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**GRADUATION PROJECT**

**"THE EFFECT OF MARKET ORIENTATION**  
**ON BUSINESS PERFORMANCE"**

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**LEFKOŞA**

## **Declaration**

1. This project comprises only my original work.
2. Due acknowledgment has been made in the text to all other material used.
3. This project involves exclusive of tables, figures, references and appendix.

**Burçin KELEŞZADE**

5 July 2006

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## Abstract

This paper addresses the issue of interrelationships between market orientation and firm performance. Three dimensions of market orientation, namely customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter-functional coordination of market oriented strategy are measured. In addition to this, the study was applied on fifty food importing companies in T.R.N.C.

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# CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

## 1-1 Introduction

Introduced in the early 1950's, the marketing concept (the philosophical foundation of a market of a market orientation) represents a cornerstone of marketing thought. However, given its widely acknowledged importance, it is remarkable how little research has focused on the subject. Only a small set of conceptual articles exist which offer preliminary suggestions for engendering a market orientation (Felton, 1959; Webster, 1988). And the few empirical studies that have been conducted on the subject primarily concern the extent to which organizations have adopted the marketing concept, rather than the antecedents or consequences of a market orientation (e.g. McNamara, 1972). In recent years, however, there has been a strong resurgence of academics' and practitioners' interest in market orientation. This interest has resulted in significant conceptual and empirical researches (see, for example, Harris and Piercy, 1997; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Slater and Narver, 1994).

The term market orientation has been used to refer to the implementation of the marketing concept. Thus, a market-oriented organization is one whose actions embrace the marketing concept (Deshpande et al., 1993; Mohr-Jackson, 1991; Wong and Saunders, 1993). The study of market orientation seeks to understand the behaviour of members of the organization that is manifested by adoption of the marketing concept as a firm philosophy.

The marketing concept is a business philosophy articulated more than forty years ago. In 1954, Peter Drucker argued that marketing is not only the responsibility of people at a functional level but also a general management responsibility. The marketing concept has played a major role in business practice and management thinking since the early 1960s. According to Webster (1988) the management of many companies is rediscovering the marketing concept. This interest in the marketing concept is translated by the amount of recently published literature; books and articles that emphasized Drucker's original theme of organizing and operating business with the goal of 100 per cent customer satisfaction in mind.

## **CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2-1.Introduction**

The objective of this chapter is to review the existing marketing literature to show the relevance and significance of the research questions. The chapter also seeks to show that other researchers have not yet adequately explored these issues. The discussion begins with a review of the performance literature including determinants and the issues of measurement in and forging links between market orientation and business performance . Next, a review of the market orientation literature is presented. Specifically, the relationship between market orientation and business performance is explored.

### **2-2.Market orientation: conceptualization**

In recent years, market orientation has received significant conceptual and empirical research (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Mohr-Jackson, 1991; Narver and Slater, 1990; Ruekert, 1992; Shapiro, 1988; Slater and Narver, 1994). These recent conceptualizations are reviewed next.

According to Kohli and Jaworski (1990) existing definitions of the marketing concept are of limited practical value, and it is important to develop operational definitions of the marketing concept by identifying specific activities that translate the philosophy into practice. To delineate the market orientation construct domain, they reviewed existing literature, and interviewed several business managers in different industries. Based on this review, they define market orientation at the strategic business unit (SBU) level as: 'the organization-wide generation of the market intelligence pertaining to current and future customer needs, dissemination of market intelligence across departments, and organization-wide responsiveness to it' .

They advocate the idea that market orientation should be viewed as a continuous rather than a dichotomous either-or construct. In other words, they argue that a measure of market orientation only needs to assess the degree to which a company generates market intelligence,



discriminates it and takes actions based on it. Accordingly, it is meaningless to classify a business as either or market oriented.

By their definition, market intelligence includes an analysis of current and future customer needs and preferences, and an analysis of such exogenous factors as government regulation, technology, competition and other environmental forces.

Narver and Slater (1990) define market orientation at the SBU level as: 'the organizational culture that most effectively and efficiently creates the necessary behaviours for the creation of superior value for buyers and, thus, continuous superior performance for the business'.

Further, they operationalize market orientation along five distinct components: customer orientation, competitor orientation, interfunctional coordination, long-term focus and profitability emphasis.

They administered a questionnaire survey to top managers of a large forest product. They reported acceptable reliability levels for the scales employed to capture customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional coordination. However, they reported very low reliability scores for the scales used to measure long-term focus and profitability emphasis. For subsequent analysis they dropped these two components from their original operational definition.

They reported convergent validity for their conceptualization of the market orientation construct. The three retained components, customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional co-ordination, were strongly correlated.

The Narver and Slater (1990) conceptualization shares some themes common with those of Kohli and Jaworski (1990). Both papers view knowledge about customers' needs and preferences, competitors' actions and interfunctional co-ordination as central to the market orientation construct; both define market orientation at the SBU level and both argue that market orientation should be conceptualized on a continuum construct.

The two approaches also differ in some aspects. Narver and Slater, report that all three components, namely customer orientation, competitor orientation and interfunctional co-ordination, converged on a single dimension. They wondered if the other two proposed components, namely profitability emphasis and long-term focus, constituted a separate dimension. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) argue that it is not meaningful to include profitability as a dimension for market orientation; they assert that profitability is an outcome of a market orientation. They include long-term emphasis in their definition of market intelligence, by noting that it includes both current and future trends in the marketplace.

Shapiro (1988) argues the case for effective communication and coordination across department barriers as a way to become customer oriented. According to him, three factors make a company market driven (market oriented in other ways): 'Information on -all important buying influences permeates every corporate function. Strategic and tactical decisions are made interfunctionally and interdivisionally, and divisions and functions make well coordinated decisions and execute them with a sense of commitment.' He argues that a company can be market oriented only if it completely understands its markets and the people who decide whether to buy its products or services.

Ruekert (1992) defines the level of market orientation in a business unit as the degree to which the business unit:

- obtains and uses information from customers
- develops a strategy which will meet needs
- implements that strategy by being responsive to customers' needs and wants

He argues that managers at the business unit level collect and interpret information from the external environment to serve as the foundation for selecting goals and objectives, as well as allocating resources to various programmes within the business unit. While such information reflects a wide variety of domains such as the technological, human resource, legal and financial environments, the customer environment is the critical external environment in developing a market orientation.

The first dimension of Ruekert's definition is consistent with previous definitions of market orientation. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) argue that customer orientation is the degree to which customer information is both collected and used by the business unit. Similarly, Narver and Slater (1990) measure the collection and use of customer information in their scale of customer orientation. Shapiro (1988) argues that the use of customer information is one of three central aspects of being market oriented.

The second dimension of Ruekert's definition of market orientation concerns the development of a plan of action, or a customer-focused strategy. It reflects the degree to which the strategic planning process explicitly considers customers' needs and develops specific strategies for satisfying those customer demands.

The third dimension of Ruekert's definition of market orientation involves the implementation and execution of a customer-oriented strategy by being responsive to market needs and wants. Ruekert argues that these behaviours conducted by the business unit can vary in the degree to which they deliver customer satisfaction. This aspect of his definition is



consistent with Narver and Slater's (1990) behavioural component of interfunctional coordination to deliver value and Kohli and Jaworski's (1990) responsiveness element in their definition. It is this dimension that is often described in the popular press as being central to the concept of market orientation.

The conceptual definition of market orientation presented by Ruekert (1992) is very similar to the existing definitions proposed by Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Narver and Slater (1990) and Shapiro (1988). However, the differences between these approaches to defining the construct rest more on emphasis than on substantive differences. Kohli and Jaworski, for instance, emphasize the use of market information, while Shapiro tends to focus on decision-making processes. Ruekert emphasizes the development and execution of business unit strategy as the key organizing focus of market orientation.

In contrast to the previous discussion regarding market orientation dimensions, an extended view has been found from the exploratory study by Mohr-Jackson (1991). Her study attempted to clarify the domain of the market orientation by extending the customer orientation. She argues that internal customers (employees) are the ultimate creators of products and services, and are generators of customer satisfaction. Based on her literature review, she has found that attention has been directed towards factors that facilitate or hamper the implementation of the marketing concept and overlooking the impact of human resource management factors. Consequently, little is known about the role of the internal customers within the context of the market orientation. She conducted forty-five in-depth interviews with corporate executives to assess the characteristics of the marketing concept and the employee activities that foster its implementation. She finds that a market orientation enhances performance by improving internal customer satisfaction by means such as ownership, security, job satisfaction, full participation, involvement, motivation, enthusiasm, empowerment, absenteeism, accident rate, productivity and effectiveness, all of which have a demonstrable impact on the bottom line.

Though the marketing concept is the cornerstone of the marketing discipline, businesses typically describe only limited success in implementing it. An examination of the core pillars of the marketing concept points to limitations in the first pillar, the customer's focus. This pillar is directed at the external customer, the person purchasing the firm's products and services with no attention to the internal customer - the employee. Whereas much attention has been directed to human resource practices in total quality management, marketers have overlooked its importance. The effectiveness of a market orientation depends upon how it is defined. Without an accurate definition of a market orientation, businesses



typically described only limited success in implementing it. However, the employees' dimension is included in this chapter as a component of the market orientation construct.

For the purpose of this research, the author argues that the construct of market orientation is composed of interrelated, but separate dimensions. He argues that customer focus (orientation) is composed of those behaviours that seek to improve understanding of customer needs and those that seek to achieve superior levels of customer satisfaction through quality, service and value. He also argues that competitors' focus is composed of those behaviours that seek to understand competitors' weaknesses and strengths. And he argues that organizational commitment and employees' focus comprises those behaviours that seek to make the whole organization work in harmony towards common objectives. However, the market orientation has been operationalized along four components as follows:

- customer focus (orientation)
- competitors' focus (orientation)
- interfunctional integration (orientation)
- employee's focus (orientation)

### 2.3.1 Components of Market Orientation

Market orientation consists of three behavioral components "customer orientation, competitor orientation, and interfunctional coordination" (Narver and Slater 1990, p. 21). Narver and Slater, consistent with Kohli and Jaworski (1990), have defined customer and competitor orientations as information acquisition and dissemination activities that are necessary to understand what buyers value and the capabilities of and strategies used by competitors in serving target buyers. This knowledge provides a framework in which to create superior value for customers relative to competitors. The third component involves coordinating across the firm's departmental activities to deliver superior value to buyers.

Figure.2.1: Components of Market Orientation

Researchs	Components of Market Orientation
Kohli and Jaworski (1990)	Generation of Market Information Dissemination of Market Information Organization-wide Responsiveness
Narver and Slater (1990)	Customer Orientation Competitor Orientation Interfunctional Coordination
Deshpande and Farley (1993)	Customer Orientation

Source: Oliver, R. L. (1989) Processing of the satisfaction response in consumption: a suggested framework and research propositions. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaint Behavior*, 2, 1-16.

Researchers have been consistent in their view that a customer focus is central to market orientation (Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Narver and Slater 1990; Slater and Narver 1995). The initial step in a firm's customer-oriented strategy is to understand the factors that determine customers' actions. Thus, prior studies have suggested that the management of market intelligence systems can indicate a firm's overall market orientation. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) define "market orientation" as constituting three components:

1. Organizationwide generation of market intelligence that pertains to current and future customer needs,
2. Dissemination of the intelligence among the departments of the organization, and
3. Organizationwide response to the knowledge derived from the market intelligence.



That is, market-oriented firms are expected to gather, interpret, and use market information in a more systematic, thoughtful, and anticipatory manner than are less market-oriented firms. Therefore, these scholars consider market orientation in terms of functional activities that specific units of organizations perform (Lafferty and Hult 2001).

Another stream of research based on the groundbreaking work of Narver and Slater (1990) perceives market-oriented firms as follows:

1. Firms that are customer oriented (i.e., they gain intimate insight into customers' needs and market service requirements),
2. Firms that are competitor oriented (i.e., they gain understanding of competitors' capabilities and market response patterns), and
3. Firms that show a high level of interfunctional coordination (i.e., they coordinate the utilization of company resources to create superior customer value).

These scholars view market orientation as an organizational culture that enlists the participation of all employees for the purpose of creating superior value for the firm's customers and superior performance for itself (Lafferty and Hult 2001; Narver and Slater 1990; Sin and Tse 2000). Similarly, Dobni and Luffman (2000) consider market orientation a culture that influences the way employees think and act.

## 3.4. Market Orientation and Firm Performance

A number of researchers have examined the link between market orientation and performance. Although several studies have supported an association between market orientation and profitability the link between market orientation and innovation appears to be more complex (Martin and Grbac, 2003; Slater and Narver, 2000). Several conceptual writings suggest that the importance of market orientation for organizational performance depend on environmental conditions (Narver and Slater, 1990; Gima, 1995). A strong market orientation is required to focus the organization on those environmental events that are likely to influence their ability to increase customer satisfaction relative to competitors (Baker and Sinkula, 1999). Kohli and Jaworski (1990), for example suggest that market orientation may not have critical importance in turbulent environments. Technical turbulence moderates customer and competitor orientations' impact upon innovation performance (Liu et al., 2003). Recent research shows that the strenght of the relationship between market orientation and firm performance is not influenced by the environment (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993; Gima, 1995). As a result implementation of a market-oriented strategy, reacting to market feedback may allow a firm to adapt successfully to external environmental changes. However while a strong market orientation may keep a firm on a steady course, alone, it may not necessarily constitute a dominant market position for the firm. Firms with both strong learning and market orientations may be best able to respond environmental forces through learning that enables innovative and reactive marketplace behavior (Baker and Sinkula, 1999).

There has been substantial amount of systematic studies examining the market orientation and performance link. Traditionally, the literature concerning the marketing concept has assumed that the implementation of the market orientation would lead to superior organizational performance (Piercy et al, 2002). In their study Kohli and Jaworski (1990) propose that the greater the market orientation of an organization, the greater would be the overall performance and that this relationship would be moderated by such several external forces like weaker economy, greater market turbulence and competition. The environmental context of an organization will probably influence its level of market orientation. Organizations in more competitive and dynamic environments may be expected to be more market oriented. As a result, the linkage between market orientation and performance depends on the environmental characteristics of an organization (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993). Three



environmental characteristics have been proposed by Jaworski and Kohli (1993): Market turbulence (the rate of change in the composition of customers and their preferences), competitive intensity and technological turbulence. Organizations that work with rapidly changing technologies may be able to obtain a competitive advantage through technological innovation together with the market orientation.

Greenly (1995), in contrast, concluded that market orientation might not be an appropriate organizational strategy for turbulent markets, where customers have limited power and technological change is rapid. Narver and Slater (1990) found a positive relationship between market orientation and business profitability where a market orientation is primarily concerned with learning from various forms of contact with customers and competitors in the market (Day, 1994; Slater and Narver, 2000). Further the authors extended their original study by considering the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on profitability. An entrepreneurial orientation encompasses such behaviors as innovativeness, risk taking and competitiveness which may enhance the prospects for developing a breakthrough product or identifying an unserved market segment (Lumpkin and Dess, 1996; Slater and Narver, 2000).

Market orientation is significantly important in enabling firms to understand the market place and develop appropriate product and service strategies to meet customer needs and requirements (Liu et al, 2002). A market orientation assures a customer focused strategy for market knowledge base generation, followed by coordinated, interfunctional marketing efforts to achieve long term firm – success. There has been significant advances in the development of a market orientation construct since the late 1980s and much analytical effort has been devoted to defining, conceptualizing, and operationalizing constructs of market orientation (Deng and Dart, 1994). Two conceptualizations of market orientation have gained wide support (Piercy et al, 2002): the information-based view of market orientation developed by Kohli and Jaworski (1990) and the culture-based interpretation of market orientation tested by Narver and Slater (1990).

In this study market orientation was measured by a 13-item scale adapted from Gima (1995) which adopted the information-based view of market orientation. Six items pertain to the collection and use of market information, four items tap the development of market-oriented strategy and three items measure the implementation of a market oriented response to customer needs. This questionnaire is designed to be organization-oriented rather than competitor-oriented.



## 2.5 Collection and Use of Market Information

There has been increasing interest in the role of use of market information for strategic purposes. External factors such as competition, uncertainty and needs are driving forces for strategic applications of market information (Choe, 2003). Collection and use of market information enabled by information systems is broadly considered to be a competitive weapon to cope with uncertain and volatile environments. Companies can deal with uncertainty by increasing their information processing capability and by creating interorganizational links between customers and suppliers. Knowledge-based resources and information gathering include specific technical and creative skills as well as integrative and coordinative skills (Mata et al, 1995). When customers tastes and rivals' strategies are dynamic, there is need to redesign or adapt the product. Firm innovativeness described by the development and marketing of innovations is likely to involve market, technology and competitor uncertainty. This means need for new information, technical changes and new organizational arrangements.

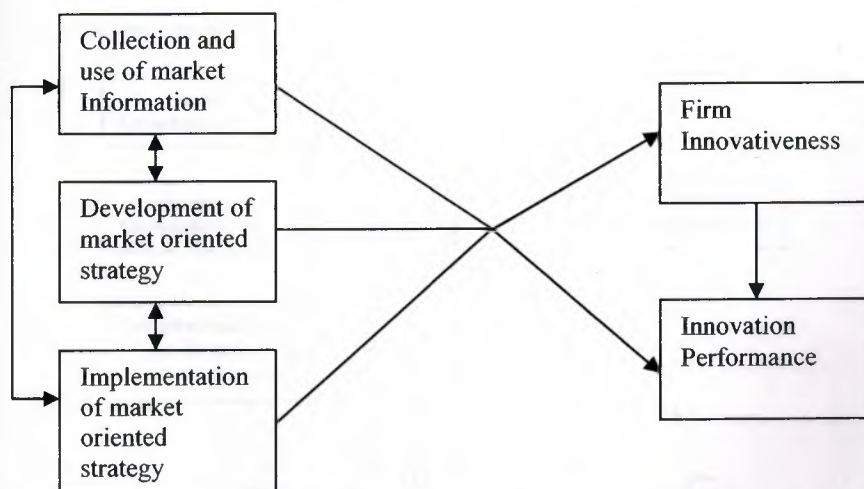
It is essential that senior managers are committed to the concept of market orientation and fully understand the role of market information and sound overall intelligence. Strategy formulation and implementation necessitates the active participation and commitment of staff throughout an organization (Clark, 2000). Companies need intelligence-gathering capabilities to keep up with technology development including both formal processes and information systems and informal systems that involve employess and senior managers to have the responsibility to the company to gather, disseminate and interpret technological information (Tyler, 2001). The more informed individuals engage more in problem solving discussions and create significant number of innovation which is associated with the ability to access knowledge from outside the boundaries of the firm and the ability to integrate knowledge across departmental boundaries within the firm.

## 2.4. Market Orientation and Firm Innovativeness

Studying the impact of market orientation on firm innovativeness has been a popular research area in recent years. Firms have to pay more attention to the needs of customers in the prevalent business environment which is defined highly competitive and offer them quality products and services to satisfy their ever-rising expectations. Hence, firms need a strategy that aligns the organization with the stake-holders and a business approach with customer or market orientation.

Market orientation is one of the core aspects of strategic marketing (Liu *et al*, 2002; Webster, 1992; Gatignon and Xuereb, 1997) together with firm performance, new product performance and firm innovativeness (Gima, 1995; Gatignon and Xuereb, 1997; Bear and Frese, 2002; Calontone *et al*, 2002). Increasing attention given to market orientation by both researchers and practitioners is based on the assumption that market orientation improves organizational performance and relies not only on the concept of competitive orientation (Choe, 2003). Competitive effects play an important role in the strategy of firms and in their innovation strategy and performance. As commonly reported in the literature market orientation may have a direct impact on performance and indirect effects may exist too. R&D and market orientation and the interaction between them drive innovation and firm innovativeness (willingness and capacity to innovate) which in turn drive customer acceptance (Harmsen *et al*, 2000).

Figure.2-2: The Theoretical Model



Source: Bear, M., & Frese, M., "Innovation is not Enough: Climates for Initiative and Psychological Safety, Process Innovations and Firm Performance", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 2002, Vol. 24: 45-68.



## CHAPTER 3 – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Introduction

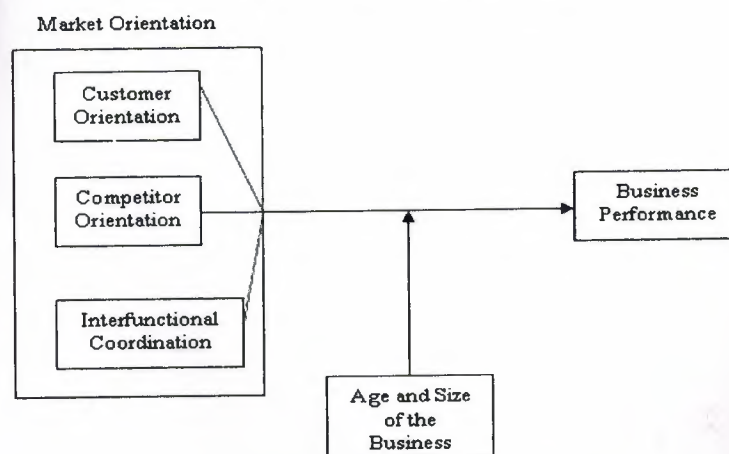
The survey results in the literature provide evidence for the basic propositions that market orientation influences firm performance. Within marketing, there has been great interest in market orientation as an intangible factor that has an effect on organizational performance (Homburg *et al.*, 2003). Market orientation is the business culture that produces performance by creating superior value to customers (Slater and Narver, 2000). Organizations must constantly innovate in every aspect of their business operations in order to compete and survive in the competitive market place.

### 3.2 Proposed Conceptual Framework

A number of researchers have examined the link between market orientation and performance. Although several studies have supported an association between market orientation and profitability the link between market orientation and innovation appears to be more complex (Martin and Grbac, 2003; Slater and Narver, 2000). In this paper the relationships between market orientation and firm performance are analysed.

### 3.3 Research Hypotheses and The Model

Figure.3-1: The Research Model



The model explores the relationships between three components of market orientation and firm performance.

H1: There is a positive relationship between customer orientation and firm performance.

H2: There is a positive relationship between competitor orientation and firm performance.

H3: There is a positive relationship between inter-functionally coordination and firm performance.

H4: There is a positive relationship between market orientation and firm performance.

### 3-4. Conclusion

This chapter examines the conceptual framework and the model derived from the literature review in the previous chapter. The next chapter discusses the research methodology employed in this study.

## **CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The objective of this chapter is to describe the methods by which the stated research questions and hypotheses, mentioned in the previous chapter, are tested using a survey conducted on TRNC firms.

The chapter involves the overall research design, including research design, target population, sampling method, sample size, and survey instruments, including all measures used.

### **4.2 Research Methodology**

#### **4-2-1. Research Design**

This study's hypotheses are tested by data on food importing companies in T.R.N.C. In this research a cross-sectional study design was used as the research approach. Cross-sectional study means collecting information from any given sample of population elements only once (Malhotra 2006).

#### **4-2-2. Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of the research is to find out using market orientation tools and techniques of businesses which exists in T.R.N.C. and if they use these techniques how these affects their strategies and performances.

#### **4-2-3. Target Population**

Research applied on 50 businesses, each serves in food importing companies in T.R.N.C.



#### **4-2-4.Sampling Method**

Convenience sampling method applied in this research. Convenience sampling method means a non probability sampling technique that attempts to obtain a sample of convenient elements. The selection of sampling units is left primarily to interviewer. Limitation of the sampling method non probability results of the study cannot be generalized(Malhotra,2006).

#### **4-2-5.Data Collecting Method**

In order to collect datas for research, Narver and Slater's questionnaire used and applied on these 50 businesses. This questionnaire is to be formed 3 sections. First section includes demographic questions, second section includes questions which try to expose business' interior situation, and third section include questions which related with business' performance.

#### **4-2-6.Data Collecting Procedure**

The questionnaires which based on Narver and Slater's framework, were delivered to 50 food importing companies by using convenience sampling method and all of these questionnaires are turned back ( in April 2006).

#### **4-3.Conclusion**

This section has described the methodology followed during the investigations of this project.

## **CHAPTER 5 - FINDINGS**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This section depicts the results obtained from the questionnaire carried out on the subjects of the sample firms as described in chapter 5.

#### **5-1-1. Description of the questionnaire carried out**

The questionnaire carried out on the 50 SBU in T.R.N.C. which is included in appendix the questionnaire was divided into 3 sections. The first Section of the survey asked about company and director information in general, and their past and present experiences in operations. Section II measured the degree of market orientation in markets. Section III consisted of a set of questions concerning the performance of the business unit. Measures used in this study were adopted from Narver and Slater 1990; Previous researchers used a five-point Likert scale (Jaworski and Kohli 1993), except Narver and Slater 1990, which used a seven-point Likert scale. In order to allow comparisons with extant work and to conform with what previous researchers had done, a five-point Likert scale was used from chapter 2 and chapter 3.

#### **5-1-2. Results**

The results arrived from the questionnaires are reported below.

## 5.2. Facts about Firms Participating in the Survey

### 5.2.1. Industry

Firms participating in this study are varied. In fact, there is 1 industry represented in this survey. As shown in Table 5-2-1, the firms responding to the survey were from food importing industry.

**Table 5-2-1: Companies in North Cyprus Participating in the Survey**

Industries	Frequency	Percentage
Food	50	100
Total	50	100

### 5.2.2. Company Size

In this survey, we measure company size by the number of employees. Table 5-2-2 shows that 14 percent of firms can be considered medium-sized companies (21-30 employees), 6 percent are large companies (50 and more), and 44 percent are small companies (10 employees or less).

**Table 5.2.2: Number of Employees**

Number of Employees	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10	22	44
11 – 20	16	32
21 – 30	7	14
31 – 40	2	4
50 – and more than	3	6
Total	50	100.0



### 5-2-3. Company Age

The information from Table 5-2-3 shows the companies were set up in 1991-2000 (28 percent). Thirty percent started their business in 1981-1990s. 24 percent of company were setup in 1971-1980 and other companies were set up with percentage 10 percent in 2001 and after. Around 2 percent of firms have existed since the 1960s-prior

**Table 5-2-3: Company's Age**

	Frequency	Percentage
1960 and prior	1	2
1961-1970	3	6
1971-1980	12	24
1981-1990	15	30
1991-2000	14	28
2001 and after	5	10
Total	50	100

### 5-2-4. Education Level

As shown in Table 5-2-4, the respondents of the TRNC firms have at least a university degree (40 percent), of which 12 percent of them had a higher degree. 46 percent of the respondents had finished high school degree.

**Table 5.2.4: Education Level**

EDUCATION LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Primary school	1	2
Secondary school	0	0
High school	23	46
University	20	40
Master/PhD	6	12
Total	50	100

**5-2-5.Occupation of Respondents**

Most of respondent in this survey came from director and manager (94 percent), followed by owner (4 percent), and coordinator (2 percent). Table 5-2-5 presents area of occupation of respondent.

**Table 5-2-5: Occupation of Respondents in the Survey**

	Frequency	Percentage
Owner	2	4
Coordinator	1	2
Director	35	70
Manager	12	24
Total	50	100



### 5-2-6.Age of Respondents

The results of respondents' ages presents in Table 5-2-6. Most commonly, managers of the survey firms were in their 31- 40s (36 percent), followed by the 51-60 age group (28 percent), and the 21 –30 age group (18 percent). Overall, the data from this survey suggested that performance does not depend on manager's age.

**Table 5-2-6: Respondents' Age in the Survey**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>21-30</b>	9	18
<b>31-40</b>	18	36
<b>41-50</b>	7	14
<b>51-60</b>	14	28
<b>61 and more</b>	2	4
<b>Total</b>	50	100.0

### 5-2-7.Respondents' Gender

People who respond this survey were 80 percent (male) and 20 percent (female). Overall, the data from this survey suggested that performance does not depend on manager's gender.

**Table 5-2-7: Respondents' Gender in the Survey**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	10	20	20
	Male	40	80	80
	Total	50	100.0	100.0

### **5.3. Reliability**

Reliability of analysis showed that the three factors that constitute market orientation (Customer orientation, competitor orientation, inter-functional coordination) have a  $\alpha$  value of (0.492). In addition reliability of business performance is ( $\alpha = 0.897$ ).

### **5.4. Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis was guided on all variables in this study. The bivariate correlation procedure was subject to a test of statistical significance at levels ( $p < 0.01$ ) or ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of the correlation analysis are shown in figure 5-4.

		competitor	interfunctional	market/orientation	hedef/performans	piyasa ortalaması	rakiplar/gore	genel/perfor/ma	customer	iletişim ve satış yılında kuruluş	yaşam satış
competitor	Pearson Correlation	1	.171	.712(**)	.074	-.029	.096	.055	.187	-.455(**)	-.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.250	.000	.611	.845	.512	.710	.198	.001	.882
	N	49	47	47	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
interfunctional	Pearson Correlation	.171	1	.727(**)	.036	-.107	-.047	-.034	.417(**)	.006	-.134
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.250		.000	.810	.469	.753	.819	.003	.966	.362
	N	47	48	47	48	48	48	48	48	48	48
market/orientation	Pearson Correlation	.712(**)	.727(**)	1	.157	-.050	.110	.088	.658(**)	-.301(*)	-.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.293	.740	.463	.555	.000	.040	.975
	N	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47
hedef/performans	Pearson Correlation	.074	.036	.157	1	.731(**)	.719(**)	.918(**)	.150	-.172	.385(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.611	.810	.293		.000	.000	.000	.300	.231	.009
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
piyasa ortalaması	Pearson Correlation	-.029	-.107	-.050	.731(**)	1	.658(**)	.990(**)	.109	.030	.350(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.845	.469	.740	.000		.000	.000	.452	.837	.013
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
rakiplar/gore	Pearson Correlation	.096	-.047	.110	.719(**)	.658(**)	1	.871(**)	.221	-.178	.353(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.512	.753	.463	.000	.000		.000	.123	.217	.012
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
genel/perfor/ma	Pearson Correlation	.055	-.034	.088	.918(**)	.890(**)	.871(**)	1	.191	-.124	.408(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.710	.819	.555	.000	.000	.000		.184	.392	.003
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
customer	Pearson Correlation	.187	.417(**)	.656(**)	.150	.109	.221	.191	1	-.130	.256
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.198	.003	.000	.300	.452	.123	.184		.367	.073
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
iletişim ve satış yılında kaç	Pearson Correlation	-.455(**)	.006	-.301(*)	-.172	.030	-.178	-.124	-.130	1	-.371(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.966	.040	.231	.837	.217	.392	.367		.008
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
birlikte çalışan eleman sayısı	Pearson Correlation	-.026	-.134	-.005	.385(**)	.350(*)	.353(*)	.408(**)	.256	-.371(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.862	.362	.975	.009	.013	.012	.003	.073	.008	.008
	N	49	48	47	50	50	50	50	50	50	50

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

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



#### **5-4-1. Correlation of Variables**

Market orientation is to be formed three components namely competitor orientation, customer orientation and inter-functional coordination which are based on Narver and Slater's research framework.

According to the results of correlation analysis, there are significant and positive correlations between these three components and market orientation and among each three component.

( $p < 0.01$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Correlation analysis indicates that there is no significant relationship neither between the components and performance nor between the market orientation and the performance.

These correlation results show that there is a negative relationship between competitor orientation and the age of the businesses. The other negative relationship is indicated between the market orientation and the age of the businesses. These negative relationships mean if a business grows old it becomes more competitor oriented or market oriented.

#### **5-5. Conclusion**

This section has revealed the findings from the empirical investigations of this report.



## **CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6-1. Introduction**

The objective of this final chapter is to highlight the contributions that have been made by this study and to provide recommendations accordingly.

### **6-2. Conclusions**

Customers today are highly informed and more demanding than before. Being responsive to customer needs and changing market conditions are accepted to be important for the success of firms.

Given the consistent interactions between the components of market orientation and firm performance, we would argue that efforts of firms to enhance the performance are especially important for companies which want to gain competitive advantage. The findings show that the firms which deal with food importing in T.R.N.C. are generally not completely market oriented. These firms are usually adjusting themselves according to their competitors so most of them are strongly competitor oriented. This research has proved that there is no any effect in the number of employees over the firms' performances in food importing companies in T.R.N.C.

Our research indicates that any component of market orientation is not affecting the firms' performances in a positive or negative way. In other words, we may say there is no relationship between the components of market orientation and firms' performances in food importing firms in T.R.N.C.

These firms are appeared to feel themselves more market oriented when they grow old considering the negative relationship between market orientation and the age of the companies that we found in this study.

This study demonstrates that these companies have not become institutional because of the low number of employees and the other reason for this is these firms' having no necessary departments such as marketing department, finance department etc.

In the end, the research shows that most of the respondents of these firms graduated from high school or university. However, this situation has no effect on the performances of these firms.

### **3.3. Answers for Hypothesis Formulated in the Project**

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between customer orientation and firm performance.

We could not meet any relationship between customer orientation and firm performance. The hypothesis is rejected.

**H2:** There is a positive relationship between competitor orientation and firm performance.

This study shows that competitor orientation has a positive effect on the business performance. The hypothesis is accepted.

**H3:** There is a positive relationship between inter-functional coordination and firm performance.

We could not find any relationship between inter-functional coordination and firm performance. The hypothesis is rejected.

**H4:** There is a positive relationship between market orientation and firm performance.

The only relationship is found between competitor orientation and firm performance but there is no relationship between other components and firm performance. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

### **6-4. Main Conclusion**

Despite the fact that a positive relationship was found between the components of market orientation and firm performance in other surveys that were done before, in the one I studied on food importing companies in T.R.N.C. no relationship revealed apart from the competitor orientation.



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Table 1

Summary of empirical research on the relationship between market orientation (MO) and business performance (BP)

Author(s)	Sample	Measures		Conclusions
		MO	Performance	
Narver & Slater, 1990	113 SBUs of a US corporation	3 components: Customer orientation, Competitor orientation and Interfunctional coordination	subjective and relative: ROA, growth sales, NP success	positive relation MO-BP
Ruekert, 1992	5 SBUs of a US corporation	3 components: Use of information, Development of MO strategy, Implementation of MO strategy	objective: growth sales and profitability	positive relation MO - BP
Kholi & Jaworski, 1993	2 samples: 222 SBUs, and 230 managers - US	3 components: Intelligence generation, Intelligence dissemination and Responsiveness	subjective and relative overall performance  objective: market share	positive relation MO-subjective BP  not significant relation MO-objective BP
Kholi, Jaworski and Kumar, 1993	2 samples: 229 SBUs, and 230 managers - US	MARKOR scale, 3 components: Intelligence generation, Intelligence dissemination and Responsiveness	subjective multiple items performance measure	positive relation MO- BP
Diamantopoulos & Hart, 1993	87 firms UK	Kohli & Jaworski's scale	subjective and relative measures: sales growth	mixed results about MO-BP relation
Slater & Narver, 1994	81 SBUs and 36 SBUs of two US firms	Narver & Slater's scale	subjective measures: ROA, sales growth, and NP success	positive relation MO-BP
Deng & Dart, 1994	248 firms Canada	Narver & Slater's components, plus Profit emphasis	11 subjective performance measures (1 about NP success)	positive relation MO-BP
Deshpandé Farley & Webster, 1994	50 firms Japan	consumer orientation	subjective measures: profitability, market share, growth rate, and size	positive relation customer orientation-BP
Van Bruggen & Smidts, 1995	82 managers of a single firm Holland	Kohli & Jaworski's scale for distributors and competitors	subjective measures: absolute and relative overall performance	positive relation MO-BP
Greenley, 1995	240 firms UK	Narver & Slater's scale	subjective BP measures: ROI, sales growth, and NP success	positive relation MO-BP
Lambin, 1996	34 insurance firms, Belgium	scale with nine components	objective BP measures	positive relation MO-BP
Fritz, 1996	144 firms Germany	3 items: selling and customer oriented corporate philosophy, and customer satisfaction importance in goals	subjective BP measures: long term profitability	positive relation MO-BP
Pitt, Caruana & Berthon, 1996	161 service firms UK 193 firms in Malt	Kohli, Jaworski and Kurman's MARKOR scale	subjective performance measures: overall performance and relative, sales growth, ROCE	positive relation MO-BP in both samples



Table 1 (cont.)

Author(s)	Sample	Measures		Conclusions
		MO	Performance	
Selnes, Jaworski & Kohli, 1996	102 firms, 222 SBUs US, 70 firms, 237 SBUs Scandinavia	Kohli, Jaworski and Kurman's MARKOR scale	subjective measures: overall performance, overall relative performance  objective measure: market share	positive relation MO-subjective BP  non significant relation MO-market share
Pelham & Wilson, 1996	68 small firms US (longitudinal study)	9 items based on Narver and Slater, and Kohli and Jaworski scales	subjective measures: NP success, product quality	positive relation MO-BP
Atuahene-Gima, 1995, 1996	117 service firms and 158 manufacturing firms Australia	Ruekert's scale	subjective measures of NP performance	MO is an important factor in the NP success
Bhuian, 1997	92 bank managers Saudi Arabia	Kohli & Jaworski's scale	objective measures: ROA, ROE and sales per employee	non significant relation MO-BP
Gatignon & Xuereb, 1997	393 marketing managers US	Narver and Slater's scale of customer and competitor orientation	multi-item subjective measures of NP success	different strategic orientations have different impact on innovation performance according the market characteristics
Greenley & Foxall, 1997, 1998	230 firms UK	Kohli, Jaworski and Kurman's MARKOR scale	subjective measures: ROI, sales growth, market share and NP success	the impact of multiple stakeholder orientation on performance is moderated by the external environment

Notes: NP = new product

## Appendix

### The Narver & Slater (1990) scale

In answering please use the following response scale and place the most appropriate number to the left of each statement. Please respond to all statements.

Not at all	To a very slight extent	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a considerate extent	To a great extent	To an extreme extent
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

_____	Our salespeople regularly share information within our business concerning competitors' strategies.
_____	Our business objectives are driven primarily by customer satisfaction.
_____	We rapidly respond to competitive actions that threaten us.
_____	We constantly monitor our level of commitment and orientation to serving customers needs.
_____	Our top managers from every function regularly visit our current and prospective customers.
_____	We freely communicate information about our successful and unsuccessful customer experiences across all business functions.
_____	Our strategy for competitive advantage is based on our understanding of customers needs.
_____	All of our business functions (e.g. marketing/sales, manufacturing, R&D, finance/accounting, etc.) are integrated in serving the needs of our target markets.
_____	Our business strategies are driven by our beliefs about how we can create greater value for our customers.
_____	We measure customer satisfaction systematically and frequently.
_____	We give close attention to after-sales service.
_____	Top management regularly discusses competitors' strengths and strategies.
_____	All of our managers understand how everyone in our business can contribute to creating customer value.
_____	We target customers where we have an opportunity for competitive advantage.
_____	We share resources with other business units.

## Correlations between performance measures and performance clusters

Table IV: Correlations between performance measures and performance clusters		
	Performance (distance/means)	
Profitability compared to industry average*		
Profitability compared to business objectives**		
Return on Capital Employed compared to industry average**		
Sales growth compared to industry average**		
Sales volume compared to business unit objectives**		
Market share compared to your major competitor**		
Market share compared to business unit objectives**		
Overall assessment of your company's performance compared to industry average**		
Notes: **p<0.01 *p<0.05		

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**Table I.**  
Summary of market  
orientation research: US  
research (1990-96)

Study	County	Sample	MO instrument based on	Performance measure	MO/performance relationship
Narver and Slater (1990)	USA	113 SBUs in 1 corporation	Literature review	ROA	Positive
Ruekert (1992)	USA	5 SBUs in 1 company	Discussions with managers	Sales growth, profitability	Positive
Jaworski and Kohli (1993)	USA	222 + 230 companies (2 samples)	Kohli and Jaworski (1990)	Market share, ROE, organizational commitment, <i>esprit de corps</i> , overall performance	Positive
Slater and Narver (1994a)	USA	107 SBUs in 2 corporations	Narver and Slater (1990)	ROA, sales growth, new product success	Positive
Raju <i>et al.</i> (1995)	USA	176 hospitals	Kohli <i>et al.</i> , (1993)	19 subjective measures including: ROI, service quality, mortality	Positive
Pelham and Wilson (1996)	USA	68 small firms (various industries)	Narver and Slater (1990)	New product success, sales growth/market share, product quality, profitability	Positive

Ngai, J.C.H. & Ellis, P. 1998, 'Market orientation and business performance: Some evidence from Hong Kong', *International Marketing Review*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 119-39.

Study	Country	Sample	MO instrument based on	Performance measure	MO/performance relationship
Deshpande <i>et al.</i> (1993)	Japan	50 "quadrads" from public firms and their customers (various industries)	Personal interviews and literature review (e.g. Narver and Slater, 1990, Kohli and Jaworski, 1990)	Profitability, size, market share, relative growth rate	Positive (based on customers' assessments); none (based on managers' own assessments)
Diamontopolous and Hart (1993)	UK	87 companies	Kohli and Jaworski (1990)	Sales growth and profits relative to industry average	Weak association
Au and Tse (1995)	New Zealand/ Hong Kong	148 NZ hotels + 41 HK hotels	Kotler (1977)	Occupancy rate	None identified
Greenley (1995)	UK	240 large companies (various industries)	Narver and Slater (1990; 1994a)	ROI, new product success, sales growth	None identified
Pitt <i>et al.</i> (1996)	UK/Malta	161 UK service firms + 200 Maltese firms (various industries)	Kohli <i>et al.</i> (1993)	ROCE, sales growth, subjective impressions	Weak association

**Table II.**  
Summary of market  
orientation research:  
non-US research (1990-96)

Market  
orientation

**Sayın Katılımcı,**

*Bu araştırmanın amacı, Pazar Odaklılığın İşletme Performansı üzerine etkisini ölçmektir. Düşünceleriniz bizim için son derece önemlidir. Soru formundaki sorulara verdiğiniz tüm yanıtlar gizli tutulacak ve sadece istatistiksel analizlerde kullanılacaktır. Sizden elinizdeki 3 sayfalık soru formunu doldurmanız için birkaç dakikanızı ayırmanızı rica ediyoruz. Çalışmamıza yaptığınız katkılardan dolayı teşekkür ederiz.*

**Saygılarımızla,**

Yard. Doç. Dr. Figen YEŞİLADA

Burçin KELEŞZADE

## **I. BÖLÜM : Demografik Özellikleriniz**

1. Cinsiyetiniz: ☐ Kadın ☐ Erkek

2. Yaşınız:

☐ 20 ve altı ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ 61 ve üstü

3. Medeni Durumunuz: ☐ Evli ☐ Bekar

4. Eğitim Durumunuz:

☐ Okur-yazar ☐ Ortaokul mezunu ☐ Üniversite mezunu  
☐ İlkokul mezunu ☐ Lise ve dengi okul mezunu ☐ Lisans üstü (Yüksek Lisans-Doktora)

5. Şirket içindeki göreviniz .....

6. Hizmet verdiğiniz sektör.....

7. İşletmeniz kaç yılında kuruldu?

.....

8. Şirketinizde çalışan eleman sayısı?

☐ 10 ve altı ☐ 21- 30. ☐ 41 - 50  
☐ 10 - 20 ☐ 31- 40 ☐ 50 ve üstü



**BÖLÜM 2.** Aşağıdaki ifadeleri değerlendirirken aşağıda sunulan ölçeği kullanarak her bir ifadenin soluna sizin için en uygun rakamı yazınız

5. Evet, her zaman
4. Evet, genellikle
3. Bazen evet, Bazen hayır
2. Nadir olarak evet
1. Hayır, hiçbir zaman

\_\_\_\_\_ Satış elemanlarımız rakiplerimizin stratejileri ile ilgili bilgileri düzenli olarak paylaşıyor.

\_\_\_\_\_ İşletmemizin hedefleri belirlenirken müşteri memnuniyeti esas alınır.

\_\_\_\_\_ Rakiplerimizin bizim için tehdit oluşturan faaliyetlerine hızlı bir şekilde karşılık veriyor.

\_\_\_\_\_ Müşteri ihtiyaçlarını karşılamada memnuniyet seviyesini devamlı olarak izliyoruz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tüm departmanlarımızın üst düzey yöneticileri mevcut ve potansiyel müşterilerimizi düzenli olarak ziyaret eder.

\_\_\_\_\_ Müşterilerimizle ilgili başarılı ve başarısız tüm deneyimlerimizle ilişkin bilgileri şirketimizle paylaşıyoruz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Rekabet üstünlüğü sağlamaya yönelik stratejimizin temeli müşteri ihtiyaçlarını anlamaya yöneliktir.

\_\_\_\_\_ Şirketimizdeki tüm fonksiyonlar(pazarlama/satış, üretim AR-GE Finans/Muhasebe vb) hedef pazarlarımızın ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak üzere bir bütün oluşturur.

\_\_\_\_\_ Şirket stratejilerimizi "müşterilerimiz için nasıl daha fazla değer yaratabiliriz" düşüncesiyle geliştiririz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Müşteri memnuniyetini sık sık ve sistemli bir şekilde ölçüyoruz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Satış sonrası hizmete çok önem veriyoruz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tepe yönetim rakiplerin güçlü yanlarını ve stratejilerini düzenli olarak tartışır.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tüm yöneticilerimiz işletmemizde çalışan herkesin müşteriye değer yaratma sürecine ne şekilde dahil olabileceğini bilirler.

\_\_\_\_\_ Rekabet avantajı sağlama fırsatımız olan alanlardaki tüketicileri hedefliyoruz.

\_\_\_\_\_ Diğer işletme birimleriyle kaynaklarımızı paylaşıyoruz

**BÖLÜM 3.** Aşağıdaki ifadeler işletmenizin performansını ölçmeye yönelik hazırlanmıştır. Lütfen sunulan ölçeği son 3 yıllık performansı dikkate alarak değerlendiriniz.

- 1- Hiç Tatminkar değil.
- 2- Tatminkar değil.
- 3- Ne Tatminkar ne de Tatminkar değil.
- 4- Tatminkar.
- 5- Kesinlikle Tatminkar.

İşletmenizin **karlılığı** piyasa ortalamasına göre kıyaslandığında

İşletmemizin **karlılığı** işletme hedeflerine göre kıyaslandığında.

**Yatırımlarınızın geri dönüşü** piyasaya göre kıyaslandığında

**Satışlardaki değişim**(artış/düşüş) piyasa ortalamasına göre kıyaslandığında

**Satış miktarı** işletmenizin hedeflerine göre kıyaslandığında

Pazar payınız **en yakın rakibinize** göre kıyaslandığında

Pazar payınız **işletmenizin hedeflerine** göre kıyaslandığında

**İşletmenizin müşteriye elde tutma oranı** rakiplerinize göre kıyaslandığında

Sonuç olarak son 3 yıla göre işletmenizin **performansı** piyasa ortalamasına göre kıyaslandığında