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Investigating the export performance of commercial companies (Case study of Ardabil Province)

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Abstract

The last decade differs from previous decades due to globalization and business competition. In the global dimension, markets for consumer products, industrial goods and services, or resource markets such as capital, materials, and technology are highly integrated. Simultaneously, the formation of multiple trade agreements and the disposition of open trade policies between countries has led to the annulment of protectionist tools and the suppression of trade barriers. In conclusion, in practice, almost all companies, regardless of national origin, size, or type of industry, are now encountered with the fact that not participating in global and regional markets might not be a long-term choice. The present article intends to designate the determinant factors of export performance development and define the necessary solutions to increase the province's exports while at the same time specifying the position of Ardabil province industries in the country. The participants of the study comprised 110 people. About 30.5% of the participants are active in business, 37.5% are active in manufacturing, and 32% are active in the industry. Furthermore, 12% of the participants had five or fewer years of work experience, 16% of the participants had 6 to 10 years of work experience, 33.5% of the participants had 11 to 15 years of work experience, and 38.5% of the participants had more than 15 years of work experience. Overall, 57 factors were extracted from the interviews with experts. The results of exploratory factor analysis indicated that six factors were eliminated due to low factor loading. Besides, factor analysis performed on the remaining 51 variables identified 12 factors as the main factors explaining approximately 77% of the variability (variance) of the variables. The research results unraveled that reviewing the legal and protection system structure of the relevant agencies involved in the export and definition of commercial companies might be a suitable solution. Furthermore, the results showed that creating the culture and the maturity of using commercial companies' services aligned with risk acceptance is neglected in the export field.

Keywords: Commercial companies, Ardabil, Performance, Businesses, Exports
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1 Introduction

Exporting is defined as the most straightforward way to enter a foreign market. Occasional exporting or passive exporting occurs when a company passively sells the product to foreign buyers from time to time due to having a product over domestic consumption. However, active exporting occurs when the company decides to export its

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products to the target country. In both cases, the company might produce the products in its own country and export them in the same way as consumed in the country or adapt them for the desired market [7]. Export performance is the extent to which a firm's goals (including strategic and economic goals) are fulfilled to export a product through the designation and implementation of export marketing strategies. It has various dimensions that can not be explained by one indicator or factor. [3].

Export performance studies can be classified into two main categories: exporters and non-exporters. In general, these studies intend to determine the variables that simulate export activities. Standard measures in these studies are the classification of exporters and non-exporters upon a willingness to export, export involvement, and export intensity. The second group comprises studies that concentrate on the exporters' financial and strategic objectives. The most common financial performance measures are export sales, export intensity, and export profitability. Furthermore, recently, the researchers have underlined the achievement of strategic goals such as market share, competitive position, and set forth [12]. Kerman et al. hold that the growth of social media in international trade has its risks and challenges.

Nowadays, marketers find out that they are losing control over the marketing messages as a threat. That is why they seek to understand the potential power of social media as a powerful marketing tool for their institutions. Laleh, Noubar, and Moa'tameni [15] know electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) as a modern crucial factor in social networks and sites which can reinforce the company sales growth rate. In other words, e-WOM can be considered as the most affordable and reputable marketing strategy in companies [15]. According to the export managers on the use of social media output like the resulting attitudes of the social media, the intent to use social media, and the proper use of social media web-based software, three groups of Spanish exporters were determined based on the managers' intervention with social media tools, including social media potential, social media innovation principles, and social media expertise. Regarding the types of the departments and attributes of the companies, these three clusters of export institutions have pre-defined characteristics, and their relationship with the institutional performance is determined.

Farajnezhad, Bodaghi Khajeh Noubar, and Fakhimi Azar [5] in their study, presented a structural model of customer behavioral intention in accepting social media marketing and indicated that trust, perceived ease, comparative advantage, adaptability, mental norm, perceived behavioral control, and attitude toward behavior play an important role in this regard.

Madsena and Moen [13] believe that export performance is often measured by the managers' subjective evaluations, while individuals do not usually realize the reflection of such evaluations on the organization's performance. To put it simply, by analyzing the relationship between subjective and objective measures of export performance, Madsena and Moen, in their study, investigate the gap between the two issues in their literature review and unravel the aspects of management used in subjective analysis to evaluate export performance.

They also claim that managers have a predictive role in subjective evaluation, which can influence the future of export development. Their study was carried out in small and medium-sized companies in Norway and showed that the management's subjective evaluation of the companies' export development is directly derived from its sales from its exports to the target markets.

Boso et al. [2] conducted the above study to examine the multiple information and available data from 162 companies on export companies in Africa to find out the time when export marketing capabilities can be developed or derived from export performance. The research results unraveled that market responsiveness is derived from export performance when export performance is developed simultaneously with the responsiveness of the organizations.

The combined effect of both corporate capabilities on export performance in competitive environments is weakened in a high level of inefficient competition. The research findings revealed that since the output of export performance depends on inefficient competition, strong capability to meet the needs of the export market and greater competition for new products in African markets is not always to the benefit of companies.

Wu et al. [8] state that based on the Economic Theory, the institution-centered approach in the international arena, as well as the international diversity, this study intends to examine entering foreign markets by developed export companies to improve the innovative performance and high diversity of companies involved in multiple foreign markets which can affect the performance of companies. The results demonstrate that the diversity of the institutions influence the positive interface between the institutions and their innovation.

The complexity of export success can account for using a set of measures. Multiple measures are preferred due to the presentation of a more comprehensive picture of performance and the demonstration of different aspects of performance, each of which might be influenced by specific characteristics of the institution. Thus, this study uses combined measures of export performance in the form of subjective words to evaluate the achievement level of export objectives perceived by managers [12]. In a study, Taheri, Bodaghi Khajeh Noubar, and Taghizadeh [14] indicated that executives'

capability in companies, competitive strategy, company communications, product strategy, human resources strategy and infrastructures have an important role in export performance extension of commercial companies.

Along the same lines, Mihi-Ramírez, Noubar, and Fernández-Bendito, [10] brought into attention the role of Reverse Logistics in optimizing the production of companies. They stated that this type of logistics can boost the competitiveness of companies and in effect contribute in Knowledge Management of the companies.

As mentioned above, export is the most common approach for companies to enter the global market. However, this approach requires fewer resources than the other methods of internationalization. Therefore, proper evaluation of the market and export sales and support of export companies have been increasingly recognized as a suitable way for the company growth and, in effect, the economic growth of the province and the country.

This decision is more impressed by the accepted infrastructure of the companies on the way to do businesses in foreign markets. This highlights a need for more applied research and guidance in this field. The significance of this paper lies in investigating the export performance of the companies in Ardabil province and determining the appropriate and localization provincial roadmap according to the resources and facilities of the province. However, the practical significance of this paper is mainly manifested in the provision of a high-performance development model for commercial companies.

The study's main objective is to provide a development model for the export performance of commercial companies in the province. The indicators should be explored in an accurate estimation based on appropriate tests under statistical software to do this. Furthermore, this study intends to deal with the meaning and significance of the model through structural equation modelling (SEM) in its final stage of analysis. The points mentioned above can be considered as research innovations.

The present study is both quantitative and qualitative research. The research instruments were a questionnaire and an interview. Besides, the paper was descriptive, inductive, cross-sectional, and mixed-method in terms of type, method, time, and paradigm, respectively. Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Approach (qualitative-quantitative) was used in the research study since the central issue of the current paper is to design and model export performance development.

In the qualitative phase, concepts and components were identified using the grounded theory and the Delphi technique with several export and trade experts. In contrast, the quantitative phase used the exploratory factor analysis technique and structural equations for the data collected from the survey and structured questionnaire (from the first phase). Ultimately, the final model was designed based on Strauss and Corbin grounded theory.

The statistical population in the qualitative phase included experts in the field of export and trade, from which 30 participants were selected for extracting the concepts and Delphi technique. In the quantitative phase, as the report received from the Chamber of Commerce of the province showed 154 commercial companies operating in the province, these companies considered the present study's statistical population.

1.1 Sample size

In order to select the research sample, the available random sampling technique will be used. Upon Cochran's formula, the required sample will be calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{\frac{t^2 pq}{d^2}}{1 + \frac{1}{N}(\frac{t^2 pq}{d^2} - 1)} = 100$$

$p = 0.5$ The existence of the desired adjective is relative.

$q = 0.5$ The absence of the desired adjective is relative.

$d =$ percentage error, equal to 5% in this study.

$t =$ using table T-table, T-value is obtained based on confidence percentage. The T- value for 95% confidence is t = 1.96.

$N =$ The number of commercial companies are 154 companies.

$n =$ Sample size was estimated according to the formula about 110 companies.

1.2 Sampling method

In general, there are two main methods of sampling for data collection: random sampling and non-random sampling. The most common type of sampling is random sampling. Random sampling is a method of sampling in which a part of the population is taken into account, and all the members have the same chance of being selected [7]. This is simple random sampling.

1.3 Data collection method

The field research study was carried out to collect the data. Besides, desk research such as studying the books and house and foreign journals and searching databases (Internet) was also used to obtain a theoretical basis.

1.4 Data collection instruments

The data collection instrument for the desk research is theoretical basis and interviewing questions. Firstly, the researcher collects the necessary notes in writing and technological form using the concerned book, article, thesis, dissertation, dissertations, and organisations' research projects. The notes taken needed to be concerned with the title and criteria of writing a thesis or dissertation. Afterwards, the researcher structures the research questionnaire.

1.5 Validity of the questionnaire

Validity is defined as correctness or trueness [7]. Validity is the extent to which the instrument measures the desired construct. There are different methods to measure the validity of the questionnaire. Validity is crucial since inappropriate and inadequate measurement can make any scientific research worthless and inadvisable. The questionnaire was modified according to the opinion of several professors in the management field to increase the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis is used to determine the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the questions, items, or components.

1.6 Validity of the questionnaire

Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. it is acceptable if the alpha coefficient is greater than 0.7.

The Cronbach's alpha formula is:

$$\alpha = \frac{N}{N-1}\left[\frac{S_t^2 - S_i^2}{S_i^2}\right]$$

S_i^2: covariance

α: Cronbach's alpha coefficient

S_t^2: Total variance

N: Number of questionnaire questions

Table 1 demonstrates the Cronbach's alpha value for the research questions.

1.7 Methods and tools of data analysis

The methods used for data analysis include:

1. Descriptive statistics: Descriptive statistics, including the three measures of central tendency, dispersion, and association used to classify data and display them through frequency tables and graphs. SPSS software was run to conduct descriptive statistics. Descriptive graphs and tables under EXCEL were used to show the number of companies and their field of activity.

2. Inferential statistics: One of the most robust and appropriate data analysis methods in behavioural sciences and social sciences research is analysis through exploratory factor analysis. This was carried out using SPSS software, which includes fundamental variable analysis and Varimax, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, and conceptual model design for provincial industries. Firstly, in factor analysis, we should ensure the available data might

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha value for each variable

Row	Research Variables	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
1	Customer Focused	0.77
2	Capability of Company Managers	0.78
3	Competitive Strategy	0.78
4	Rules and Regulations	0.78
5	Corporate Communications	0.78
6	Product Strategy	0.78
7	Human Resources Strategy	0.78
8	Profit Strategy and Market Share	0.78
9	Infrastructure	0.78
10	Incentives	0.78
11	Environmental Factors	0.77
12	Knowledge	0.77

be used for analysis. To put it simply, we need to make sure if the number of data (sample size and relationship between variables) is appropriate for factor analysis. To this end, we used KMO index and Bartlett Test.

KMO Index: The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) index is a sampling adequacy index that examines the small partial correlation between the variables and, in effect, determines whether the variance of the research variables is influenced by the common variance of some latent and fundamental factors or not. This index range is 0 to 1. If the index value is close to 1, the data (sample size) are suitable for factor analysis, and if not (usually less than 0.6), the results of factor analysis are not suitable for the data [11].

Bartlett Test: This test checks when a correlation matrix is mathematically known as a singular matrix and thus can not be suitable for identifying a structure (factor model). Suppose the significance level (sig.) of the Bartlett Test is less than 0.5. In that case, factor analysis is suitable to identify the structure (factor model) since the assumption of uniformity in the correlation matrix is rejected [11].

Running factor analysis, the research questionnaire was prepared. Then, SPSS software was carried out to estimate errors-in-variables and variables' position in the model based on their dependency or independency. Afterwards, the significance of the model was examined through structural equations software (LISREL software).

2 Results

As stated above, the data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The results were then evaluated and monitored using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, frequency percentage, and cumulative frequency percentage were utilized to examine and analyze the background characteristics of respondents.

In this part of the research, the personal characteristics of the interviewees are analyzed, such as age, activity background, gender, and educational level:

Table 2: Frequency distribution of the interviewees by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	25	83/5
Female	5	16/5
Total	30	100

Table 2 demonstrates that the vast majority of respondents, with 83.5%, are men, and women constitute 16.5% of the interviewees.

Table 3 shows that about 16.5% of the interviewees have less than 10 years of work experience, 33.5% have 11 to 20 years of work experience, and 50% have more than 20 years of work experience.

According to Table 4, 20% of the interviewees are under 30 years old, 36.5% are 31-45 years old, and 43.5% are over 45 years old.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of the interviewees by work experience

Work Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 10 years	5	16/5
11 to 20 years	10	33/5
Over 20 years	15	50
Total	30	100

Table 4: Frequency distribution of the interviewees by age

Age	Frequency	Percent
under 30	6	20
31 to 45	11	36/5
over 45	13	43/5
Total	30	100

Table 5: Frequency distribution of the interviewees by age

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor	3	20
Masters	11	8
PhD	36	72
Total	50	100

Table 5 demonstrates that the interviewees with bachelor's degrees make up 20% of the participants. The interviewees with Masters degrees make up 22% of the participants. The interviewees with PhD make up 72% of the participants.

2.1 Open coding based on interview texts

In this phase, resorting to the data foundation theory method (ground theory) with the coding method, each element is assigned a tag or label (code). The codes represent the content of the data or text. The interviews were analyzed line by line and examined word by word in the open coding. Table 4, 5 shows the concepts extracted from the text interviews. It is observable that 61 concepts were extracted from the interviews.

2.2 Results of the first, second and third rounds of the Delphi method

The first questionnaire asked the respondents to rate the 61 factors extracted from the interviews according to their degree of relevance to the causal factors (CF) of the development of the export performance of commercial companies in a 5-spectrum continuum.

Factors collected from the initial stage of the Delphi method were analyzed with SPSS software, and the mean, standard deviation, and index of all factors were obtained. Then, the factors whose mean was lower than the index value were removed from Delphi, and the rest entered the second stage of Delphi. The results of the first, second, and third rounds are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Results of the first round of Delphi questionnaire

Row	Factors and items	First round	Second round	Third round
1	The market share of this company in the domestic	4.42	4.65	4.97
2	The growth of the market share of this company in the domestic market	4.42	4.62	4.96
3	Growth in return on investment compared to previous years	4.43	4.63	4.98
4	Sales margin growth compared to previous years	4.42	4.62	4.97
5	Generic competitive position of the company in domestic markets	4.41	4.63	4.98
6	Export tariff for the company products	4.42	4.65	4.98
7	Integration of market information in line with the company activities	4.41	4.66	4.98
8	Existence of value-added for the company products	4.41	4.67	4.99
9	Development of private sector activities in line with the company activities	4.44	4.66	4.96
10	Existence of comparative advantage for the company goods in the market	4.45	4.68	4.97
11	Extent of transport network for the company goods	4.42	4.69	4.96
12	Meeting consumer needs in exports	4.40	4.62	4.98
13	The growth of company sales network	4.42	4.65	4.97
14	High managerial perception of competition and market capacity	4.46	4.62	4.98
15	Perception of company management to export knowledge	4.45	4.62	4.98
16	Participation in domestic and international exhibitions	4.42	4.69	4.98
17	Provision of target market analysis by companies to investors	4.43	4.63	4.99
18	High variety of company export products	4.43	4.65	4.96
19	Active presence of the company in business and marketing boards and investing abroad	4.42	4.66	4.97
20	Company flexibility in responding to customers	4.41	4.67	4.96
21	Manpower development of the company	4.42	4.66	4.98
22	Existence of revisions and reforms in export incentives with the aim to facilitate and increase the effectiveness of companies	4.41	4.68	4.97
23	Specialized training services for company employees	4.41	4.69	4.98
24	Existence of appropriate environmental social space to increase the company exports	4.44	4.62	4.98

Row	Factors and items	First round	Second round	Third round
25	Company satisfaction with the quantity and quality of exports	4.45	4.65	4.98
26	Regular attendance at exhibitions	4.42	4.62	4.99
27	Active presence of the company in business and marketing boards and domestic investment	4.44	4.62	4.96
28	Cooperation of the company's management with other departments of the company in the decision-making process	4.42	4.60	4.97
29	Specific brand definition for the products	4.46	4.63	4.96
30	Variety of company products	4.45	4.65	4.98
31	Proper development of export financing programs of the company	4.42	4.66	4.97
32	Influence in the export market to develop the company exports	4.44	4.67	4.98
33	Existence of appropriate environmental social space to increase the company exports	4.43	4.60	4.98
34	To have various export programs	4.42	4.68	4.98
35	Existence of organized environmental programs in order to promote technology in the company	4.41	4.60	4.99
36	Provision of timely and adequate facilities and credit to the exporters	4.42	4.63	4.96
37	Existence of environmental programs that help to make companies' export goods/ services more competitive	4.41	4.65	4.97
38	Reducing the cost price of export	4.41	4.62	4.96
39	Training social relationships and communication to the employees	4.40	4.62	4.98
40	Existence of programs for the development and upgrading of general and specialized infrastructures suitable for export	4.45	4.62	4.97
41	Existence of extension packages for export companies	4.42	4.63	4.98
42	Existence of facilitation packages for export companies	4.46	4.65	4.98
43	Existence of support packages for export companies	4.42	4.66	4.98
44	Existence of a suitable system for export quality management	4.46	4.67	4.99
45	Existence of proper banking infrastructure for export companies	4.45	4.66	4.96
46	Existence of appropriate financial infrastructure for export companies	4.42	4.68	4.97

Row	Factors and items	First round	Second round	Third round
47	Existence of guilds and unions related to the activities of companies in order to empower them	4.41	4.69	4.97
48	Developing trade policies with countries to promote border exchanges	4.43	4.62	4.97
49	Presence of the representative of the province in International Export Organizations and Associations	4.42	4.65	4.96
50	Development of trade with Islamic and friendly states through export diplomacy	4.41	4.61	4.98
51	Existence of organized programs to reduce or eliminate customs tariffs	4.42	4.62	4.97
52	Existence of programs to adjust the import of raw materials required for export production	4.41	4.62	4.96
53	Belief of the company Chief Executive Officer in the value of making more profit with high financial risks	4.41	4.63	4.98
54	Encourage the company Chief Executive Officer to achieve new export marketing strategies	4.44	4.65	4.97
55	The competitiveness of the company in the relevant industry	4.45	4.62	4.97
56	Existence of competitive promotion opportunities in the mentioned industry	4.42	4.63	4.98
57	Company management plan to reduce the cost price of the product	4.44	4.63	4.97
58	Satisfaction of the company with its export growth	4.41	4.66	4.96
59	Appropriateness of export market share	4.42	4.65	4.98
60	Satisfaction of the company custom	4.44	4.62	4.97

This method calculated the degree of consensus between the experts (the group under study). The experts arranged several categories by topic and used similar categories to judge the importance of each category. The consensus condition in the first stage of Delphi was that indicators average below 4.41 (as the index value) were removed. The factors eliminated in the first stage are: meeting consumer needs in exports and training social relationships and communication to the employees. In the second stage of Delphi, the consensus condition was to eliminate the average of less than 4.62. The factors eliminated in the second stage are: defining a specific product brand and having various export programs. In the third stage of Delphi, the items agreed upon by the experts were selected, and finally, 51 final items were determined.

Describing the variables in the statistical sample, Construct validity was analyzed, and factor analysis was performed. Construct validity can be defined as the extent to which the test measures the desired theoretical construct or feature. However, one of the methods to determine construct validity is to examine the correlation of the measure with similar measures in the field, described above as convergent validity. To test construct validity, the factor structure of the test needs to be evaluated, the most usual method of which is the statistical method of factor analysis. As a result, exploratory factor analysis was applied to the Export Performance Development Scale of Commercial Companies.

According to the Convergent Validity Test in SPSS software, the scores of the variable (quantitative with a distance scale) components were calculated. Table 7 reveals the Export Performance Development Scale of Commercial Companies 0.815.

Table 7: Normality Test

	Convergent Validity	
	Statistics	Sig.
Export Performance Development of Commercial Companies	0.815	0.092

Interviews with 30 experts of the Chamber of Commerce identified a total of 57 items. The interviews took into account the export performance of commercial companies. To measure the content validity of the questionnaire, 30 experts of the Chamber of Commerce completed the questionnaire. They were asked to express their opinions on each factor's appropriateness (validity) on a 5-point scale.

2.3 Exploratory factor analysis for the export performance development of commercial companies questionnaire

Firstly, in factor analysis, we need to make sure if the available data can be used for analysis. In other words, the number of data (sample size and relationship between variables) need to be appropriate for factor analysis? To this purpose, KMO index and Bartlett Test were used.

KMO Index: The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) index is a sampling adequacy index that determines the small partial correlation between the variables and specifies if the variance of the research variables is under the influence of the common variance of some latent and fundamental factors. The index functions within a range of 0 to 1. If the index statistic is close to 1, the data (sample size) are appropriate for factor analysis. If the index statistic is less than 0.6, the factor analysis results are not appropriate for the data [9]. According to Table 7, the sample size was suitable for factor analysis (kmo = 0.62).

Bartlett Test: Bartlett Test also examines when the correlation matrix is mathematically known as a single matrix and is, in effect, not appropriate for identifying the structure (factor model). If the significance level (sig.) of the Bartlett Test is less than 0.5, factor analysis is suitable for identifying the structure (factor model) as the unity assumption of the correlation matrix is rejected [9]. Table 7 shows that factor analysis is appropriate to identify the structure (sig.=0.000).

Table 8: Bartlett Test and KMO index

Bartlett Test and KMO index		
KMO index		.624
Bartlett Test	Approximate chi-square statistics	2838.385
	degree of freedom	1381
	significance level	.000

3 Discussion and conclusion

According to the results, 57 factors were extracted based on interviews with experts. In addition, the results of exploratory factor analysis eliminated six factors due to their low factor loading. According to the factor analysis on the remaining 51 variables, 12 factors were identified as the main factors that explain approximately 77% of variables' variability (variance). These variables were labelled as follows.

1. Customer Focused
2. Capability of Company Managers
3. Competitive Strategy
4. Rules and Regulations
5. Corporate Communications
6. Product Strategy
7. Human Resources Strategy
8. Profit Strategy and Market Share
9. Infrastructure
10. Incentives
11. Environmental Factors
12. Knowledge

It is noted that factors of Capability of Company Managers, Competitive Strategy, Corporate Communications, Product Strategy, Human Resources Strategy, and Infrastructure play the most crucial role in developing the export performance of commercial companies, respectively. In the current section, the results of this research in both qualitative and quantitative stages are compared with the results of other research conducted in Iran and other countries. Nevertheless, this section aims to compare the factors of this research with the other research. To put it simply, the main factors of this research might be in accordance with the other research, and due to lack of literature in comparison at the sub-level, the variables have been compared at two different levels.

The results of this study correlate with the studies by Hasanki et al. [6], Azizi et al. [1], and Boso et al. [2]. Farrokhi and Mohammadi [4] consider export a more complex activity than domestic business and state that employees and managers responsible for making decisions in foreign markets can play a vital role in this field. In their research, Najafli and Mosadeghian know internal factors on fluctuations as an influential factor in improving (export) performance. In another study, Khademi et al. [12] consider the internal and external environmental factors as the factors affecting export performance.

4 Practical suggestions

One of the factors in the export development model in the country can be the incentive policies in using the services of commercial companies. It is, in fact, the allocation of export bonuses and incentives for the use of the company services, the item considered in the initial plan of the Trade Promotion organizations (TPOs), but was not implemented in practice.

Reviewing the legal and protection system structure of the relevant agencies involved in exports and the definition of commercial companies is also a good solution.

Supporting the costs of export target market studies of trading companies and using the accompaniment and potential of their specialized knowledge in holding trade delegations, foreign exhibitions, and commercial centers of Iran in foreign countries can also be considered one of the solutions to existing problems. Following the role of various agencies in providing and developing the activities of commercial companies, the definition of such activities in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, Customs, and Chambers is neglected.

Since most commercial companies do not have the maturity to outsource exports in a win-win and sustainable approach, it is necessary to create the necessary culture. Creating the culture and maturity to use the services of commercial companies along with risk acceptance is one of the issues neglected in the export field.

Concerning the application of scientific methods of export marketing in exports, a market research and marketing department can be created and activated in the trade-export unit to identify the cultural, economic, political, and legal environment of target markets. This will reduce risk, offer competitive pricing, identify competitors, and identify distribution channels and local distribution channels.

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