The Effect of The Relationship Between Social Responsibility and Confidence on Corporate Reputation

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Abstract

In terms of gaining a competetive advantage in a globalized economy, reputation is currently considered to be increasingly significant. Corporate reputation consists of a number of factors including people's general views, experiences and perceptions and it takes corporations a considerable length of time to build a good reputation, however, a reputation can also be damaged or even destroyed in a very short time. Corporations which are aware of this fact undertake corporate communications practices and develop strategies that create and maintain mutual understanding among shareholders to protect and provide sustainability. The most important strategic asset increasing the success of corporate reputation is foundations. In today's competitive environment in which corporate communication is planned very carefully, a corporation's reputation being built upon trust is of vital importance. In the process of building corporate reputation in which different components have different roles, social responsibility has a vital function. Thanks to the social service projects, corporations send the message that their main aim is not to earn money but to share what they gain with their target group and to pay attention to the needs of its target group. In this study, the relationship between social responsibility and confidence will be analysed and, from the aspect of corporate reputation, the relationship of social responsibility and confidence will be emphasized in terms of their contribution to corporate reputation.

Keywords: corporate reputation, social responsibility, confidence

บทคัดย่อ

ในยุคโลกาภิวัฒน์ที่ความได้เปรียบเสียเปรียบมีผลต่อการแข่งขันทางธุรกิจ องค์กรต่างๆ จึงให้ความสำคัญกับการรักษาชื่อเสียงเพิ่มมากขึ้น การรักษาชื่อเสียงจำเป็นต้องอาศัยปัจจัยต่างๆ ได้แก่ มุมมองทั่วไปของสาธารณะ ประสบการณ์ และ ภาพลักษณ์ซึ่งใช้เวลาค่อนข้างยาวนานในการสั่งสมชื่อเสียงที่ดี แต่ก็สามารถเสียหายได้ในเวลาอันสั้น องค์กรที่มีความตระหนักในเรื่องดังกล่าวจึงปฏิบัติการณ์ทางการสื่อสาร และพัฒนายุทธศาสตร์ที่จะเสริมสร้างและรักษาไว้ซึ่งความเข้าใจร่วมกันของผู้ถือหุ้น เพื่อป้องกันลำรงความยั่งยืน กลยุทธ์ที่สำคัญที่สุดที่จะเพิ่มความสำเร็จของการรักษาชื่อเสียงองค์กรจึงอยู่ที่รากฐาน ในสภาวะที่มีการแข่งขันสูงอย่างปัจจุบัน องค์กรจำต้องวางแผนการสื่อสารองค์กรอย่างระมัดระวัง เพราะว่า ชื่อเสียงขององค์กรนั้นวางอยู่บนพื้นฐานของความเชื่อมั่นซึ่งมีความสำคัญมาก การธำรงรักษาชื่อเสียงที่องค์ประกอบต่างๆ ล้วนมีบทบาทที่หลากหลายนั้น จำเป็นต้องอาศัยการขับเคลื่อนโดยใช้แนวคิดเรื่องความรับผิดชอบทางสังคม โครงการบริการทางสังคมเหล่านี้เปิดโอกาสให้องค์กรสามารถสื่อสารกับสังคมได้ว่า องค์กรไม่ได้มุ่งเน้นผลกำไรแต่เพียงอย่างเดียว แต่ยังแบ่งปันผลประโยชน์และใส่ใจต่อความต้องการของสังคมอีกด้วย งานวิจัยนี้ วิเคราะห์ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความรับผิดชอบทางสังคมและความมั่นใจขององค์กร โดยพิจารณาจากองค์ประกอบด้านชื่อเสียงองค์กร ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างความรับผิดชอบทางสังคมและความมั่นใจต่อองค์กรว่า ส่งผลต่อชื่อเสียงขององค์กรอย่างไร

คำสำคัญ: ชื่อเสียงองค์กร ความรับผิดชอบทางสังคม ความมั่นใจ

Introduction

With a parallel relationship with corporate performance, corporate reputation has been identified as an "intangible" and a "soft" concept, which provides competitive advantages, and allows organizations to sustain their business. Considering its intangible nature, there has been an increasing interest in the field of corporate reputation. Aydemir (2013) suggests that there is always a risk factor to lose corporate reputation earned throughout the years, and therefore this risk forces organizations to review their corporate communication practices with particular attention paid to reputation (p.122).

Fombrun (1996) defines corporate reputation as a perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future prospects that describe the firm's overall appeal to all its key constituents when compared to other leading rivals (p.72). Following Fombrun's definition, we can say that corporate reputation is an essential asset for organizations, and is earned by virtue of different factors over the long-term.

There are various constituents of corporate reputation such as vision, leadership, financial performance, management, customer orientation, goods and services, trust, ethics, and social responsibility. Furthermore, all of these factors have different roles in the process of building and sustaining corporate reputation. In this context, social responsibility is of particular importance in terms of corporate reputation and contributes to a company's future prospects. The most important benefit of social responsibility is to show the target audience that the principal objective of a company is not only to make profit, but also to evaluate their activities within a transparent and credible framework. Moreover, social responsibility programs allow the target audience to assess the company from different perspective and give credence to the organization. In the process of building corporate reputation, social responsibility and confidence have a close relationship, and make considerable contributions to the company's reputation over the long-term.

The aim of this research is to reveal the perspectives and viewpoints of communication faculty students about the relationship between social responsibility and confidence according to their knowledge, thoughts and experiences and the contribution of this relationship to corporate reputation through focus group interviews.

The Notion of "Corporate Reputation"

In today's globalized and increasingly competitive environment, recent advances in the field of information and communications technologies (ICTs) seem to eliminate many differences between organizations. Therefore, organizations expend more effort to stand out from their rivals by employing different corporate reputation practices, and creating new values to sustain their business. Furthermore, organizations have raised the awareness of reputation, and have been positioning themselves in accordance with the requirements of today's globalized and changing world. This changing environment has an impact on the attitudes and preferences of internal and external stakeholders. In this respect, corporate reputation can be defined as a general assessment of internal and external stakeholders over a period of time, and includes the experiences of stakeholders, the communicative process between organizations and stakeholders, and finally the perceptions of all relevant parties (Aydemir, 2013, p.122).

In addition to this, corporate reputation appears to have a strategic place in the organization-stakeholder relationship, and takes on an essential role which is perceived as "different" by the stakeholders. There is a wide-range of definitions of corporate reputation. However, before proceeding to discuss these definitions, it is necessary to define the notion of "reputation".

The notion of reputation derives its origin from two main concepts, i.e., "credibility" and "trust". In particular, "credibility" means the capacity to manipulate emerging from the information or the skills that are inherited or presumed to be

inherited. On the other hand, "trust" describes confidence in the accuracy and honesty of a person or an organization's activities (Budd, 1995). As Budd states, "reputation is the collective outcome of building *trust* and gaining *credibility*." It is also worth mentioning that there seems to be a lack of consensus among scholars when defining corporate reputation. As Barnett, Jermier and Lafferty (2006) state, "It would be inaccurate to claim that there is something of an emerging consensus among researchers when it comes to defining corporate reputation because many do not appear to define the term or do not appear to be aware of how others are handling the concept" (p.35). Dowling (2001) defines this notion as the attributed values (such as authenticity, honesty, responsibility and integrity) evoked by the company (p.19). On the other hand, Fombrun (1996) describes corporate reputation as the good or bad, strong or weak, and emotional or influential reactions of customers, investors, employees and the community (p.37).

Nowadays, companies have been exerting more effort than in the past to sustain their existence in the marketplace, compete with their rivals, and create differences. The success of an organization is generally dependent upon its corporate reputation. It is claimed that an influential communication process is required to build a strong reputation (Aydemir, 2013, p.122). Moreover, as Jorgensen and Isaksson (2008) point out, strong corporate reputations clearly result from a mixture of a company's actual performance in the marketplace and their efforts to nurture positive perceptions among key audiences of their corporate behaviour, attitudes and values (p.366).

Similarly, Chun (2005) describes corporate reputation as the perceptions of all stakeholders of an organization; that is, what customers, employees, suppliers, managers, creditors, media and communities believe the organization stands for, and the associations they make with it (p.105). It could therefore be claimed that "a firm's reputation is produced by the interactions of the firm with its stakeholders and its actions circulated among stakeholders, including specialised information intermediaries" (Deephouse, 2000, p.1093), e.g., the media. In consideration of these intermediaries and the information received from the media, corporate reputation can

provide a strategic perspective to companies for the future, and enables them to evaluate their activities from different angles.

Companies are required to establish a strong infrastructure, and compose a strategic plan in order to have an influential corporate reputation. There are various components that need to be mentioned in the process of building corporate reputation. As Okay and Okay (2007) put forward:

1. Corporate communication and identity
2. Social responsibility
3. The role of the chief executive officer (CEO) (p.382).

In addition to this, corporate reputation has been known as one of the most important strategic values for companies (Flanagan & O'Shaughnessy, 2005, p.445). Corporate reputation might result in companies to act in a rational manner because all relevant stakeholders, e.g., investors and customers, continuously evaluate a firm's reputation. Therefore, this notion can become the most crucial asset of a company in hard times. Corporate reputation also minimizes the risks of organizations, and meets the expectations of the stakeholders. It is thus considered as one of the most influential strategic value, which fosters the success of organizations. Further, considering its advantages, corporate reputation is claimed to raise the awareness and the performance of organizations (Aydemir, 2013, p.122). As already mentioned, the fact that corporate reputation boosts performance and raises the awareness of target audience, companies not only move ahead of their rivals, but also receive positive feedback from the stakeholders. For this reason, it could be argued that the main functions of corporate reputation are to make companies measurable, and enable them to reach their goals. With regard to the above discussion, corporate reputation plays a key role with companies.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Social responsibility lies in the fact that companies should focus not only on their interests, but also on the community; have an interest not only in their main responsibilities, but also the social problems, and predict the results of their own actions. It is also argued that companies can create a positive image when they are aware of their responsibilities (Peltekoglu, 2004, p.168). Moreover, social responsibility has an important function to improve the relationships and the communication between companies and the stakeholders. In particular, there are different factors, i.e., the close interaction with the environment, changes in the community, and expectations that lead companies to act in parallel with the requirements of social responsibility (Peltekoglu, 2004, p.173). Therefore, the responsibilities that companies are expected to accomplish in the interests of society are assembled under the banner of "social responsibility". It is suggested that the companies aware of the importance of this notion can not only enter into new fields, but also gain a competitive advantage by improving their corporate image (Bayraktaroglu, Ilter, & Tanyeri, 2009).

It is presumably a well-known fact that social responsibility has become a competitive advantage in today's world. Moreover, there are various factors that enhance the importance of social responsibility as follows: development of professional management, increase in the number of aggregate corporations united by small businesses, pollution prevention, companies' need for leaving a good impression, development of labour unions, reduced depletion of natural resources, need to foster employee motivation, increasing need for goods and services supply that meet community expectations, and finally contributing to globalization and democracy process (Eren, 2000, p.111).

In today's business environment, CSR is increasingly becoming a more important moral way for entrepreneurs to achieve not only financial, but also sustainable social and environmental success (Hennigfeld, Pohl, & Tolhurst, 2006). In this respect, CSR can therefore best be described as an approach which enables the

organization to assess the environmental, financial and social implications of their activities, to minimize the negative results, and, more importantly, to develop both the organization itself and the community (Chandler, 2004, p.11).

Recently, CSR has been considered as one of the most influential strategic policies for organizations, and put into practice systematically. Historically, CSR has been discussed within a broad spectrum and there are different approaches to it. For instance, Friedman defines social responsibility as a destructive doctrine in a free society. On the other hand, there are researchers such as Archie Carroll who consider that social responsibility cannot only include profit motive, but also legal, moral and discretional expectations at a given point in time (May, Cheney, & Roper, 2007, p.6). In the past, customer opinions were traditionally claimed to be influenced by product features, however, CSR is becoming an important factor with an impact on customer decisions (Dawkins & Lewis, 2003).

In addition to this, it is argued that there is a strong interaction between companies and their customers (Friedman & Miles, 2006). Compared with the traditional elements of corporate reputation, social responsibility has a distinct role to build and sustain trust in today's business environment. It is possible to suggest that CSR programs consider the needs of the stakeholders. These programs draw attention to the unpredictability of investments and business activities, and the importance of the social environment. They can also demonstrate that community expectations are dependent upon a sustainable relationship with the business world. Likewise, CSR programs meet the community needs and provide new opportunities to the organizations with respect to ethical values and fundamental human rights.

The increasing number of large and supranational companies are becoming recognized as potentially damaging to local communities. However, there is also an increase in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that aim to protect the environment and the human rights. Thus, it could be argued that CSR programs have begun to accomplish different purposes compared to the past. In other words, many NGOs have an efficient organizational structure with different multinational

memberships and are able to lead companies to focus on environmental issues (Owen, 2002, p.3).

Further to this, the impact of companies on the environmental and social welfare is another reason to leave a good impression on the community, and CSR is an essential element of an influential business management. In connection with the quality of business management, the main target of companies appears not only to be the supply of goods and services, but also to meet the social needs of the community. Therefore, the notion of CSR might give the message that the quality of business management is more important than financial performance from the point of the stakeholders. Further, the achieved quality is expected to be used in accordance with stakeholders' expectations and in the interests of the stakeholders.

Considering ethical values, CSR programs can improve standards of living, provide moral and material support, create a positive impression on stakeholders, and finally build trust towards the companies.

Recently, many companies have implemented a range of CSR programs to improve the welfare of the society and increase competition to move ahead of their rivals. The practice of CSR for a better society and environment provide opportunities for the companies. These voluntary contributions can also strengthen relationships with stakeholders. As a result, the social and environmental concerns would be minimized thanks to the interaction between companies and the stakeholders. It is possible to describe CSR as a progress guide for a company's future activities which will create a positive impression over the long-term.

The Issue of "Confidence" in Corporate Reputation

There is presumably a strong link between effective communication and "confidence". Building confidence allows people to make voluntary contributions, boost their energy, foster employee motivation, and shape the perspectives of the

stakeholders. The effective and strategic use of "confidence" in companies also makes everything much easier. The parties can communicate with each other without any concern by building confidence. It could therefore be argued that the essence of life is built on "confidence". In any relationships throughout life, building confidence eliminates prejudices and provides considerable advantages to organizations.

In this respect, whilst the success of organizations is built on corporate reputation, corporate reputation is built on trust. Today, the goods, the services and the performance of many organizations appear to be similar to each other. However, corporate reputation has become an important differentiating and thus competitive factor. Building trust in corporate reputation could make organizations distinct from their rivals. It could be assumed that there is a direct correlation between corporate reputation and trust. Moreover, transparency is another important value which has a positive impact on the organization-stakeholder relationship. It is suggested that trust is an essential element of corporate reputation and gives credibility, which, in turn, allows organizations to have a responsible communication over the long-term (Aydemir, 2013, p.122).

Building the confidence of the target audience might reduce the organization costs and enable organizations to monitor their audience. In a broad sense, the achieved trust encourages service suppliers, employees and customers to count on the organization and creates a good will in hard times. Confidence not only shapes the activities, decisions and perceptions of the target audience, but also allows both the organization and its target audience to take mutual decisions.

In order not to lose trust, companies should give persuasive and consistent messages to internal and external stakeholders in any aspect, and review the feedback with a particular attention on innovation. Further, a good reputation does not necessarily mean that all activities of organizations receive positive feedback from the target audience. Therefore, organizations are expected to know how they are perceived by their audience and determine the most appropriate methods in detail to accomplish their goals. Otherwise, their activities may receive negative feedback,

which, in turn, creates an issue of trust and impedes investment growth (Aydemir, 2013, p.123).

It is important for companies to set "confidence" as a central element of their investments. As mentioned, building trust drives the target audience to have positive perceptions about the company. This also makes customer-focused investments more explicit and comprehensible.

It could be argued that trustworthy organizations create differences. These organizations have a consistent image and give the impression to their stakeholders that they consider target audience expectations. Thus, it is important to build corporate reputation in terms of trust.

Problem of the Research

Many companies are reverting back to corporate responsibility as a strategy to win back the trust of its stakeholders and customers. It is quite promising to see companies think about the common good of the communities in which they operate. Social responsibility allows companies to create a dialogue with its customers and stakeholders and carries them to success. For example, Walmart is a company that has arrived at this conclusion and they take the relationship between social responsibility and trust into consideration (Jarvis, 2009).

A good company builds trusts and reputation. Social responsibility increases stakeholders' trust in the company and creates a positive effect on the company's reputation with their help (Godelnik, 2013). For example, Wells Fargo offers educational tools and programs free of charge in order to build financial management skills of all age groups, economic classes and ethnic groups. This awareness is seen as a win-win (The Halo Effect, n.d.).

Consumers have a range of barnd options to choose from and consumers compare more than a product's reputation, quality and price. According to a study by <u>Reputation Institute</u>, a private global consulting firm based in New York, people's willingness to buy, recommend, work for, and invest in a company is driven 60 percent by people's perceptions of the company—or its reputation, and only 40 percent by people's perceptions of the products or services it sells (Smith, 2013, p.1) .

To find which companies have the very best reputations, the Reputation Institute invited more than 55,000 consumers across 15 markets to participate in a study between January 2013 and February 2013 that ranked the world's 100 most reputable companies—all multinational businesses with a global presence. The study has assigned a point which represents an average measurement of people's emotions. These points were calculated by using four emotional indicators: trust, respect, admiration and feel good. Analysis showed that 41 percent of how people feel about a company is based on their perceptions of the firm's CSR practices (Smith, 2013, p.1).

Relating to the subject, Kasper Ulf Nielsen, executive partner at Reputation Institute said that "CSR speaks to who the company is, what it believes in and how it is doing business." Nielsen also said that "it's a core element of reputation and can be used to help establish trust and goodwill amongst stakeholders. [Almost half] of people's willingness to trust, admire, and feel good about a company is based on their perceptions of the corporate social responsibility of the company, so this is a key tool for companies to use to improve support from stakeholders like consumers, regulators, financial community, and employees" (Smith, 2013, p.1).

Microsoft was ranked first in this study conducted by the Reputation Institute. Lori Forte Harnick, genereal manager of citizenship and public affarirs at Microsoft, stated that "we are always honored to receive recognition for our CSR efforts and initiatives." Harnick also stated that "being a responsible global corporate citizen is a critical part of Microsoft's culture and business at all levels of the company. We take our responsibilities to the public seriously and believe it's more important than ever to serve the needs of people in communities worldwide" (Smith, 2013, p.2).

We can see a relationship between trust, social responsibility and reputation as evident in said examples, study results and interviews. Unfortunately, there are no clear and informative studies on this subject. New studies are crucial for accessing true and correct information and obtain findings about the subject. Based on these findings, the study of this subject has become necessary.

The basic problem addressed by the current research is whether social responsibility work has a supportive aspect in terms of creating confidence in the target group or not and whether the relationship between social responsibility and confidence has a contribution to corporate reputation during the corporate process. The current research will attempt to bridge an important gap as well as contribute to this field of research. Using the focus group interview, which is a qualitative research technique, the following questions are intended to be answered by this study.

- Do the organizations create confidence in the target group by carrying out social responsibility work?
- Does the relationship between social responsibility and confidence have a contribution to institutional reputation?

Sampling and Method

In the research, a focus group interview was conducted based on open-ended questions and built on the individual interview method (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Focus group interviews are one of the qualitative research techniques chosen especially from a definite sector to discuss a definite theme or viewpoint and in which the emerging interaction leads to the data and the results (Cohen, Manion, & Marrison, 2000). Today, the focus group interview is used commonly in academic studies (Morgan, 1997; Krueger & Casey, 2000). This method is actually one of the most systematic data collection tools in the social sciences. The detailed data obtained from focus group interviews form a solid basis for one-on-one interviews and surveys (Kitzinger, 1995, p.299-302).

The interview method used in the focus group interview in chat environment is semi-structured. With no configured interview in addition to a configured interview with two predetermined questions, the intention of the interviews was to make discoveries with existing open-ended questions. Thus the interview was conducted with flexibility and was shaped due to the flow of the conversation. The participants were not criticized in any respect; any personal opinion was not stated and any misunderstandings were attempted to be overcome by the repetition of what was said. The questions were clearly formulated to be readily understood and answered by the participants. An open communication was conducted with group members for 120 minutes in total. Thirty people were selected from students in 4th class in the Faculty of Communication with participants that shared common features, namely those with an interest pertaining to the subject under investigation. An environment where the participants felt comfortable to participate in the discussion was selected. The participants were informed about the path to be followed at the beginning of the interview and a preparatory explanation related to the subject was made. The notes taken during the interviews were systematically summarized after the completion of the interviews and the content analyses were performed with the data obtained. In the analysis of the data, attention was paid to the types of expression of the participants, their body language, and the stability of the participants. The stability between the participants' thoughts and that same-similar interpretation was made as part of the careful evaluation process.

Findings

In this section, the findings of the study are discussed and interpreted. In the interview with the participants the two basic research questions were asked. Within this framework, on the basis of the data obtained via the focus group interview, each of the 30 participants' conversations were examined. First of all, which participants answers "yes, partly, no" to the questions was examined.

The number of the participants giving the answer of "yes" to the question "Do the organizations create confidence in the target group by carrying out social responsibility work?" is 28, and the number saying "no" is two. The answer of "partly" was not given. Twenty-eight of the participants giving the answer to the question that "Does the relationship between social responsibility and the confidence have a contribution to institutional reputation?" stated that the relationship between social responsibility and confidence contributes to the institutional reputation.

Most of the participants except for the two negative opinions for the first question stated that institutions create confidence in the target group by carrying out social responsibility work. The participants' comments regarding the institutions carrying out social responsibility work create confidence in target group are outlined as follows: Social responsibility work creates sympathy in the target group; they are beneficial for raising awareness in the society; they are remembered as quality institutions in the minds of the target group and create confidence in the target group. Some of the female participants approached the matter emotionally and stated that the organizations undertaking social responsibility work affect the target group emotionally and so they create confidence in the target group.

Other than these positive comments, two participants stated that institutions create their own advertisements especially under the banner of social responsibility and especially large companies who carry out social responsibility work in order to take on innocent sheath and by doing so covering up the damage they have caused to the environment and human health. At this point, a participant emphasized the damage done by a company to the environment during an oil drilling accident in the ocean. The participant stated that the oil company made several attempts through social responsibility projects to appear innocent, however, these attempts only undermined confidence in the company. Another participant stated that social responsibility projects of institutions do not reveal the truth; they deceive people while recieing a tax exemption and the people who understand this do not trust the social responsibility projects or the institutions undertaking them.

The participants answering the question "Does the relationship between social responsibility and the confidence have a contribution to institutional reputation?" stated that the relationship between social responsibility and confidence contributed to the institutional reputation in a general sense. The participants stated that social responsibility work had contribution to institutional reputation at the same rate as confidence; and they succeeded in building their reputation in their target audiences. The participants emphasized that the institutions undertaking social responsibility work created a positive perception, loyalty towards the institutions, and built a sense of belonging that increased concomitantly with social responsibility and trust and the general interest of the society, which is preserved and developed by social responsibility work.

The participants see social responsibility work as a tool used by institutions to communicate about themselves to society, to stand out from their competitors and come to the forefront compared to their competitors. Some participants stressed that organization show more interest in CSR as they believe they will add a value to the institutions conducting social responsibility activities. As a result the contribution of the relationship between CSR and trust in the global competitive environment is in question.

Some of the participants explained that a project undertaken by Samsung for the hearing impaired created confidence and sympathy to the institution as an example. A participant stated that social responsibility projects are used to affect the society emotionally and so contributed to the trust emerging in the target group regarding the institutional reputation. The participant stating this gave the example of the Vodafone Farmer Club social responsibility project conducted in Turkey sent free weather condition information was sent to hundreds of farmers every day. The participant emphasized that Vodafone achieved success by affecting a large group of society emotionally and thus it gained confidence and increased its own institutional reputation. Another participant also stated that some oil companies tried to remove the problems experienced by traffic congestion with social responsibility projects, and they led these companies to increase confidence and the value of the reputation.

Some participants stated that social responsibility work was used as an effective tool, reducing the cost of the institution in reaching the customer and as an obligation, not an option. They emphasized that the institutions sensitive to the problems of the society created sincere emotions through social responsibility work and thus it also created brand loyalty. CSR work led to the establishment of brand was also evaluated as a strategy in the formation of the confidence.

The participants giving negative answers stated that among the most effective tools at the disposal of institutions are social responsibility projects, but they are undertaken as if without seeking profit, their real aim nevertheless remains to increase profits.

Conclusion

When we evaluate the answers given in the interviews, we see that social responsibility work builds confidence in the target group and the relationship between social reliability and confidence contributes to institutional reputation. In the study it was found that a negative viewpoint remains at very low level. The interviewees who approached this subject negatively state that social responsibility work does not reveal the truth and the main objective of the institutions is profit and that CSR only seves as an advertisement. The participants with a positive approach stressed public interest, brand and competition in terms of institutional reputation. As already mentioned, corporate reputation creates brand trust, provides competitiveness and raises awareness. This notion is comprised of the perceptions of and the expectations towards the organizations. Corporate reputation enables companies to have a permanent place in the market industry, and compete with their rivals efficiently. Further, corporate reputation is used in parallel with the strategic targets of the organizations. The effective use of corporate reputation facilitates communication with internal and external stakeholders, and creates a positive image of the organization's agenda and mission.

As an intangible and a soft asset, corporate reputation is comprised of variable and relative evaluations. In this particular context, building trust is the main factor which eliminates variable and relative perceptions, and places importance on the main objectives of the organizations. A reliable corporate reputation makes significant contributions to the organizations. In this sense, Walmart can be given as an example. According to Walmart 2014 Global Responsibility report, Walmart is continuing to increase its reputation with environmental and social responsibility work at thousands of stores. According to the report, Walmart's social responsibility work is for building trust with stakeholders and the target group (Walmart, 2014). The answers and samples given by the participants of this study support the explanations including confidence and social responsibility in Walmart's 2014 Global Responsibility.

In order to build trust, it is important to use CSR programs effectively. These activities can change the perspectives of the customers, shareholders, rivals, trade bodies, other companies and influential people in the marketplace towards the organizations. In this regard, several companies see institutional social responsibility as a strategy to gain the customers' and stakeholders' confidence (Jarvis, 2009). When research results were evaluated, the participants also were shown to view social responsibility as a strategy for building institutional reputation.

It could be claimed that the CSR programs are perceived as an extra cost and burden for many organizations. However, considering their possible benefits, the extra cost required to carry out these programs seems to be rather minimal. It should also be borne in mind that CSR programs establish an effective communication with internal and external stakeholders, provide the most appropriate and expected performance results, and create a sustainable company image. In this respect, it is necessary to identify the possible contributions emerging from the relationship between the CSR activities and building trust. Research results reveal that confidence and social responsibility contribute to institutional reputation equally and social responsibility is used as an advertisement and its return to the institutions is positive.

When we look at the findings, social responsibility work being for the benefit of society is one of the factors creating loyalty and increasing a sense of belonging in target groups towards the institutions. CSR programs with a particular attention on public welfare create a reliable corporate reputation. It is necessary for organizations to understand that there is a direct proportion relationship between social responsibility and trust, because the financial goals and concerns of an organization may not be sufficient for their sustainability.

Moreover, companies which are aware of community expectations build influential image via CSR programs. It is also possible for these companies to be perceived as trustful by their internal and external stakeholders. They create a warm atmosphere by increasing enthusiasm and credibility towards themselves. These companies also demonstrate that their services are supplied in the interests of the community. They give the message that their main target is not to make profit, but to share what they have earned with the community.

In particular, it is important for organizations to link CSR programs with the expenditure and income approach. This practice would show that they are concerned with social and environmental problems, and provide finance for the relevant fields. In the long-term, these practices build trust towards the company. It should also be borne in mind that the notion of trust is a crucial factor in determining stakeholders' decisions.

Above all, there has been an increasing interest in corporate reputation among the organizations thanks to environmental and social factors. CSR programs have become more important in the global marketplace, and organizations are expected to build trust and raise awareness in today's competitive environment. In order to accomplish this, corporate reputation should have a strong foundation, which then makes CSR programs indispensable from business activities. From these research findings, it should be stated that there is a balanced and parallel relationship between institutional social responsibility and confidence and for this reason, confidence

contributes to institutional reputation by creating loyalty and an integration process in the target group towards the institution.

Implications

Social responsibility plays a crucial role in building and sustaining trust in corporate reputation. This notion is considered as one of the main philosophical values of an organization, and means that organizations are aware of the responsibilities towards the community. The organizations that place importance on social responsibility generally consider the requirements of the stakeholders. It could be claimed that social responsibility programs send specific messages to the target audience and create a mutual communication between the parties. Aydemir (2013) suggests that organizations share their profit with their audience by means of the CSR programs (p.122-123). Aydemir (2013) further observes that these programs significantly improve the image and the corporate reputation of organizations. It is probable that these programs allow the target audience to understand the organizations' concern for their environment and community, and put "confidence" in the first place of their perceptions (p.122-123).

The CSR programs have a decisive role on the companies' objectives related with human resources and relationships with the environment. In addition to this, the companies that are aware of social expectations can create trust with stakeholders. In connection with advancing information technology, the organizations with an interest in social responsibility appear to set aside their concerns about profit and create an image of a "global corporate citizen". It is possible to describe these organizations as "responsible corporate citizens". These organizations are willing to take responsibility for "performing in accordance with the social interests". As a result, they can create difference in terms of credibility and gain advantages in favour of them.

In this particular context, it can be difficult for the companies, which focus on raising social awareness, to achieve success without building trust. With regard to

corporate reputation, CSR programs show that a company can perform in an honest and reliable way. They may also give the message that their expenditures have social benefits and the target audience is taken into account by the company. Building corporate reputation can be a long process; however it can be lost unexpectedly. CSR programs, therefore, are put into practice in order to not to lose corporate reputation, and allow the companies to share their profit with stakeholders. When companies are at risk, the achieved trust would change disadvantages into the advantages.

In today's world, costly and further investments seem to be insufficient to build a good reputation. Thus, CSR programs would raise the trust of internal and external stakeholders towards companies. It may also be easier to accomplish these costly and further investments by building trust. CSR programs are rather important to establish and sustain communication, and to create corporate reputation in a reliable way. Building trust is presumably the key to accomplish this process. In today's business world with a continuous demand and work flow, it is possible for companies to show stakeholders that ethical values are taken into account by means of building trust and CSR programs.

In the process of establishing corporate reputation, CSR programs enable companies to use their resources efficiently and in the interest of the community. The possible benefits of these programs would also be used for future generations. CSR programs improve a company's credibility in the society, and this credibility creates a positive image of the company's business management. As a result, the company is able to represent itself as a "responsible" organization. These programs lay a firm foundation for corporate reputation. CSR programs with a particular interest in public welfare would create an environmentally friendly and community-focused image. This might also makes a company responsible and trustworthy.

It could be argued that we are living in an era where the real growth of the companies is not only assessed by profit. In this respect, the social benefits have become an important variable to evaluate companies success. Therefore, the notion of

social responsibility has different roles in terms of corporate reputation and builds trust.

The rganizations, which shape their future with the mission of sharing, can protect their work-life balance with the CSR programs. In addition to their financial goals, they appear to be concern with social and environmental issues, and achieve a balance between financial and social values. It can also be possible to show that they are able to establish a strong connection between social responsibility and trust, increase life standards by considering the business and community power, and perform in accordance with ethical values.

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