 2009; Atayeter & Erol 2011; Süzer 2019; Ponom 2019; Takyi et al., 2022).

Exporter companies rated the services provided by institutions such as Chamber of Commerce and Industry, KOSGEB, exporter unions, manufacturer unions, universities, technology transfer offices, industrial zones, and development agencies at a higher level in comparison to the non-exporter companies and they also appreciate those services more. Besides that, when compared to the non-exporter ones, the exporter companies thought more positively that the governmental incentives were effective and they were allocated transparently and fairly. This finding suggests that exporter companies had a more positive attitude towards those incentives.

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