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KOSGEB Supports And SMEs Brand Knowledge[1]

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SUMMARY

The economic system has changed worldwide after the Second World War era. Especially with the gas crisis after the 1970s increasing input costs affect negatively economic growth. Because of these results, small and medium enterprises (SME) become more important (Bo, 1992). SME's are very important for countries' economy, therefore they should be supported by all governments (Dogan, 1998). Brand knowledge means that; during the process of purchase, it helps consumers to provide possibilities about the experience of consumers and guess the ability of characteristics of products. KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Turkey) was established in 1990 in order to support SME's in Turkey. KOSGEB focus on support programs and project-based support programs after 2010. Especially these days, KOSGEB provides project-based support programs such as SME Project Support Programme and SME Development Support Programme for building brands. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of KOSEB support programs for SMEs' brand knowledge (KOSGEB Destek Programları Yönetmeliği, 2010). However; there are a lot of studies about branding in the relevant literature, there are not enough studies about KOSGEB supports for brand knowledge of SMEs'. There is no study about KOSGEB supports for brand knowledge of SMEs in the TR71 region (Aksaray, Nigde, Nevsehir, Kirsehir and Kirikkale provinces). Therefore this study is unique. The survey method is used in this study, and the survey was made between 07.05.2018, and 20.06.2018 and 115 people joined this survey. Before starting the study, consent was taken from the authorities and the participants. This study is exploratory in nature because it aims to analyze KOSGEB supports that affect the brand knowledge of SME's. 115 people in the TR71 area were filled the survey forms. The survey was conducted between 07.05.2018 and 20.06.2018. According to our results; education level, KOSGEB support time, SMEs' operation time, SMEs' sector, KOSGEB support type and maximum limit of KOSGEB support affect brand knowledge of SMEs.

INTRODUCTION

The economic system has changed worldwide after the Second World War era. Because of these changes and improvements in logistics, information and communication technologies, increasing integration of world

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[1] This paper is derived from my PhD Thesis (The Role Of KOSGEB Supports On Process Of Institutionalization And Branding Of Smes: A Study In Tr71 Region)

economies, increasing competitive environment and increasing of consumer demands manufacturers have to produce more various products. Especially with the gas crisis after the 1970s increasing input costs affect negatively economic growth. Because of these results, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) become more important (Bo, 1992). SMEs are very important for countries' economies, therefore they should be supported by all governments (Dogan, 1998).

Literature Review

Definition of Brand

There are a lot of definitions of Brand. The word of the brand means to burn in the ancient Nors language and it means that separate animals by branding. These brands show the quality of farms. In this way, the Brand has been used for guidance in purchasing process till this time (Clifton et.al., 2003).

According to the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office; a Brand is a kind of different goods and services from different companies, their names, marks, numbers, types of goods, packages and all other marks (www.turkpatent.gov.tr).

According to some scholars, the brand concept came from ancient Egypt and ancient Greek times. These processes started with marking products in order to show their quality, then it changed the process to show the origin and quality of products. Chinese porcelains, Greek and Roman Lambs and İndian goods in the 1300s are good examples of that. The brand became a discipline in the 1950s (Kavak and Karabacakoglu, 2007).

According to studies made by marketing researchers Smith and Copeland, the first time to become a trademark is very important. According to them, during the purchasing process, consumers are not willing to buy if the good has no trademark. In the following years, some researchers like Gardner and Levy Brand have more far meanings than only simple marks which help distinguish between different goods. They also asserted that a brand includes emotions, behaviors and some thoughts, as a result, consumers choose products according to their emotions and products' attractive sides (Engin, 2016).

In the 20. Century, the Brand concept has become a whole of strategy which make them differ from other competitors and helps to make easily competition between other competitors. The brand makes difference for consumers. At the same time, the brand means all efforts made by the company for a focus group of customers (Emirza, 2010).

Brand Knowledge

Brand knowledge means that; during the process of purchase, it helps consumers to provide possibilities about the experience of consumers and guess the ability of characteristics of products. It enables consumers that, guessing the success of the product. Having brand knowledge improves the consumers' brand belief and trust (Erçiş, Yapraklı and Can, 2009).

According to Keller (2003) brand knowledge essentials are; Brand strength, Market culture, Brand "extroversion", Integration relationships, Brand portfolio, Branding strategies, Brand meaning, Brand Identity, Brand tradition, Performance, Quality, and value (Kapreliotis, Poulis and Panigyrakis, 2010).

Alimen and Cerit (2009) conducted a study on university students about brand knowledge. They found that there are differences between brand knowledge and gender. Kapreliotis, Poulis and Panigyrakis (2010) surveyed 654 companies. According to their study; there are no differences between the owner of the company and managers of the company about brand knowledge. Tatlow, Golden et.al. (2014) made a study about brand knowledge in Ireland. According to their findings; there are no differences between education status and brand knowledge.

Research Problem

KOSGEB (Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization of Turkey) was established in 1990 in order to support SME's in Turkey. KOSGEB focus on support programs and project-based support programs after 2010. Especially these days KOSGEB provides project-based support programs such as SME Project Support Programme and SME Development Support Programme for building brands. Therefore this study aims to analyze the role of KOSEB support programs for SMEs' brand knowledge (KOSGEB Destek Programları Yönetmeliği, 2010). However; there are a lot of studies about branding in the relevant literature, there are not enough studies about KOSGEB supports for brand knowledge of SMEs'. There is no study about KOSGEB supports for brand knowledge of SMEs in the TR71 region (Aksaray, Nigde, Nevsehir, Kirsehir and Kirikkale provinces). Therefore this study is unique.

METHODS

The survey method is used in this study, and the survey was made between 07.05.2018 and 20.06.2018, and 115 people joined this survey. Before starting the study, consent was taken from the authorities and the participants. This study is exploratory in nature because it aims to analyze KOSGEB supports that affect the brand knowledge of SMEs. The SPSS program was used for statistical analyses.

Research Question

Are there any relations between KOSGEB's supports and SME's brand knowledge?

Hypothesis

H1: There are differences between the structure of SMEs and Brand Knowledge (owner or manager, gender, education level).

H2: There is a relation between the support time of KOSGEB and the brand knowledge of SMEs.

H3: There is a relation between SMEs' operation times and brand knowledge of SMEs.

H4: There are differences between SME's scale, legal status, sector, using KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs.

H5: There are positive relations between increasing the maximum limit of KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs.

Variables

- Brand Knowledge. Kapreliotis, Poulis ve Panigyrakis' survey questions, which were created in 2010, were used in this study. This survey contains a total of 65 questions with a Likert scale of 1- Totally not agree………5- Totally Agree.
- Gender (Male and female)
- Status (This variable is analyzed into two different categories; owner of company and manager of the company).
- Educational Status (This variable is analyzed into five categories; elementary, high school, pre-college, college, master's degree).
- Company Age (This variable is divided into four different groups, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years and 16 and above).
- Legal Status of Company (This variable is divided into four different groups, a private company, limited company, joint-stock company and others.)
- Sector of Company (This variable is divided into three different groups, trade, manufacture and service sector.)
- Size of Company (This variable is divided into three different groups, micro company, small company and medium company.)
- Use of KOSGEB supports (This variable is divided into three different groups, only SME project support program, only SME development support program and both of them.)
- Time of Using KOSGEB Supports (This variable is divided into four different groups, 1-3, 4-5, 6-7 and 7 and above).

Research Design

This study used a cross-sectional research design. The cross-sectional research design is the one that is most applied in the social sciences. It allows the identification of collected data measured at a single point in time on all proper variables. It also allows the researcher to identify relationships and correlation amongst numerous variables and it is also appropriate for studies on large groups of subjects (Nachmisa and Nachmias, 2008). These strengths made a cross-sectional design suitable for this study. This study employed quantitative data collection and analysis methods.

Reliability of Measurement

In order to test the reliability of measurement, Cronbach Alfa scores were used in this study. As seen in Table 1, Cronbach Alpha Score is bigger than 0,60.

Table 1. Reliability of Measurement

Cronbach's Alpha	,988
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO)	,888
Barlett's Test of Sphericity – Approx. Chi-Square	8981,179
Sig. (p)	,00
Total varianse (%)	76,456

Population according to the central limit theorem Regardless of their distribution, if the sample volumes are large enough (n ≥ 30) The sampling distributions of the means fit the normal distribution. Also according to Goldsmith and Barrett, it is sufficient for the sample volume to be more than 40 for the same condition. (Şentürk ve Eker, 2017)

Sampling

The survey aimed to collect data from companies that used KOSGEB supports in the TR71 region. So we applied the KOSGEB and according to information received from them, 82 companies used KOSGEB support in the TR71 area between 2011 and 2016 years. We requested 3 people who filled out survey forms who are owners or managers of the company. We were able to reach 115 people (a total of 246 people) in the TR71 area. 115 people in the TR71 area filled the survey forms. The survey was conducted between 07.05.2018 and 20.06.2018.

Reliability

Reliability means that the results are reliable time after time and that this can be explained by variables. The required data was obtained from the survey filled out by companies that used KOSGEB supports in the TR71 area voluntarily. Surveys were mailed or handed out to all members and only filled out by companies that used KOSGEB supports in the TR71 area willing to join this study.

Validity

External validity refers to whether this study is applicable to other groups. This study has external validity to a certain extent. The findings of the study can be applied to companies that used KOSGEB supports in the TR71 area but it cannot be applied to the other organizations as each organization has different dynamics and characteristics. Lack of randomization was also a threat to the validity of the data collected. The information given in the survey was provided on a snapshot basis. Empirical validity means that the

relationship and the implementation among the variables measured should be the same in the actual world. To enhance empirical validity, in this study a wide range of related variables was selected to increase the validity and compare the results. As the researcher examined the literature and looked at many dimensions of the study, it was understood that this study has content validity.

Limitations

This study is to be used only for companies that used KOSGEB supports in the TR71 area.

Findings

Table 2 Descriptive of the study

Status in SME	Frequency	Percentage
Owner of company	39	33,91
Manager	76	66,09
Company Age		
1-5 years	11	9,56
6-10 years	29	25,22
11-15 years	24	20,87
16 and above	51	44,35
Sector of Company		
manufacture	94	81,74
service	7	6,09
trade	14	12,17
Time of Using KOSGEB Supports		
1-3	21	18,26
4-5	25	21,74
6-7	34	29,57
7 years and above	35	30,43
Use of KOSGEB Supports		
SME project support program	40	34,78
SME development support program	40	34,78
Both of them	35	30,44
Gender		
Female	18	15,65
Male	97	84,35

Educational Status		
Elementary	4	3,48
high school	34	29,57
pre-college	22	19,13
college	43	37,39
master's degree	12	10.43
Legal Status of Company		
limited company	85	73,91
joint-stock company	30	26,09
Size of Company		
Micro	14	12,18
Small	60	52,17
Medium	41	35,65

Hypothesis Testings

H1: There are differences between the structure of SMEs and Brand Knowledge (owner or manager, gender, education level).

Table 3 t-test Gender

Group	N	Mean	SS	t	p
Female	18	4,0812	.53635	.530	.597
Male	97	3,9914	.67929		

In Table 3, a t-test was employed for brand knowledge and gender variable. There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and gender (t=.530, p=0.597>0.1).

Table 4 H1 Descriptives

Brand Knowledge		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	90% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
	Elementary	4	4,2538	,60667	,30333	3,2885	5,2192	3,71	5,00
	high school	34	3,8430	,79990	,13718	3,5639	4,1221	1,00	5,00
	pre-college	22	4,1902	,54456	,11610	3,9488	4,4317	3,34	5,00
	college	43	3,9106	,59141	,09019	3,7285	4,0926	2,57	5,00
degree	master's	12	4,3846	,44371	,12809	4,1027	4,6665	3,63	5,00
	Total	115	4,0055	,65768	,06133	3,8840	4,1270	1,00	5,00

Table 5 H1 Anova analysis

Brand Knowledge					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4,008	4	1,002	2,433	,052
Within Groups	45,302	110	,412		
Total	49,310	114			

In Table 4 and 5; the Anova test was employed for brand knowledge and education status variables. There is a statitically significant difference between brand knowledge and education status (F=2,433, p=,052<0,1). According to TUKEY Test results, people who have master-level education status have the biggest mean score (4,3846), and people who have high school graduate education level have the lowest mean score (3,8430).

Table 6 H1 Group Statistics

	status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Brand Knowledge	Owner of the company	39	4,0832	,63423	,10156
	Manager	76	3,9656	,67000	,07685

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					90% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Brand Knowledge	Equal variances assumed	,060	,806	907	113	,366	,11765	,12965	-,13921	,37450
	Equal variances not assumed			924	80,594	,358	,11765	,12736	-,13578	,37107

In Table 6, a t-test was employed for brand knowledge and status variables. There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and status (t=.924, p=0.358>0.1).

H2: There is a relation between the support time of KOSGEB and the brand knowledge of SMEs.

Table 7 H2 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Support Time	2,7217	1,08860	115
Brand Knowledge	4,0055	,65768	115

Correlations

		Support Time	Brand Knowledge
Support Time	Pearson Correlation	1	,058
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,537
	N	115	115
Brand Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	,058	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,537	
	N	115	115

In Table 7; a Correlation table was employed for brand knowledge and time of using KOSGEB supports variable. There is no statistically significant relationship between brand knowledge and time of using KOSGEB supports (r=,058, p= ,537>0,1).

H3: There is a relation between SMEs ' operation times and brand knowledge of SMEs.

Table 8 H3 Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Brand Knowledge	4,0055	,65768	115
Operation time	3,0000	1,04294	115

Correlations

		Brand Knowledge	Operation time
Brand Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	1	-,284**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,002
	N	115	115
Opertion Time	Pearson Correlation	-,284**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,002	
	N	115	115

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In Table 8; a Correlation table was employed for brand knowledge and SMEs' operation times variable. There is a statistically significant relationship between brand knowledge and SMEs' operation time (r=-,284, p= ,002<0,1).

H4: There are differences between SME's scale, legal status, sector, using KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs.

Table 9 H4 Descriptives

Brand Knowledge

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	90% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
micro	14	4,0275	,60175	,16082	3,6800	4,3749	2,91	4,89
small	60	4,0931	,58044	,07493	3,9431	4,2430	2,57	5,00
medium	41	3,8698	,76653	,11971	3,6278	4,1117	1,00	5,00
Total	115	4,0055	,65768	,06133	3,8840	4,1270	1,00	5,00

ANOVA

Brand Knowledge

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1,222	2	,611	1,423	,245
Within Groups	48,088	112	,429		
Total	49,310	114			

In Table 9, the Anova test was employed for brand knowledge and SMEs' scale variables. There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and scale (F=1.423, p=0.245>0.1).

Table 10 Brand Knowledge Descriptives

Brand Knowledge

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	90% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Limited company	85	4,0376	,62629	,06793	3,9026	4,1727	2,00	5,00
joint-stock company	30	3,9144	,74336	,13572	3,6368	4,1919	1,00	5,00
Total	115	4,0055	,65768	,06133	3,8840	4,1270	1,00	5,00

ANOVA

Brand Knowledge

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,337	1	,337	,778	,380
Within Groups	48,973	113	,433		
Total	49,310	114			

In Table 10, the Anova test was employed for brand knowledge and legal status variable. There is not a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and legal status (F=.778, p=.380>0.1).

Table 11 Brand Knowledge-2 Descriptives

Brand Knowledge

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	90% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
manufacture	94	3,9249	,66379	,06846	3,7889	4,0608	1,00	5,00
service	7	4,1055	,52873	,19984	3,6165	4,5945	3,38	5,00
trade	14	4,4967	,44693	,11945	4,2387	4,7548	3,94	5,00
Total	115	4,0055	,65768	,06133	3,8840	4,1270	1,00	5,00

ANOVA

Brand Knowledge

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4,059	2	2,029	5,023	,008
Within Groups	45,251	112	,404		
Total	49,310	114			

In Table 11; the Anova test was employed for brand knowledge and SMEs' sector variable. There is a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and SMEs' sector (F=5,023, p=,008<0,1). According to TUKEY Test results, the trade sector has the biggest mean score (4,4967), and the manufacturing sector has the lowest mean score (3,9249).

Table 12 Brand Knowledge-3 Descriptives

Brand Knowledge

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	90% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
SME project support program	40	3,7488	,46801	,07400	3,5992	3,8985	2,57	4,69
SME development support program	40	4,1808	,60724	,09601	3,9866	4,3750	2,62	5,00
Both of them	35	4,0985	,80842	,13665	3,8208	4,3762	1,00	5,00
Total	115	4,0055	,65768	,06133	3,8840	4,1270	1,00	5,00

ANOVA

Brand Knowledge

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4,166	2	2,083	5,168	,007
Within Groups	45,144	112	,403		
Total	49,310	114			

In Table 12; the Anova test was employed for brand knowledge and KOSGEB supports variable. There is a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and KOSGEB supports (F=5,168, p=,007<0,1). According to the TUKEY Test results, the KOBİGEL support has the biggest mean score (4,1808), and SME Project has the lowest mean score (3,7488).

H5: There are positive relations between increasing the maximum limit of KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs.

Table 13. H5 Descriptive

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Brand Knowledge	4,0055	,65768	115
KOSGEB supports	1,9565	,80993	115

Correlations

		Brand Knowledge	KOSGEB supports
Brand Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	1	,223[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,017
	N	115	115
KOSGEB supports	Pearson Correlation	,223[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,017	
	N	115	115

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In Table 13; a Correlation table was employed for increasing the maximum limit of KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs variable. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between increasing the maximum limit of KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs (r=,223, p= ,017<0,1).

Conclusion and Discussion

The importance of SMEs has increased day by day. According to this situation, SMEs should be supported by governments. Therefore KOSGEB was established in order to support SMEs in Turkey. This paper examines KOSGEB's supports for SMEs' brand knowledge in the TR71 region. According to our results, KOSGEB supports have a positive effect on SMEs' brand knowledge.

There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and gender (t=.530, p=0.597>0.1). 17 female in our data however 97 male so, females are very less in our data therefore we got that result. Our results didn't support the study of Alimen and Cerit (2009). On the other hand; there is a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and education status (F=2,433, p=,052<0,1). According to TUKEY Test results, people who have master-level education status have the biggest mean score (4,3846), and people who have high school graduate education level have the lowest mean score (3,8430). Because education level shows us the conscious level of brand knowledge. It shows us that if the education level increases from high school to master-level degree, brand knowledge level increases. These results support the study of Tatlow Golden et al. (2014).

There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and status (t=.924, p=0.358>0.1). Because SMEs' managers don't have enough awareness of brand knowledge terms. These results support the study of Kapreliotis, Poulis and Panigyrakis (2010). There is no statistically significant relationship between brand knowledge and time of using KOSGEB supports (r=,058, p= ,537>0,1). KOSGEB

was established in 1990 and it has a variety of supports for SMEs. But, KOSGEB supports for brand knowledge is very new, therefore; brand knowledge scores of new companies which got KOSGEB supports are higher than old companies. There is a statistically significant relationship between brand knowledge and SMEs' operation time (r=-,284, p= ,002<0,1). It means that if the age of companies decreases, Brand knowledge consciousness increase.

There is no statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and SMEs' scale (F=1.423, p=0.245>0.1). Because this study is only focused on small and medium size of companies from the TR 71 region and in these companies brand knowledge consciousness is very low. There is not a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and legal status (F=.778, p=.380>0.1). Because, it is thought that most of the business owners do not have enough information about the difference in the legal status of SMEs. in the TR 71 region. There is a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and SMEs' sector (F=5,023, p=,008<0,1). According to TUKEY Test results, the trade sector has the biggest mean score (4,4967), and the manufacturing sector has the lowest mean score (3,9249). Because brand knowledge is very effective in the trade sector in SMEs from the TR71 region.

There is a statistically significant difference between brand knowledge and KOSGEB supports (F=5,168, p=,007<0,1). According to the TUKEY Test results, the KOBİGEL support has the biggest mean score (4,1808), and SME Project has the lowest mean score (3,7488). SMEs can use both KOSGEB supports together. KOBIGEL has more support money for brand knowledge of SMEs. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between increasing the maximum limit of KOSGEB support and brand knowledge of SMEs (r=,223, p= ,017<0,1). Because if KOSGEB supports an amount increase, SMEs' brand knowledge consciousness increase. As a result; SMEs have much more money to spend on brand knowledge.

Hitherto; according to these findings, there are important problems with SMEs' brand knowledge but KOSGEB supports try to help these problems. KOSGEB should prove new supports about brand knowledge and more SMEs should be supported with these new support programs. Additionally, this study helps further new studies on this particular subject.

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