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The effect of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perception on tourism students' intention to work in sector

Orhan Can Yılmazdoğan^{a*}, Cihan Secilmis^a, Donus Cicek^b

^a *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Eskişehir, Turkey*

^b *Anadolu Üniversitesi, Eskişehir, Turkey*

Abstract

This study aims to determine the corporate social responsibility (CSR) perception of tourism students about the hotels that they are planning to work at in future and the effect of this perception on their intention to work in tourism sector. A questionnaire form is used as a tool in order to gather data which is developed by Carroll (1991) and adopted to Turkish by Caliskan and Unusan (2011). A four dimensional (economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic dimensions) model of corporate social responsibility perception is used on questionnaire. Also a scale which developed by Kusluvan and Kusluvan (2000) is used for measuring the intention to work in sector. The study is conducted with data which is gathered from a total of 565 students who continue their bachelor and associate degrees in universities in Eskişehir. According to the correlation analysis which is conducted in order to determine the relationship between the students' CSR perception and their intention to work in sector, there is a significant and positive relationship between students' intention to work in sector and the subdimensions of CSR which are ethical responsibilities, legal responsibilities, economical responsibilities and philanthropic. On the other hand, regression analysis results indicate that corporate social responsibility perception has an effect on intention to work in sector ($r=,186$) and 3,3% of intention to work in sector could be explained through corporate social responsibility perception.

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* Orhan Can Yılmazdoğan Tel.: +902222393750-1509; fax: +902222290084.

E-mail address: cyilmazdogan@ogu.edu.tr

1. Introduction

One of the most important decisions in human life is job decision. Generally, in this critical decision process which will definitely effect an individual's life in every possible way, school, self-development, family attitude, personality and environment have a great influence (Erdinc & Kahraman, 2012, p. 231). According to a study which conducted in tourism business, decision of studying tourism are effected by personal, demographic, psychological and social factors (Schmidt, 2002, Erdinc & Kahraman, 2012, p. 231). The stage after job decision is the decision to keep doing that profession. Structure of sector and the opportunities for employees which are provided by businesses in sector have an effect on this decision. This opportunities include the position, social opportunities, management structure of firm, firm's attitude to employees, social activities, corporate philosophy and etc. (Pelit & Arslanturk, 2011, p. 164). Education and development opportunities and international opportunities provided by firm and corporate social responsibilities (CSR) have great importance during the process of profession choice of the today's generation and their decision to work. From the perspective of firms, to attract the new generation employees and keeping them have great importance in terms of CSR (Arguden, 2007, p. 40).

2. Literature

Corporate social responsibility is standing out as a concept which is holding a place in both literature and implementation in recent years (Rigby, Mueller & Baker, 2011; Erkman & Sahinoglu, 2012; Coles, Fenclova & Dinan, 2013). With a simple definition, CSR is a concept which firms' are not only economically responsible by producing goods and services but they are also responsible to their employees, to shareholders, to suppliers and most importantly to the society and environment which they exist in (Erkman & Sahinoglu, 2012, p. 268).

Tourism industry is an industry which contains a variety of stakeholders and employees. While tourism sector is encouraging many people to join the sector with its wide job and career opportunities (Leiper, 1999, p. 605), on the other hand it is a sector that majority of the people who studied or still studying tourism are not willing to work in (Erdem, 2010). Earlier studies (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Pelit & Gucer, 2006; Roney & Oztin, 2007) points out that students who recently joined the sector and students with experience have different opinions. Common finding of these studies is that students who graduate from tourism are intent to choose another sector for their career (Duman, Tepeci & Unur, 2006, p. 52). The reasons are stated as low wages and inconvenient work hours, lack of job definition and vocational standarts, negative experiences during training periods, student's tourism field choice despite their unwillingness, long work hours and low social status of profession (Cati & Bilgin, 2013, p. 25). Tourism sector should retain its employees in sector in order to sustain its current importance in future.

A number of studies are conducted about students' attitudes towards tourism sector (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000; Aksu & Koksall, 2005; Duman et al., 2006; Roney & Oztin, 2007). Also there are studies about students' CSR perceptions (Ozalp, Tonus & Sarikaya, 2008; Burcea & Marinescu, 2011). However, there is not a study which focused to determine the effects of these perceptions on students' intention to work in tourism sector. Although students' perception of CSR and its effect on intention to work in tourism sector is not recently studied, it has great importance for the potential work force who will soon be employed by tourism businesses.

3. Literature

CSR concept is getting more attention as the new social developments are occurring and thus firms are putting it to their agenda. CSR concept is first mentioned in Bowen's "The Social Responsibilities of the Businessman" book in 1953 (Turker & Ucar, 2013, p.155). According to Bowen (1953) CSR is managers' way of act by taking society's aims and values into consideration and making their policies accordingly. In other definition Walton (1967) cited about CSR as the "problems that arise when corporate enterprise casts its shadow on the social scene, and the ethical principles that ought to govern the relationship between corporation and society." According to Demir and Songur (1999) CSR is related with firm's strategic approach which is convenient to economic and legal circumstances, work ethic and firm's internal and external stakeholders. With other point of view CSR is the responsibility or

irresponsibility level of firm on how their daily changing strategies affecting their stakeholders and environment (Waddock, 2004).

Carroll (1991) has developed 4 dimensional CSR model. Carroll's CSR pyramid consist of economical responsibility, legal responsibility, ethical responsibility and philanthropic (Carroll, 1991, p. 42). Economical dimension consist lowering operational costs to minimum, being profitable for stakeholders, providing good employment and effective working conditions for employees, looking for new resources and supporting technological development (Caliskan ve Unusan, 2011, p. 157; Cingoz ve Akdogan, 2012, p. 336). Legal responsibility means while the firm fulfilling its economical aims it should be acting according to the laws, rules and regulations of society which it exist in (Ozalp, Tonus, Sarikaya, 2008, p. 73). Ethical responsibility means to act according to unwritten moral values that society espouse (Varol, 2010, p. 56). Philanthropic is defined as charity activities which are done willingly by firm due to society's expectations (Kusku ve Bay, 2012, p. 53).

Firm's responsibility to both internal and external stakeholders has great importance. Employees who are considered as internal stakeholders will evaluate firm by taking objectivity of employee election and performance evaluation processes into consideration (Ozalp, Tonus & Sarikaya, 2008, p. 72). While CSR provides the firm the advantage to retain the current qualified employees it also has effect on attracting the qualified employees to the firm (Aktan & Boru, 2007, p. 30). According to the results of studies in area of social responsibility, these attempts help firms to raise their market share, strengthen their brand position, create better corporate image and effect, lower costs and effect the employees' working intention (Kotler, 2005, p. 10-11)

Students who study in tourism schools which aim to provide qualified workforce for tourism sector are potential employees. In this context, knowing the tourism students' CSR perceptions and their effect on students' intention to work in tourism sector is important in order to recommend to study tourism and work in tourism sector. Otherwise, as a result of lack of qualified workforce it is possible for sector to face a decrease of customer satisfaction. Thus tourism activities in important touristic destinations may face extinction threat (Solmaz ve Erdogan, 2013, p. 559).

4. Methodology

This study aims to determine if the hotel businesses' CSR activities have an influence on tourism students who are considered to be the potential tourism workforce, and if there is an influence to determine its extent. From this point of view, this study attempted to determine the university students' CSR perception and intention to work in sector who study in Eskisehir. For this purpose, bachelor students of Anadolu University Tourism Faculty and Osmangazi University Tourism Faculty and associate degree tourism program students of Anadolu University Eskisehir Vocational College are picked for study. So, study's theoretical population which is determined in terms of time and place concepts (Erdogan, 2003, p. 167), consist of tourism students who study in Eskisehir in February and May 2014. In this context, accessible population consist of Anadolu University Tourism Faculty (701) and Osmangazi University Tourism Faculty (703) and Anadolu University Eskisehir Vocational College tourism program students (189). However, because it was impossible to reach to every student convenience sampling was mandatory. Convenience sampling method is adopted because producing low cost information in a short period of time was also needed. Convenience sampling method is a method that every member can be chosen equally and independently and also not affecting others (Altunisik, et al., 2007, p. 129). Data gathered from 565 students through this method. 153 students of Anadolu University Tourism Faculty, 318 students of Osmangazi University and 94 students of Anadolu University Eskisehir Vocational College Tourism Program have agreed to participate to the study.

A survey form is used as a data collection technique. Survey form was developed by Carrol (1991) and adopted to Turkish by Caliskan and Unusan (2011). Survey form consist of four dimensional social responsibility model which has economical, legal, ethical and philanthropic dimensions. Also Kusluvan and Kusluvan's (2000) scale is used in survey in order to measure the intention to work in sector. Analysis of data is conducted by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 17.0.1 program.

5. Results

5.1. Findings of demographic variables

When the general characteristics of participants are examined it can be seen that 56,5% of participants were male (319) and 43,5% of them were female (246). A big majority of them have sectoral experience (71,2%) and while 83,4% of them are bachelor degree students 16,6% were continuing to their studies as associate degree students. Additionally 26,2% of participants (148) 1st year student, 28% of participants (158) 2nd year students, 17% of participants (96) 3rd year students and 28,8% of participants (163) were 4th year students. 318 students of Eskisehir Osmangazi University (56,3%) and 153 bachelor degree and 94 associate degree students (43,7%) have participated to the study.

5.2. Findings of correlation analysis

Correlation analysis conducted in order to determine relationship between the students' CSR perceptions and their intention to work in sector who continues to study in Eskisehir.

Table 1. Findings of correlation analysis

	x	s.d.	ER	P	LR	ECR	WI
Ethical Responsibilities (ER)	4,28	0,610	1				
Philanthropic (P)	4,33	0,625	0,771**	1			
Legal Responsibilities (LR)	4,45	0,707	0,748**	0,726**	1		
Economic Responsibilities (ECR)	4,20	0,719	0,751**	0,632**	0,572**	1	
Working Intention (WI)	3,36	1,142	0,173**	0,160**	0,146**	0,200**	1

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

According to the results, there is a significant and positive oriented relationship between CSR's subdimensions of "ethical responsibility" (,173**), "philanthropic" (,160**), "legal responsibility" (0,146**) and "economical responsibility" (,200**). According to this, it is possible to say that as the participants' positive evaluations about ethical, philanthropic, legal and economical responsibility implementations in tourism sector increase, their intention to work in sector will increase as well.

5.3. Findings of correlation analysis

Regression analysis conducted in order to determine the influence of students' CSR perceptions on their intention to work in sector who continues to study in Eskisehir.

Table 2. Findings of regression analysis

Variable	B	Std. Error	β	t	p
Constant	1,782	0,356		5,006	0,000
CSR	0,367	0,082	0,186	4,492	0,013
R= ,186	R ² = ,035	Δ R ² = ,033	Durbin-Watson= 1,938		
F _(1,563) = 20,177	p< 0,001				

According to the regression analysis results, the model which created to predict the intention to work in sector is significant ($p < 0,001$). So, it is possible to say that CSR activities has an influence on intention to work in sector ($r = ,186$); and 3,3% of intention to work in sector can be explained through CSR perception.

6. Discussion

Hotels' existence as businesses may depend on fulfilling their responsibilities to their stakeholders and their environment. Thus, hotels should take their environments and their stakeholders into consideration while they are implementing CSR activities. Additionally, hotels should fulfill their responsibilities to their employees as well as to their customers. Because, these responsibilities may have effects on employee's performance and life quality while they are not at work (Caliskan and Unusan, 2011, p. 164).

In modern times where differentiation is a necessity to get competitive edge, hotel's awareness about CSR implementations is considered as an important differentiation element. In highly competitive environment, hotels not only differentiate themselves by their price, product and service quality but also by creating a business image which represents hotel as a corporate which adopts a social responsibility understanding while operating in market. So, strong image, which occurs as a consequence of social responsibility, puts hotel into a favourable position by raising hotel's brand and market values (Kaya, 2008; p. 97). This research has conducted in order to determine the student's CSR perception's effect on their intention on working in tourism sector who are studying in Eskisehir.

According to the study results in which four dimensional corporate social responsibility model is used there is a significant and positive relationship between intention to work in sector and the dimensions of CSR model which are economical, ethical, legal and volunteer. In study of Caliskan and Unusan (2011) it is pointed out that there is a significant correlation ($p < ,01$) between employee's CSR perception and work satisfaction ($x = 3,62$). As the employees' ethical, legal, volunteer and economical social responsibility perception raise their work satisfaction raise. There is a positive correlation between CSR perception dimension and intention to keep working ($x = 3,63$). The results of this study correspond to Caliskan and Unusan's study. As employees' ethical, legal, economic and volunteer social responsibility perceptions raise, their intention to work in sector raise as well. From this point of view, positive CSR perceptions of tourism student's who may be considered as potential tourism employees, may effect their intention to work in sector in a positive way.

When the job insecurity and low wages are considered as important factors which affect tourism student's intention to work in sector (Kusluvan and Kusluvan, 2000; Roney and Oztin, 2007) the importance of CSR implementations emerge. On the other hand, if hotels designate the maximum work hours of their employees, improve the training conditions of students and adopt professional human resources management implementations with legal arrangements (Pelit and Aslanturk, 2011; Kozak and Kizilirmak, 2001) might be useful in order to strengthen their intention to work in sector.

According to the regression analysis results, the model which built to estimate the intention to work in sector is significant. According to this, it is determined that CSR perception has an affect on intention to work in sector ($r = ,186$) and 3,3% of intention to work in sector can be explained with CSR perception. Erkman and Sahinoglu (2012) in their study tried to examine the relationship between CSR perception of employee's and organizational commitment. They stated that there is a positive relationship between employees' CSR implementation perceptions and their organizational commitment and as employees' social responsibility perception raise their commitment to their organization raise as well.

Because CSR includes economical, legal, ethical responsibilities towards employees it contains a lot of important factors in order to prevent complains and sectoral expert migration. Businesses which implement CSR may reduce these kinds of problems with legal, ethical, volunteer and economical dimensions. As good implementation of this understanding may have positive influence on work satisfaction of employees', organizational communications, customer relationships, motivations and intention to work in a positive way (Caliskan and Unusan, 2011; 155) it may also effect firm's attractiveness of potential workforce and retain the current employees.

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