

Chapter 17

Physical Distribution Problems of Textile Companies in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to discover what sort of similar and different problems textile companies face in physical distribution process and provide suggestions. The research includes only six textile companies operating in the Thrace region, Tekirdağ province, Çorlu and Çerkezköy districts. This research is an exploratory study. The interview guide used in the paper includes open-ended questions focusing on certain issues. The data are coded systematically and direct quotations were provided in the descriptive analysis. The participants' own words were the units for analysis. Data triangulation and a chain of evidence can be mentioned in this regard. These points ensure the reliability and construct validity of the research. Findings indicate that companies make mistakes and errors in product stacking, product codification, and product description. In addition, storage spaces of companies are insufficient; warehouses cannot be managed well. Companies face many problems such as the imbalance arising from working on minimum-maximum stock, faulty orders, and packaging materials.

INTRODUCTION

Concepts such as supply chain, and logistics, physical distribution have turned into areas of expertise in the recent years. In particular, physical distribution offers a myriad of benefits to companies and customers if the system formed in itself is well managed; on the other hand, it has a structure that gives rise to serious distress when planning, implementation, and control cannot be performed well. Since marketing promises goods and services to buyers/customers; it benefits from logistical support services in order to achieve this (Tek & Özgül, 2008, p.532).

The national body of literature contains studies that have been conducted on physical distribution. For example, Çevik and Gülcan (2011) investigated the environmental sustainability of logistics operations; Yavuz (2006) investigated logistic design and optimization in physical distribution companies; Kılıç (2013) examined the network design in physical distribution; Karpuzlar (2005) investigated the benefits

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of supply chain actions in regard to physical distribution; and Arlı (2009) looked into the impacts of owning a warehouse on company performance in international physical distribution. In the international body of literature, Lusch, Vargo and Fisher (2014) worked on expanding the limits of physical distribution and logistics management; Rao, Rabinovich and Raju (2014) studied the role of physical distribution services as an indicator of product returns in online retailing; Hyunwoo and Narushige (2011) investigated the impact of online shopping demand in the physical distribution network; Xing, Grant, McKinnon and Fernie (2010) studied physical distribution service quality in online retailing; and Quak and Duin (2010) investigated the impact of road pricing on physical distribution in urban areas. Moreover, Antun, Lozano, Alarcón, Granados and Guarneros (2010) conducted studies on the physical distribution of goods in mega cities. Zinn and Bowersox (1988) investigated physical distribution planning with the retardation principle; Williamson (1981, 1979) studied the physical distribution costs; Blanding (1982) researched the physical distribution planning and operations; Perreault and Russ (1976) studied the physical distribution service in industrial purchasing decisions; Lun Lai and Lu (2009) investigated transport logistics and physical distribution; Eilon and Samuel (1977) examined physical distribution from an company's perspective.

Convenient and easy access of consumers to finished products depends on the proper management of physical distribution operations. However, many companies face serious adversities in the process of delivering goods and services to customers. Problems faced in this physical distribution process lead to customer complaints and dissatisfaction. It has been a matter of curiosity about what sort of potential problems are faced regarding the interconnected procedures concerning the means of transport, material handling, storage, stock management, order processing and information technology, packaging procedures, and customer services. The purpose of this study is to discover what sort of similar and different problems textile companies face in physical distribution process and provide suggestions. Hence, the type of problems facing textile factories engaged in production operations within the Tekirdağ province, Çorlu and Çerkezköy districts in the physical distribution process are investigated by an exploratory study in this study. Within the scope of the study, a short introduction was made in regards to the related literature, but details were not provided. Then, the method section of the research study was written in detail. The concerned companies that are included in the sampling of the framework of this study were notified in advance, an interview guide with open-ended questions concentrated on certain areas was sent to them, and their responses were obtained. The findings obtained from the six textile factories that are engaged in various production operations were systematically analyzed. Some conclusions were revealed and some suggestions were proposed by this study, which was conducted in the form of qualitative research.

It was observed in the literature that there are only a few qualitative research studies on the various dimensions of the company logistics. This study emerges the practical problems faced by textile companies in the process of company logistics via qualitative data. This study provides recommendations related to the issues emerged in each step of company logistics process. The descriptive and explanatory findings revealed by this study are available to combine with the data collected from other types of data (such as experts, theoreticians, practitioners, academic studies, conducted projects, opinions of stakeholders) to develop theories on physical distribution or even develop hypotheses for quantitative research. Thus this paper contributes to the literature in terms of filling in the gaps of the literature by analyzing the types of problems companies experience in the physical distribution process. The recommendations proposed in this study are expected to be taken into consideration by the leadership of companies. The conclusions of this study will likely be utilized by employees, customers, managers, and last but not least, entrepreneur investors.

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