

The Role of ICT in Turkish Apparel Sector

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Abstract

The clothing industry, which is among the main export items of many developing countries, is also a sensitive sector due to market characteristics such as short life cycles of its products, high volatility, low predictability, and high impulse buying. With the advanced technology, some firms in the sector have the chance to compete more strongly through rapid response and reduced lead time, while companies that do not have this technology have difficulties. In this sense, shortening the lead time of a product is an important performance criterion for the firms, and using ICT is the most important tool in determining both the quality and the rapid lead time. This paper identifies the characteristics of the Turkish apparel sector in terms of ICT and its implementations using firm-level analysis. For this purpose, first, the general relationship of the sector with ICT will be discussed, and try to determine which ICT elements are at the forefront. Then, the role of ICT in Turkish apparel firms will be examined. We combine two micro data sets compiled by TurkStat to reach a firm-level data set. The period considered is between 2009-2019 due to the data limitation. The data set is constructed by matching firms in the ICT Usage in Enterprises Survey and Foreign Trade Statistics. Especially the first data set includes ICT usage-related questions such as the number of employees using a computer and/or internet, whether the firm has a website as well as whether the firms use enterprise systems such as ERP, CRM, or SCM.

Keywords: Apparel sector, Turkey, Information and Communication Technologies

JEL Codes: L67, L25, O14, O33