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TEXTILE FACTORIES AND THEIR PERFORMANCE IN USING AGOA OPPORTUNITY (THE CASE OF MAA GARMENT AND ALMEDA TEXTILE AND GARMENT FACTORIES)

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that Ethiopia has immense resources in the area of textile and garment factories the existing export performance and income generating capacity of the sector in the country and/or the study region is low. The country/region has failed to promote its export performance using the privileges given by US government. This being so, the purpose of the study was to assess the Textile Factories and Their Performance in Using AGOA Opportunity, the case of MAA Garment and Almeda Textile and Garment Factories. In this study, cross sectional and census method were used. The data collecting instruments employed in the study were: questionnaires and key informant interview guides. Primary data was collected using self-administered structured questionnaire from the total of 82 respondents (management groups). The Interview was conducted with selected (marketing, production, DGM, supply, finance, quality) departments in the factories, Chamber of Commerce. Secondary data was collected from the two factories and Custom & Revenue Authority. The data obtained from the above sources were organized, presented and analyzed by using both qualitative and quantitative methods of research analysis. The major statistical tools used for analysis were frequency count, percentage and mean. The result of the research indicates that the performance of the factory in exporting to US under AGOA program is low. Finally, the recommendations given based on the major findings were: the factories should focus efficient production management, improved market strategy, the FDRE Government should support and encourage small and medium firms to produce accessories, prepare national AGOA strategy to use it the opportunity by providing information, technical assistance, and market linkage with USA.

KEYWORDS

AGOA, export sales, textile performance.

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INTRODUCTION

It is noted that in various literatures the garments and textiles industry shapes a vital element of world trade, specifically for some Sub-Saharan Countries and African least developed countries which has huge amount of the total exports. In 2004, the global exports of textiles were estimated at \$195bn and of clothing at \$258bn, representing 2.2% and 2.95 respectively of total world commodity operated (WTO, 2005). Here, although the developed countries dominated the global exports in textiles and clothing; currently, developing countries produce half of the world's textile exports and around three quarters of the global clothing exports (UNCTAD, 2005).

While share of developing countries in the textile and clothing area shows growth, the growth has been focused on distinct in labor-intensive and lower-value added part of the textile manufacture (e-business Watch, 2005).

Literature on the subject reveal that export performance of textile industry is limited to exporting raw cotton, Depreciation of nominal exchange rate are some of the factors affecting the textile export performance negatively; whereas labor cost affects positively because of cheap labor availability in our country (Yared, 2010).

An empirical study also shows that infrastructural growth affects the performance of textile industry as it is more interconnected with economic development (CBN, 2000). Study conducted by David (2003) confirmed that weak infrastructure influences for the performance of textile factories negatively and make the companies to use their own power. During 2004 and 2005 Botswana and Ethiopia increased their exports of clothing (USITC, 2007). The key products include yarn, garment, and woven products Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI, 2009).

It is stated in ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development document that Ethiopia has around 2,575,810 hectares of land for cotton production and this makes it the 4th largest cotton producer in the world like Pakistan. Pakistan cotton production capacity from its 2.9 million hectare area is around 4.5-5.7 million MT. In Ethiopia, from the 2.6 million hectare total land suitable for cotton production, 1.7 million hectare is found in 38 high cotton producing areas and 0.9 million hectare in 75 medium potential areas (China Textile Planning Institute of Construction, 2004).

Nonetheless, as indicated in various studies there is huge gap between potentials of cotton and the existing export performance income generating capacity of the textile factories in the region. That is, the immense resource in the country has not been exploited.

Be that as it may, although Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia government has been devising various favorable development policies and strategies to bring about sustainable solution for the prevailing gaps in the country the practices have not shown remarkable improvements on the mentioned area. The country, for instance, has failed to fully utilize the opportunity African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) created by United States government. As indicated in the study conducted by Rahel (2007) the share of Ethiopia from AGOA has showed a decline of 0.01%.i.e., 0.03% in 2002 to 0.02% in 2003. Furthermore, a study conducted on Assessment of the Competitiveness of the Manufacturing Sector (2010) confirms that government encouragement, availability of cotton, labor resources, is not proportionate to the textile industry's performance.

The study conducted by Institute of Social Studies (2003) has generally discovered that most eligible enterprises in Ethiopia cannot take full advantage of AGOA due to shortage of market information, poor production capacity, not well-trained and skilled labor, weakness of management skills, and red tap problems in the governmental office.

Similarly, the textile firms in the study Region (Tigray) have not taken full advantage of AGOA.

It is thus with aforementioned gaps that the researcher has intended to assess the existing performance of textile factories using AGOA as an opportunity of exporting textile products and to analyze how the Ethiopian/Regional government supports the textile factories in order to enable them to exploit the opportunity of AGOA in the study region.

As there was no previous study research in specified area done to improve the performance textile sub-sector at firm level, this study would therefore contribute to fill the information gap by investigating the performance of textile factory under AGOA.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Countries of the global world vary in their level of innovation and technology, capital endowment in the production of goods and services. So, entry of nations in different international market is highly related with their interest in the production of goods and service that helps them to have a comparative cost advantages in order to develop the benefit of their nation (Hailegiorgis, 2011). Basically, this theory goes back to the 18th century; Adam Smith contributes more in the significance of specialization and trade in his wealth of nations. In contrast, according to Katsikeas et al (2000) in their 100 empirical studies argue that export performance is the more explored concern in global marketing and to be expected debatable.

AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act): Initially it was signed by Bin Clinton, president the USA, on May 18, 2000 as Title 1 of The Trade and Development Act of 2000. The aim of AGOA is to provide supports and incentives for African Countries to open their door to free markets and encourage their economic developments.

Generalized System of Preference: In this system, AGOA develops a list of products, which are entitled to Sub-Saharan African countries to export to United States of America duty free and tax free. The program GSP covers more than 6400 items and the AGOA provisions come to an end by September 30, 2015 (Jones, 2010). Ethiopia's engagement in manufacturing different handcraft products has long experience. However, the contribution of the sector to the economic growth of the country is not as expected (Loop, 2003). According to Befekdu and Berhanu (1999/2000) explained that state involvement in industry was small. Almost all of the establishments were privately owned. Out of 273 establishments, 91% were totally private owned. The role of government makes the process of the establishment progress smooth by providing kind supports to the foreign investor (Loop, 2003). During the military regime private sector was dejected through many factors; such as privileges were given to state owned enterprises in cases such as market information, providing land, providing foreign exchange and connecting to market. Now a day under the administration of EPRDF (Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front) beginning 1991, the country follows Agriculture-led Industrialization strategy. The policy focuses on export-oriented, labor-intensive manufacturing (Shiferaw, 2007). Especially the strategy targets import substitution and export oriented industries such as leather and leather products, textile and garment, sugar, flowers, high-value fruits and Cement Industries (Admmas University College, 2010). In 2007/8 the number of large and medium scale industries created job opportunity for more than 133, 803 employees Central Statistics Authority (CSA, 2008).

The Ethiopian textile industry faces many challenges in exploiting the AGOA opportunities. According to the report of Ethiopia AGOA strategy 2004, the following are some of the general challenges: lack of accurate and latest market information about privileges given by USA, weak industrial capability, support and experience, problems of quality, efficiency, and responsiveness, low level of skilled labour force, weak production and operation, lack of management skills and knowledge, uncertainty of the program when it will expire, and many obstacles in government offices.

Measurement of performance: performance is the accomplishment of job, tasks or objectives to achieve the expected level & standard of satisfaction. Performance is one of the oldest methods of measurement in firm related researches. According to the study of Ittner and Lacker (1998), there are different measurement of performance and their interpretation for creativity. So far, other studies targeted market share (Greve, 1998), share sales profit (Audia, Locke and Smith, 2000), assets (Miller and Chen, 2004) and investments (Luo, 1997). Zahid and nanik (2011) summarized the general performance of textile sub-sector highly influenced by income statement, management, sales volume, receivables, and productivity.

According to the study conducted by Assocham (2008) on factories performance on 28 textile factories in Mumbai Stock Exchange found factors affects by net profit, interest costs, power, and raw materials. Virambhai (2010) textile factory productivity and financial performance targeted on plant's current position and its performance. The study focused and concluded on the management/firm should take in to account cost minimization, maximizing production.

Ajay Kumar (2011) studied on Indian garment and textile industry analysis with inflation, sales, income, and textile production and his finding was import and export performance in crisis period. Performance measurement in small and medium enterprises was targeted on standards of financial measures. However, productivity, responsiveness, and customer satisfaction could be lacking (Cooper, S., 2005).

ELIGIBILITY FOR AGOA

According to U.S. International Trade commission (2002), US government put the following main requirements for Sub-Saharan African countries to be eligible and receive the opportunities of duty free of certain products. Most of the time legislation shows a country's eligibility for AGOA depends on three requirements.

1. Market oriented economy, rule of law, and elimination of trade barriers, economic policies reduction of poverty, system to combat corruption, protection of workers' right.
2. Avoidance of activities that challenges U.S. national security
3. Not supporting terrorism. There is also annual supervision on the Sub Saharan African countries to determine whether they are performing based on the AGOA's conditionality.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the research is focused on assessment of Textile Factories and Their Performance in using AGOA Opportunity, the case of MAA Garment and Almeda Textile and Garment Factories, the specific factories will use it as input to improve its export performance and decision making so as to attract investors who want to invest on the textile factory. It will also be used as a reference material by researchers who want to conduct their study on similar area.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is well known in world's history that textile industry is one of the highest contributing sectors to the world's economy and it is the earliest manufacturing and industrializing economy.

In Ethiopia, from the 2.6 million hectare total land suitable for cotton production, 1.7 million hectare is found in 38 high cotton producing areas and 0.9 million hectare in 75 medium potential areas (China Textile Planning Institute of Construction, 2004).

However, the country/study region, for instance, has failed to fully utilize the opportunity (AGOA) created by US government (Rahel, 2007). As indicated in the study conducted by Rahel (2007) the share of Ethiopia from AGOA has showed a decline of 0.01%.i.e., 0.03% in 2002 to 0.02% in 2003. It is thus with the aforementioned gaps that the researcher has intended to assess the existing performance of textile factories using AGOA as an opportunity of exporting textile products in the study region.

As there was no previous study research in specified area done to improve the performance textile sub-sector at firm level, this study would therefore contribute to fill the information gap by investigating the performance of textile factory under AGOA.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess export performance of Tigray Textile sub-sector under AGOA.
2. To assess the challenges that faces the factories in implementing AGOA initiative and exporting quality products to the United States.

QUESTIONS

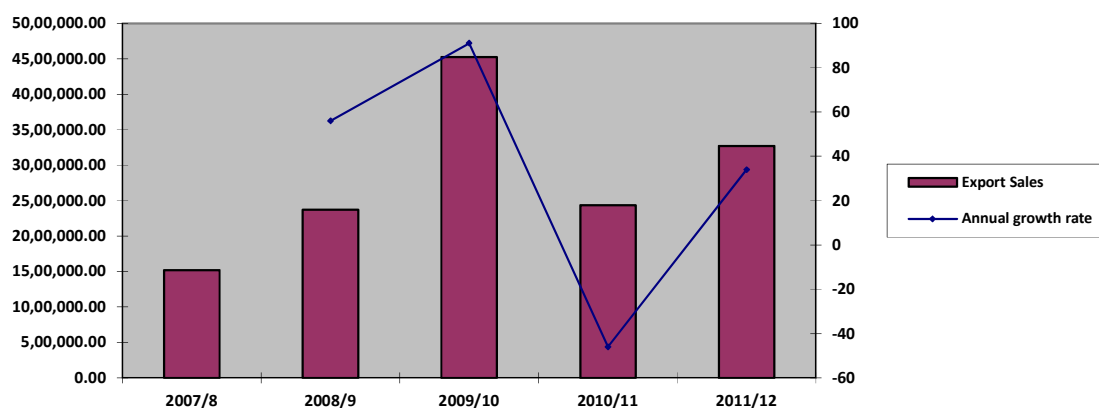
1. What is the export performance of Tigray textile sub-sector under AGOA?
2. What are the challenges the factories faces to implement AGOA initiative?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study area, Tigray region, is purposively selected due to financial and time constraints. In addition, the region is among the highest cotton producing regions in Ethiopia. The research used both qualitative and quantitative data types. With regard to data sources, the research used both primary and secondary source of data were used. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaire and interview from the two textile factories (MAA and Almeda Garment and textile Factory). Secondary data were collected from the textile factories 2007/8-2011/12 annual reports, audit reports, Ministry of Trade and Industry annual reports/magazines, and USAID-AGOA reports. Data were coded, entered into computer and processed by using the software SPSS version 16 and excel was employed. Next, the result obtained was descriptively discussed. Then, the analyzed data were presented by graphs, tables, frequency count, percentage and mean. The interview questions were analysed using the qualitative method.

DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 1: MAA GARMENT & TEXTILE FACTORY EXPORT SALES (IN BIRR) TO USA UNDER AGOA AND ITS ANNUAL GROWTH RATE



Source: MAA Garment & Textile factory and Almeda Textile factory profile, 2013

ALMEDA AND MAA GARMENT & TEXTILE FACTORY

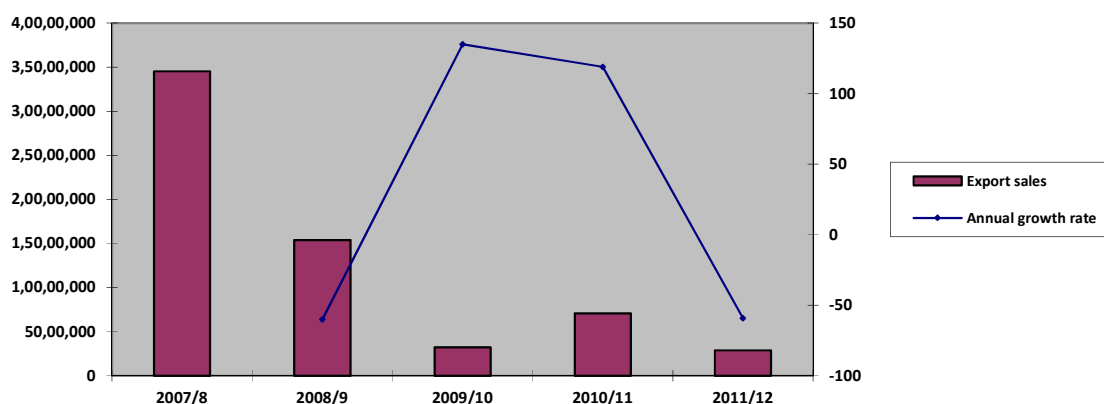
TABLE 1: ANNUAL EXPORT SALES GROWTH TO USA UNDER AGOA AND TO OTHER COUNTRIES 2007/08-2011/12

Factory name	Export (birr)	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
Almeda Textile PLC	Total Export sales	28,738,790.00	18,626,130.18	19,226,085.00	42,062,799.00	19,988,299.00
	Export to USA-AGOA	3,420,714.86	1,371,368.33	3,228,415.49	7,076,785.28	2,894,018.25
	Annual growth rate (%)		(60)	135	119	(59)
	Annual average growth Rate (%)	33.75				
	Other countries (EU, China, Africa)	25,318,076	17,254,761.85	15,997,669.5	34,986,013.72	17,094,280.75
	Annual average growth Rate (%)		(31)	(7.2)	118.6	(51)
MAA Garment and Textile factory	Total Export sales	3,068,682.00	3,304,770.00	18,421,283.00	85,288,467.00	118,062,905.80
	Export to USA-AGOA	1,520,300.00	2,370,000.00	4,526,320.00	2,432,430.00	3,270,000.00
	Annual growth rate (%)		56	91	(46)	34
	Annual average growth Rate (%)	33.70				
	Other countries (EU, China, Africa)	1,548,382.00	934,770.00	13,894,963.00	82,856,037.00	114,792,905.8
	Annual growth rate (%)		(39.6)	13.86	4.96	38
	Annual average growth Rate (%)	14.2				

Source: Computed from Almeda Textile factory and MAA Garment and textile factory annual report, 2013

The above figure shows that the factory increased its annual growth rate in 2008/9 by 56% taking annual growth rate 2007/8 as a base year. Furthermore, in 2009/10 the annual growth rate increased to 91%. However, in 2010/11 the export performance of the factory has declined to 46%. Finally, in the year 2011/12 the annual export growth rate increased by 34%. So the performance of the factory fluctuates from year to year and has shown an average of 33.7% annual growth rate. Furthermore, the reason for the highest performance of 2008/9 and 2009/10 has been confirmed by key informant of the study that it is due to the expansion and exportation of semi-finished and finished yarn and fabric products. So, the data revealed that the overall export performance of the factory to USA is shown to be low and with high fluctuation. The interview conducted with the selected department indicates that the main reasons for low export are lack of marketing skill, and AGOA information, and unable to compete in price with other competitors.

FIGURE 2: ALMEDA TEXTILE FACTORY EXPORT SALES (IN BIRR) TO USA UNDER AGOA AND ITS ANNUAL GROWTH RATE



Source: Almeda Textile Factory, 2013

CHALLENGES FACING THE FACTORIES TO IMPLEMENT AGOA

Literatures show lack of producing quality product and exporting to the international market is one of the main challenges facing the Ethiopian factories. Challenges face SSA AGOA beneficiaries are strong environmental and sanitary standards (Mold, 2005). Inefficient production management skill; insufficient skilled of labor; quality, and insufficient AGOA market information (Mulagwe, 2004). So with this objective the questions were prepared in relation to quality, credit access, market information, non tariff barriers and management attitude and commitment.

TABLE 2: FACTORIES PRODUCT QUALITY

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.2. Products are produced based on the given specification & standard	Strongly disagree	3	3.7	3.21
	Disagree	33	40.2	
	Undecided	6	7.3	
	Agree	23	28.0	
	Strongly agree	17	20.7	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.2. There is strong internal quality management in the factory	Strongly disagree	5	6.1	2.9
	Disagree	39	47.6	
	Undecided	9	11	
	Agree	16	19.5	
	Strongly agree	13	15.9	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.2. Focus on minimizing operational deficiency	Strongly disagree	3	3.7	3.19
	Disagree	21	25.6	
	Undecided	23	28.0	
	Agree	27	32.9	
	Strongly agree	8	9.8	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.2. There is skilled manpower in our factory	Strongly disagree	4	4.9	3.01
	Disagree	40	48.8	
	Undecided	4	4.9	
	Agree	19	23.2	
	Strongly agree	15	18.3	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

Majority of the respondents agree that the qualities of products in the factories are poor. The finding is also consistent with a research finding conducted by Amare (2006) in model development of quality management system for Ethiopian textile industry: that there is poor resource utilization, low quality, scarcity of raw material supply, and weak performance of products.

TABLE 3: CREDIT ACCESS

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.3 Credit Access/finance Free from bureaucratic procedures and red-tap	Strongly disagree	8	9.8	2.79
	Disagree	31	37.8	
	Undecided	18	22.0	
	Agree	20	24.4	
	Strongly agree	5	6.1	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.3 Financial institution's policy & readiness to provide credit on time	Strongly disagree	6	7.3	3.00
	Disagree	27	32.9	
	Undecided	15	18.3	
	Agree	29	35.4	
	Strongly agree	5	6.1	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.3 Limited credit and foreign exchange	Strongly disagree	6	7.3	3.26
	Disagree	12	14.6	
	Undecided	23	28.0	
	Agree	36	43.9	
	Strongly agree	5	6.1	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

The above table result shows the respondents agree that there is credit access. However, the amount of credit is not sufficient and there is limited access of foreign currency. The research output is consistent with the research finding conducted by Rahel (2007) on challenges and opportunities on AGOA the case of Ethiopian textile industry. It revealed that bureaucracy, delay, and very long processing time negatively influence export performance.

TABLE 4: MARKET INFORMATION

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.4 Market information Availability of updated global market information	Strongly disagree	13	15.9	2.65
	Disagree	29	35.4	
	Undecided	20	24.4	
	Agree	13	15.9	
	Strongly agree	7	8.5	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.4 The factory produces customer-oriented products on time	Strongly disagree	4	4.9	2.95
	Disagree	35	42.7	
	Undecided	15	18.3	
	Agree	17	20.7	
	Strongly agree	11	13.4	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.4 High global bargaining power of factory marketing expert/manager	Strongly disagree	6	7.3	2.63
	Disagree	39	47.6	
	Undecided	19	23.2	
	Agree	15	18.3	
	Strongly agree	3	3.7	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

The majority of the respondents confirm that there is insufficient availability of global market information, inability to produce customer-oriented product on time, and weak bargaining power of marketing expert/manager in the factories. Lack of market information and the ability to use the USA market and failure to be competitive in the international market affects the performance of the factory negatively (Chatima, 2007). So it is consistent with this finding.

TABLE 5: AGOA PROGRAM

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.5 Is more complex and difficult to implement by our factory	Strongly disagree	11	13.4	3
	Disagree	16	19.5	
	Undecided	21	25.6	
	Agree	32	39.0	
	Strongly agree	2	2.4	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.5 Is highly linked with governmental policy	Strongly disagree	3	3.7	3.63
	Disagree	11	13.4	
	Undecided	12	14.6	
	Agree	43	52.4	
	Strongly agree	13	15.9	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.5 program is uncertain its continuity	Strongly disagree	3	3.7	3.43
	Disagree	16	19.5	
	Undecided	16	19.5	
	Agree	36	43.9	
	Strongly agree	11	13.4	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

Regarding the AGOA program the respondents confirm that the program is highly linked with government policy, it is more difficult to implement the opportunity, and uncertain continuity of the opportunity. The finding of the study is consistent with government policy and AGOA conditionality (Rahel, 2007). Many political and economical preconditions are incorporated in the agreement (AGOA, 2004).

TABLE 6: NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.6 Our factory are unable to fulfill the required US quality standards	Strongly disagree	9	11.0	3.01
	Disagree	23	28.0	
	Undecided	14	17.1	
	Agree	30	36.6	
	Strongly agree	6	7.3	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.6 Non tariff barriers :US safety and sanitary are more challenge for your factory	Strongly disagree	5	6.1	3.17
	Disagree	26	31.7	
	Undecided	9	11.0	
	Agree	34	41.5	
	Strongly agree	8	9.8	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

Majority of the respondents believe that the non-tariff barriers challenge the factories to fulfill US standard. In addition, the majority of the respondents agree that the US safety and sanitary standards are strong challenge for their factories. The reason why the US safety and sanitary standards are challenges for the factories is due to their poor quality and low competence in the international market (Rahel, 2007). So this is similar with the findings of this research.

TABLE 7: MANAGEMENT ATTITUDE AND COMMITMENT

Description	Responses	Frequency	Percent	Mean
4.7 The factory's management are free from corruption	Strongly disagree	18	22.0	2.5
	Disagree	27	32.9	
	Undecided	20	24.4	
	Agree	12	14.6	
	Strongly agree	5	6.1	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.7 In our factory there is high and vulnerability procedure to corruption	Strongly disagree	12	14.6	2.76
	Disagree	27	32.9	
	Undecided	17	20.7	
	Agree	20	24.4	
	Strongly agree	6	7.3	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.7 The sales and tender activities of the factory is transparent and modern	Strongly disagree	7	8.5	2.82
	Disagree	34	41.5	
	Undecided	13	15.9	
	Agree	22	26.8	
	Strongly agree	6	7.3	
	Total	82	100.0	
4.7 Deal to improve the infrastructure with government	Strongly disagree	8	9.8	3.02
	Disagree	23	28.0	
	Undecided	15	18.3	
	Agree	31	37.8	
	Strongly agree	5	6.1	
	Total	82	100.0	

Source: own survey, 2013

The above table shows there is lack of transparent sales and tender activities of the factory, the management of factories deals with government officials regarding infrastructure facilities and other challenges facing the sector. Basically, in Ethiopia, the electric, internet services, road and other basic infrastructure are owned by the government. The finding is similar with the research conducted on Ethiopian textile sector challenges and lack of paved communication infrastructure and internet services (Admaw, 2010).

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

Export performance of the factories to US under AGOA in 2007/8 was 4,941,014.86 Birr and has increased to 6,164,018.25 Birr in 2011/12. Nevertheless, comparing with the huge US market it is very low or the factories are not exploiting the opportunity given by US government.

The main challenges are insufficient supply of accessories, low operation management skills, insufficient of AGOA information, lack of effective marketing skill, quality, price, nontariff barriers, and delay in delivery. The finding shows there is insufficient awareness, lack of global market skills, and linkage of the factories with international market. Furthermore, they have a problem in searching potential customers throughout the world, visit to other international business operation and increase the export sales volume.

To increase the export performance of the textile industry; credit access is very important. So the government is better to facilitate the way of credit delivery on time by minimizing unnecessary bureaucracy and red-tap and maximize the amount of credit they required to achieve their objective. To improve the performance of textile factory, there should be improvement in marketing, imported accessory, sufficient quality of cotton supply, committed management, skilled manpower, closely relationship with the government in order to solve immediate challenges faces. To be competitive in terms of price, the factories should be more committed and improve management operation skills, decrease operation cost, in the overall factory performance. So they should focus on maximizing production efficiency and apply kaizen methods.

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