An examination of the major behavioral aspects of distribution channels in an export channel design

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This paper concentrates on the behavioral aspects of distribution channels in an export channel design from the perspective of the exporter. Based on the argument that channel conflict and satisfaction are among the major determinants of channel efficiency and performance, the perceived degrees of channel conflict and satisfaction are examined as well as the three antecedents of channel conflict, namely the channel power, cultural distance and distribution system quality, as they are regarded among major factors affecting the channel conflict. In conducting the analysis, questionnaire survey was undertaken among 30 exporter companies that are members of Ankara Chamber of Commerce and Likert scaling technique is used. The findings from the ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis suggest that the Turkish exporter do not regard the level of exercised power in a marketing channel system and the cultural distance between the foreign channel member’s markets as important sources of conflict while the international distribution system quality seems to be perceived as a major source of channel conflict. The findings also suggest that there exists a close relationship between the perceived channel conflict and the channel members’ satisfaction.

Keywords: Export channel, behavioral aspects, channel conflict, satisfaction, power.

INTRODUCTION

Although ‘globalization’, a well known and widely used term for a long time, continues to affect business in all aspects, there is, surprisingly, a limited body of knowledge and academic study regarding the international distribution channels, especially the export channels, which lacks in fulfilling the literature gap on the issue.

Export channels, as being more socially and culturally diverse and sophisticated and differ from the domestic channels in many aspects as the channel length, infrastructure and integration access, require specialized studies focusing on the international distribution channels, designed to fit to the international environments, pointing to the additional complexities that arise from the international activities firms engage with. Although the behavioral aspects of distribution channels which mainly concentrates on channel power, conflict, coordination and satisfaction, and hence, has a stake on the channel performance and success, has received extensive attention in domestic channel studies (Gaski and Nevin, 1985; Hunt et al., 1987; Lusch, 1976; Rosenbloom, 1973; Hunt and Nevin, 1974; Skinner et al., 1992), the international dimension of the topic (Shoham et al., 1997; Sachdev et al., 1994; Rosson and Ford, 1980; Raven et al., 1993; Balabanis, 1998) has received limited attention scholarly.

With regard to domestic distribution channels, there are a lot of studies seeking to explain the antecedents and consequences of channel conflict. For example, Rose et al. (2007) examines manufacturer’ perceptions of task and emotional conflict in domestic channels of distribution. Both are expected to depend on three antecedents (centralization, esprit de corps, and communication barriers) and to affect performance.

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Abbreviations: OLS, ordinary least squares.
relative to competitors and manufacturer's satisfaction directly and indirectly through strategy quality and their result support a positive link between task and emotional conflict and the deleterious effect of emotional conflict on satisfaction and performance. Another study (Hu et al., 2010) found that there are significant positive influences on the channel conflicts caused by both the economic and non-economic powers and positive influence upon the channel climate resulted from the channel conflicts as well in Taiwan domestic market between manufacturer and distributors. Power plays a significant role in the supply chain, and the different sources of power have differing impact on inter-firm relationships and the performance of the entire supply chain (Maloni and Benton, 2000). Lee (2001) also recommends that channel members in different cultures may have different perceptions of power sources. Though the importance of power and dependence has received the attention of academic scholars and practitioners, research investigating how power and dependence affect the retailer’s purchasing decision and supply chain performance is rare.

A number of studies differentiated the coercive and noncoercive sources of power (Gaski, 1984) and examined their linkage to conflict, satisfaction and performance (Hunt and Nevin, 1974; Lusch, 1976; Gaski and Nevin, 1985). Some studies, also, differentiated the effects of exercised and unexercised sources of power both in domestic marketing channels (Gaski and Nevin, 1985) and in international distribution channels (Raven et al., 1993). Environmental uncertainty has also raised some attention in channel studies (Klein et al., 1990; Celly and Fraizer, 1996). One study (Shahom et al., 1997) examined the effects of cultural distance, regarded as an important measure of the perceived environmental uncertainty, on the international channel conflict. Distribution system quality has also been examined in some channel studies. One study (Shahom et al., 1999) examined the effects of the quality of the international distribution channel used on the decision-making centralization in the international channels. In another study, (Shahom et al., 1997), in addition to the effects of cultural distance, the effects of distribution system quality on channel conflict is also examined.

In the retailing industry, there is also trading conflicts between suppliers and retailers. For example, in their study Bradford et al. (2004) examined the effect of conflict and conflict management between independent businesses in retail sector. Moreover, Scot and Parkinson (1993) examined the relevance of the constructs of power, conflict and co-operation in the UK food channel from the supplier's perspective; Dickson and Zhang (2004) investigate perception of Chinese retailers for their foreign brand apparel suppliers and explored the use of power theory for explaining these relationships.

In this study, in addition to the channel conflict and satisfaction, three important antecedents of international channel conflict, namely power, cultural distance and distribution system quality, are also examined.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the limited international distribution channels literature in that it focuses on the perceptual view of the selected exporter companies with regard to five distinct dimensions, specifically the channel conflict, satisfaction, power, cultural distance and distribution system quality. The study concentrates on the behavioral aspects of the international distribution channels which are understudied scholarly given its importance and it incorporates three antecedents of channel conflict, which have relatively been under-researched in international marketing channels. Besides, it is also aimed to provide support to the limited existing body of knowledge in international distribution channels. One distinctive feature of this study is that it takes the perspective of the exporter in contrast to the most of the studies taking the perspective of the buyer. In sum, within the scope of the study, how Turkish exporter companies perceive their major trading partner(s) and their export channels with regard to five important determinants of channel efficiency and performance is examined.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS

Conflict

According to Mallen (1963), channel conflict is part of the exchange process, with the seller attempting to obtain the highest possible return and the buyer attempting to purchase the good for as little as possible. Stern and El-Ansary (1992) defines channel conflict as ‘...a situation in which one channel member perceives another channel member(s) to be engaged in behavior that is preventing or impeding it from achieving its goals. Based on a research (Pondy, 1967), conflict has been classified into five stages: Latent conflict –underlying sources of conflict, Perceived conflict –conflict that is only perceived with no conditions of latent conflict exist, Felt conflict –tension, anxiety and dissatisfaction, in addition to the perception, Manifest conflict –behavior that blocks the goal achievement of another channel member, Conflict aftermath –post conflict behavior (Berman, 1996; Gaski, 1984). In the content of this study, I prefer another definition of conflict, provided by Gaski (1984) that points to the manifest conflict which directly affects one channel member’s behavior toward another and, consequently, has a more direct affect on satisfaction and performance: ‘...channel conflict will be considered to be the perception on the part of a channel member that its goal attainment is being impeded by another, with stress or tension the result.’

Conflict in channels can be viewed as the frequency and intensity of disagreements between channel members and the inevitable interdependencies among

channel members.
channel members creates conflicts of interest. The greater the interdependence, the greater the opportunity for interference with goal attainment, and hence the greater will be the potential for conflict among organizations (Stern and El-Ansary, 1992). Thus, differing levels of conflict between channel members is doomed to exist. It is argued that low levels of channel conflict have little impact on channel efficiency; moderate levels may actually increase efficiency, while high levels of conflict may detract from channel efficiency (Rosenbloom, 1973). This may be due to the channel members having a tolerance threshold for disagreements and conflicts and react to conflict whenever it exceeds their threshold levels and the fact that some conflict may enforce innovation and discourage channel members from becoming complacent whereas high levels of conflict can lead to bitter feelings, stress, tension, lack of trust, legal disputes and severing of relations where both parties hold high switching costs (Berman, 1996).

Within the light of the above arguments, it is important to examine the perceived degree of channel conflict as it is one of the major determinants of channel satisfaction, efficiency and performance.

**Power**

According to Berman (1996), channel power ‘...is the ability of a channel member to control or influence the marketing strategy of an independent channel member at another level in the channel.’ A similar definition is provided by Stern and El-Ansary (1992): 'Power is the ability of one channel member to get another channel member to do what it otherwise would not have done.' It should be noted that in both definitions power is regarded as an ability; a potential, rather than actual enforcement. Conflict is argued to be a by-product as well as a cause of power (Stern and El-Ansary, 1992). It is also argued that, if a channel member has more power over another and employs its power to exploit the others dependence, this increased interdependency will foster the possibility of channel conflict as discussed before.

There may be fundamental differences between the consequences of the exercised power sources and un-exercised power sources. Thus, some researchers have differentiated between the exercised and unexercised power in examining their impacts on the channel behavior (Gaski and Nevin, 1985; Raven et al., 1993).

In addition to the exercised and unexercised power, another useful classification made regarding the power sources is the differentiation between the coercive and noncoercive sources of power. Coercive power, in contrast to reward power, is based on the ability of one channel member to punish another channel member while noncoercive power consists of reward power, referent power, expertise power, persuasion power, legitimate power and information power (Berman, 1996).

The results of the past researches have supported that exercised power has stronger effect both on channel conflict and satisfaction, especially for coercive power sources (Gaski and Nevin 1985; Gaski, 1984). Additionally, the noncoercive sources of power are found to reduce channel conflict whereas coercive sources of power are found to increase conflict (Skinner et al., 1992; Gaski and Nevin, 1985; Lusch 1976). Lusch (1976) also argued that among the coercive and noncoercive power sources, coercive sources of power explain the largest amount of variance in the channel conflict. Given these arguments, it is clear that power is one of the main determinants of channel conflict and hence satisfaction as well as channel performance. Based on the above argument and past empirical research findings, we propose that power is related positively with conflict. Thus:

\[ H_1: \text{The higher the level of exercised power in a marketing channel system, the higher the perceived channel conflict.} \]

**Cultural distance**

Culture is defined as ‘...an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristics of the members of any given society’ (Czinkota et al., 1998). An alternative definition is provided by Griffin and Pustay (1999, p. 326): ‘Culture is the collection of values, beliefs, behaviors, customs and attitudes that distinguish a society.’ From these definitions, it is clear that societies exhibit some differences from each other.

A cultural cluster comprises countries that share many cultural similarities, although differences do remain (Griffin and Pustay, 1999). Thus, it is logical to expect minor differences between the societies in the same cultural cluster while major differences may be observed between countries in different cultural clusters.

According to Reid (1986), cultural distance is ‘...the perceived importance of cultural [dis]similarity in different dimensions such as language, business habits, cultural environment, legal environment, etc...’ Given that a society’s culture determines the rules that govern how firms operate in the society (Griffin and Pustay, 1999), cultural distance increases the potential for misunderstandings and makes international operations more complex (Shahom et al., 1997) which in turn may foster channel conflict.

Thus, it is important to examine the perceived degree of cultural (dis)similarities among the markets of major trading partners which may have considerable effect on channel satisfaction and performance.

\[ H_2: \text{The larger the cultural distance between the foreign channel members’ markets, the higher the perceived channel conflict.} \]
Distribution system quality

Distribution quality includes a number of strategic components: (1) visits to overseas markets, leading to high intensity of contact with foreign customers; (2) channel quality; and (3) use of highly trained salespeople (Shahom et al., 1999).

Past research findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between the components of distribution system quality and international performance (Shahom and Kropp, 1998; 1997). Shahom et al. (1997) argued that, to the extent close contacts are maintained with high quality channels, the frequency and strength of conflicts may be reduced, leading to improved performance.

It is also argued that channel members can empower information sharing through a frequent and two-way communication process (Mohr and Nevin, 1990; Hunt, 1995; Mohr et al., 1995) leading to enhanced trust between parties (Anderson and Narus, 1990) as this process can help removing some of the uncertainties, possible conflict generating suspicions and misunderstandings. Thus, frequent two-way communication, through increasing the level of cooperation, helps in the early detection and prevention of conflict, and hence, increases the level of satisfaction.

Thus, the perceived distribution system quality can be argued to be a considerable factor that effects channel efficiency and performance through its effect on channel conflict and satisfaction. In this respect, the perceived level of distribution system quality is also measured with the content of this study.

H3: The higher the international distribution system quality, the lower the perceived channel conflict.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction is defined as ‘…a dealer’s overall approval of the channel arrangement’ (Gaski and Nevin, 1985). A similar definition is provided by Berman (1996): ‘Channel satisfaction is the overall evaluation of the relationship between two channel members’. According to Schul et al. (1985), channel member satisfaction refers to members’ attitudes and feelings toward the internal environment of the channel organization and the relationships between that environment and other institutions in the channel.

The cooperative efforts of channel members are argued to result in greater efficiency and achievement of goals, leading to higher levels of satisfaction (Berman, 1996). In turn Hunt and Nevin (1974) argued that channel satisfaction may lead to higher morale, greater cooperation within a channel, fewer terminations of relationships, fewer lawsuits, and reduced efforts to file class action suits and to seek protective legislation. Hence, it is a straightforward conclusion that there is a negative relationship between satisfaction and conflict. Past research findings also provide support for this conclusion: Conflict relates inversely with satisfaction (Skinner, Gassenheimer and Kelly, 1992; Gaski and Nevin, 1985; Gaski, 1984; Fraizer, Gill and Kale, 1989).

The channel satisfaction is a major factor of channel efficiency and performance and thus included within the research scope of this study (Figure 1).

H4: The higher the level of perceived channel conflict, the lower the channel members’ satisfaction.

RESEARCH METHODS

Sample and instrument

For the analyses, first of all a questionnaire1 survey was conducted among 30 exporter companies that are members of Ankara Chamber of Commerce. The main data collection was

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1The ten item measurement scale of Gaski and Nevin (1985) is used to measure the channel conflict, which has been developed to measure channel conflict in domestic markets and has also been applied to international marketing channels as well (Shahom et al., 1997).
questionnaire sent to companies via e-mail. In order to examine
behavioural aspects of the international distribution channel, we
employed the questionnaire of Gaski and Nevin (1985), which they
used in their research entitled “The Differential Effects of Exercised
and Unexercised Power Sources in a Marketing Channel” and
applied to international marketing channels by Shahom et al. (1997), in paper entitled “Conflict in International Channels of
Distribution”. The employed questionnaire is composed of 5 main
parts where each is included to measure a different dimension of
the research: The first part of the questionnaire measures the
channel conflict; the second part of the questionnaire measures satisfaction; the third part measures cultural distance; the fourth
part measures distribution system quality and the final part mea-
sures power. For the channel power dimension, both the coercive (questions 15-19) and noncoercive (questions 1-14) sources of
power are addressed. Likert scaling technique was employed which
enabled the increase in variation in the possible scores, by coding
from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” instead of merely “agree
or disagree”. Every respondent was asked to fill out the
questionnaire by choosing one of the five optional answers. Then
weights were assigned from 1 to 5 for each optional answer. In
order to evaluate the construct validity the principal components
analysis was conducted using VARIMAX rotation. The results are
given in Table 1 and show each scale items were loaded to relevant
factors with strong factor loadings addressing the construct validity
of the measure. In addition to construct validity, to ensure the
reliability of scales Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were evaluated.
According to Table 2, reliability of the scales with alpha coefficients
is ranging from 0.835 to 0.635.

Reliabilities
Because all the questions are proven to be reliable in prior scientific
research (Gaski and Nevin 1985; Shahom et al., 1997) no factor
analysis has been done. To prove that all questions are reliable, for
each construct a reliability test is executed.

Mediating of questions into construct scores
In order to test the hypotheses all the construct-specific items are
mediated into construct scores. This construct score is the mean of
the measures of all questions related to the specific construct.

RESULTS
The means, standard deviation of the variables are given in
Table 3. The coefficients according to Pearson Correlation between these variables are also given in Table 4. The OLS regression model is used to test
hypothesis 1 through 4. The model appears to be fairly satisfactory within adjusted R-square (0.442 ) and F-
Value (0.00 < 0.01) and seems to support that the
research model fits well into the data. The results from
OLS regression are summarized in Table 4. This results
show support for two of four hypotheses. H1 hypothesis
proposing the higher the level of exercised power in a
marketing channel system, the higher the perceived
channel conflict is rejected with -0.126 beta coefficient at
p<0.01 (0.177). The larger the cultural distance between
the foreign channel members’ markets, the higher the perceived channel conflict, and it is also not significant at
p<0.01(0.204) and with 0.127 beta coefficient not
supporting the H2. On the other hand, H3 hypothesis
proposing the higher the international distribution system
quality, the lower the perceived channel conflict is confirmed with at p<0.01(0.009) with -0.249 beta coef-
icient. Finally H4 hypothesis proposing the higher the
level of perceived channel conflict, the lower the channel
members’ satisfaction is also confirmed with at p<0.01
(0.001) with -0.342 beta coefficient; then H4 is accepted.
The results are summarized graphically in Figure 2.

Conclusions
In this paper we examined the behavioral aspects of
international distribution channels in an export channel
design; Turkey. For this purpose we seek evidence on
the impact of the level of exercised power in a marketing
channel system, the cultural distance between the foreign
channel members’ markets and the international distribu-
tion system quality on the perceived channel conflict and
then search for the impact of perceived channel conflict
on the channel members’ satisfaction.

Our results indicate that Turkish sampled exporters do
not regard the level of exercised power in a marketing
channel system and the cultural distance between the
foreign channel member’ markets as important sources of
conflict while the international distribution system quality
seems to be perceived as a major source of channel
conflict. The findings also suggest that there exists a
close relationship between the perceived channel conflict
and the channel members’ satisfaction, as expected.

These results are somewhat surprising in that although
the theory suggests a well-documented (well-developed)
linkage both between the level of exercised power and
channel conflict, and between the cultural distance and
channel quality conflict, our findings do not provide
support for these hypothesis. But considering the
geographical, historical and ethnical characteristics of
Turkey, it can provide a partial explanation for the
obtained results. First of all, Turkey lies between Europe
and Asia, and inherits close relations with both sides of
her borders for centuries. This fact provides a better
understanding of different cultures and enables Turkish
exporters to be more tolerant to different cultures, which
is also doubled with the culturally diverse ethnic structure
of the country. These facts may argue to provide an
inherited ability to live with different cultures as well as
manage cultural diversity issues. Additionally, Turkey
carries considerable part of her trade with the Arab
Region and, as very well known, besides the historical
ties between these two cultures, nations such as living
together within the same borders under the Ottoman
governance starting from the 16th century to late
eighteens and early nineteens, they share the same
religious beliefs. So, Islam may argue to play a binding
force and contribute an additional source of reduced
Table 1. Rotated component matrix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If we would not involve in current distribution channel, our export activities would be much better in many countries.</td>
<td>0.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We do not like so many applications of our distribution channel.</td>
<td>0.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy of our distribution channel reduces our profit.</td>
<td>0.578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our distribution channel makes our business difficult.</td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our distribution channel behaves us very fairly.</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our distribution channel sometimes blocks our wants.</td>
<td>0.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our distribution channel helps us do our business.</td>
<td>0.840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our distribution channel does not seem to foster a sincere respect to our company’s interests.</td>
<td>0.836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy of our distribution channel makes our business complicated.</td>
<td>0.884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with our current distribution system reaps lasting benefits to us.</td>
<td>0.748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How your performance is close enough to what you want?</td>
<td>0.824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How your company get benefits from export activities?</td>
<td>0.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can you explain problems related with services that your distribution channel provide for export activities in last 3 years?</td>
<td>0.603</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural distance</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a whole cultural distance</td>
<td>0.820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in values</td>
<td>0.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in traditions</td>
<td>0.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in daily life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution system quality</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer (distributor) visits</td>
<td>0.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with quality distributors</td>
<td>0.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with well-trained sales person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving advertising support to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1. Contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research construct</th>
<th>Cronbach’s test</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving trade discounts and incentives to your distributor.</td>
<td>0.633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving personnel training to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.702</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide promotional materials to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing activities such as party, picnic, etc. to your distributors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying stock discounts to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing finance/credit to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.596</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing raw material to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.598</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing business consultancy to your distributors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing pricing consultancy to your distributors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing samples to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.581</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing ordering consultancy to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.727</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing consultancy for inventory management to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.630</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making product publicity to your distributors.</td>
<td>0.688</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivering goods lately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying legal sanctions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop selling for a certain period of time.</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applying high prices.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not delivering products according to specifications defined by distributors.</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction method: Principal component analysis; Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization; *Rotation converged in 27 iterations.

Table 2. The Cronbach’s alpha statistic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research construct</th>
<th>Cronbach’s test</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Item total</td>
<td>α</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.835</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.815</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.209</td>
<td>0.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Contd.

|       | CD1  | CD2  | CD3  | CD4  | DSQ1 | DSQ2 | DSQ3  | POW1 | POW2 | POW3 | POW4 | POW5 | POW6 | POW7 | POW8 | POW9 | POW10 | POW11 | POW12 | POW13 | POW14 | POW15 | POW16 | POW17 | POW18 | POW19 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| CDIS  | 0.678| 0.738| 0.710| 1.000| 0.586| 0.517| 0.514 |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | 0.779 | 0.781 | 0.766 | 0.777 | 0.756 | 0.774 | 0.773 | 0.758 |
| DSQ   |      |      |      |      | 0.635|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| POW   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

Variables: CON= Conflict; SAT= Satisfaction; CDIS= Cultural Distance; DSQ= Distribution System Quality; POW= Power

perception of cultural distances between these two trade partners. However, our research results should be interpreted consciously due to some exogenous facts. As our sample consist firms that are members of Ankara Chamber of Commerce, they are all located at Ankara. So, taken into account the cultural and ethnical diversity of Turkey, it may be misleading to draw a generalized conclusion for the whole country. Another remarkable point may be to examine the topic from both trade partners’ view comparatively, but due to the geographically dispersed structure of the sampled firms’ exporting map and the difficulties in routing the questionnaire to the appropriate person in an organization, since a supply chain encompasses many units within the organization, we lack to include the importers’ view. So, actually, our results may be argued to
reflect the perceptions of the sampled exporters, rather than being a realized fact. Nevertheless, we believe that our research contributes to the prevailing literature on international distribution channels in many aspects. First, it concentrates on the behavioral aspects of the international distribution channels which is understudied scholarly given its importance and incorporates three antecedents of channel conflict, which have relatively been under-researched in international marketing channels. Second, by taking the perspective of the
exporter in contrast to the most of the studies taking the perspective of the buyer, it aims to provide evidence on the "counterparts" perception on the examined relations. Actually, some of our contradictory findings may be due to the reflection of this fact. For example, it may be possible for power dimension to be a more effective tool from the importers' point of view. This may be an interesting topic to investigate for future research. Besides, this research also concentrates on an emerging market setting, in which the operating firms have to struggle with the market imperfections prevailing in the structural arrangements of such markets. Also, emerging countries usually provide considerable export incentives for exporter firms. Hence, firms operating in an emerging market may have different and/or additional motives for exporting compared with their counterparts operating in developed markets which may affect their perceptions on the behavioral aspects of distribution channels. We believe that this distinction offers another remarkable area of research for future studies.

REFERENCES