

Moderator Role of Word of Mouth Marketing on The Impact of Public Relations on Purchase Intention From an Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective

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Research Article

Abstract

Marketing-oriented Public Relations within the scope of Integrated Marketing Communication, which is also accepted as one of the marketing tools of businesses, has an important place in consumer communication. In this context, it is known that businesses mostly manage this communication with corporate social responsibility activities. Especially today, profit-oriented businesses aim to affect the purchasing intentions of consumers by establishing emotional bonds with the consumers through their corporate social responsibility activities. In this research, it has been investigated whether corporate social responsibility activities within the scope of Public Relations have an effect on consumers' purchase intention and whether Word of Mouth Marketing has a moderating role in this effect. The research results have shown that corporate social responsibility activities have a positive effect on the purchasing intentions of consumers of fuel companies, but the moderating role of word of mouth marketing in this effect is significant and negative.

Keywords

Consumer Behavior,
Public Relations,
Word of Mouth,
Marketing,
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Bütünleşik Pazarlama İletişimi Perspektifinden Halkla İlişkilerin Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerindeki Etkisinde Ağızdan Ağıza Pazarlamanın Aracı Rolü

Öz

İşletmelerin bütünleşik pazarlama iletişimi kapsamındaki pazarlama araçlarından biri olarak kabul gören pazarlama odaklı halkla ilişkiler, tüketici iletişiminde önemli bir yere sahiptir. Bu çerçevede işletmelerin bu iletişimi çoğunlukla kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetleriyle yönettikleri bilinmektedir. Özellikle, günümüzde kâr odaklı işletmeler kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetleri ile tüketici ile duygusal bağ kurarak tüketicilerin satın alma niyetlerini etkilemeyi hedeflemektedir. Bu araştırmada halkla ilişkiler kapsamındaki kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetlerinin tüketicilerin satın alma niyeti üzerinde etkisinin olup olmadığı ve ağızdan ağıza pazarlama yönteminin bu etkide aracılık rolünün bulunup bulunmadığı araştırılmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları akaryakıt firmaları tüketicilerinin satın alma niyetleri üzerinde kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk faaliyetlerinin pozitif etkili olduğu buna karşın bu etkide ağızdan ağıza pazarlamanın moderatör rolünün anlamlı ve negatif olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Tüketici Davranışı,
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Introduction

Competition-based changes in the field of marketing force businesses to develop new strategies for communication with the target audience. The synchronized use of Integrated Marketing communication elements such as Public Relations, Advertising, Sales Promotion, and Personal Sales is considered a strategy for this purpose. Especially in the customer-oriented marketing approach, determining the messages that will have an impact on the target audience and creating effective communication programs have an important place.

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) emerged in the 1980s due to the need for businesses to strategically use their communication tools in an integrated manner (Kliatchko, 2005: 21). Businesses started to use marketing communication tools with personal sales in the 1800s. With the use of mass media in the 1950s, advertising emerged as the main marketing communication tool. In the 1970s, sales promotion and public relations became frequently used marketing communication tools besides advertising. In the 1980s, businesses needed to use all marketing communication tools strategically, and this situation led to the emergence of integrated marketing communication (IMC). Businesses have started to carry out marketing communication activities in integrity with each other to meet the needs of the market they are involved in faster and to provide more comprehensive services in communication activities (Barker, 2013: 107). With the use of integrated marketing communication (IMC) by businesses, marketing communication tools work in full coordination with each other, allowing businesses to have a monophonic and single-view brand image (Schultz and Schultz, 1998: 12). Integrated marketing communication (IMC) enables them to make communication plans holistically, transfers consumer information to common databases, ensures that the messages to be given are suitable for the consumer, and ensures that all communication activities are carried out in strategic consistency (Kliatchko, 2005: 24).

In this context; Public Relations activities, one of the integrated marketing communication elements, have an important place in the communication of public and private institutions with the target audience. Social responsibility projects carried out by local and global brands and in some cases jointly with non-governmental organizations are considered within the scope of these activities. It has also emerged through literature studies that consumers attach importance to corporate social responsibility projects, especially when choosing a brand. However, it has been determined that there is no previous research in the literature on whether consumers share information about corporate social responsibility activities through word of mouth marketing. In this study, the mediating role of word of mouth marketing in the effect of public relations on purchase intention was examined from the perspective of integrated marketing communications. In this context, the data obtained from the consumers of 2 fuel companies, which stand out with their social responsibility activities within the scope of Public Relations, were analyzed.

Literature Review

1.1. Public Relations in the Context of Integrated Marketing Communications

In the Context of Integrated Marketing Communications, Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) offers many advantages for businesses. First of all, businesses that can effectively perform integrated marketing communication (IMC) ensure synergy by using marketing communication tools in a synchronized manner and eliminating the messy and inconsistent image that may occur in the consumer's mind. Secondly, it is ensured that the messages given from different communication tools create the same perception of the target audience through integrated marketing communication (IMC). Thirdly, integrated marketing communication (IMC) ensures that all communication activities are coordinated that the departments within the organization work in corporate integrity with each other (Odabaşı and Oyman, 2002:71-73).

The concept of corporate social responsibility, which is one of the Integrated Marketing Communication activities, also constitutes an important part of the Public Relations discipline, which is an important element of the promotion mix of marketing science. When viewed from this angle; The concepts of public relations and social responsibility are closely related to each other. In this relationship, social responsibility constitutes the operational side of Public Relations and plays an important role in the communication of institutions with the target audience.

The reason for the existence of Public Relations is expressed as gaining the trust of the public by influencing public opinion (Asna, 2006: 37). Based on this definition; The concept of public opinion can be expressed as the target audience for Public Relations. It is known that the announcements planned to affect the target audience, especially in marketing communication studies, are made through social responsibility projects

1.2. Brand Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility

When the definitions in the literature are examined, it is stated that social responsibility is a social activity that takes place mutually between businesses and society. In a broader definition, social responsibility is explained as a set of procedures, actions and policies that lead businesses to take measures within the scope of possible harm caused by their activities, prioritize the welfare of the society, and lead them to make decisions to carry out their activities from the production stage to the consumption stage without harming the society. (Korkmaz, 2009: 20-21) Based on these definitions, it can be said that social responsibility activities are a feature that shapes the activities of profit-oriented or non-profit-oriented institutions. It is a fact that the social responsibility activities carried out by the institutions also affect the image and reputation management of the institutions.

Campaigns and announcements made by institutions on many issues that concern the society, especially education, health and the environment, create a social benefit when they receive public support and are planned for a long time, and this increases the prestige of institutions. (Özgen, 2017: 63)

Philip Kotler suggested the following definition to describe all efforts under the umbrella of corporate social responsibility: “Corporate social initiatives are major activities undertaken by a corporation to support social causes and to fulfill commitments to corporate social responsibility.” (Kotler and Lee, 2005: 3).

Corporate social responsibility activities also have an important place in the reputation management of institutions. It is a part of reputation management for brands to feel responsible towards society and to produce various projects in this direction. Especially in line with the sustainability goals of the brands, these projects take place in a very wide range from education to culture and environmental protection under the environmental, social and economic headings. Considering the compelling effect of competition to make a difference in the marketing strategies of brands, corporate social responsibility projects can be considered as an important strategy in terms of creating loyalty in the target audience. For example; İşbank's “Önceliğimiz Çevre” campaign, “Bir Usta Bin Usta” campaign, endorsement of Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts Foundation and GSM operator Turkcell's “Kardelenler” campaign and “Aradığın Ağaç Olsun” campaign can be shown as corporate social responsibility projects of profit-oriented businesses.

Written by Ulu in 2009; In the master's thesis titled "Corporate Social Responsibility Projects Effects on Brand Perception: A Research", it was concluded that there is a significant link between social responsibility practices and brand perception and that consumers' purchasing behaviours can be changed by considering the social responsibility activities of brands.

In another research in the literature, it has been concluded that businesses that carry out corporate social responsibility activities can be a reason for consumers to create brand awareness (Akkoyunlu and Kalyoncu, 2014: 142).

Corporate social responsibility activities have an important place in the marketing communication strategies of brands as a title that operates under the umbrella of Public Relations.

1.3. Purchase Intention

Purchasing intention is defined as purchasing a certain product from a certain brand within a certain period of time (Keller, 2004). In other words, it is expressed as the intention of consumers to purchase a certain product or service (Lin et al.: 2013). The intention to buy is because it defines the consumer's need for a certain product or service, or even the perception of the product and the product. it means that they prefer to buy a product or service. In other words, the intention to buy means that the consumer buys the product again after evaluating the product and realizes that the product is worth

buying. When consumers choose a particular product, the final decision to purchase or reject a product depends on the intention of the consumer. In addition,

Many external factors that may affect the purchase intention have been identified (Keller, 2004). Consumers' evaluations and attitudes about the product or service are important in their purchasing intentions. The consumer value given to the purchase of a product or service leads to the purchase of that product or service (Madahi and Sukati, 2012).

Sometimes consumers may not have completed the purchase, and this is also included in the literature as a behavioral intention. Consumers primarily benefit from their own value judgments and experiences in their pre-purchase evaluations (Zeithaml et al.: 1996). According to the results of Çevuşoğlu et al. (2021) is the relationship between brand image and perceived price and purchasing intention in his research (Çevuşoğlu et Dec.: 2021).

In studies on public relations practices and purchasing intention, consumers generally stated that they are willing to buy the products of companies that attach importance to corporate social responsibility activities. However, there is also a perception on the consumer side that conducting corporate social responsibility activities will increase prices. As it is known, price perception is greatly influenced not only by internal factors but also by the activities of enterprises (Ünsalan and Bayraktar, 2017). Therefore, the perception that prices will increase may negatively affect the purchasing intention. Negative or positive emotional states of consumers affect their purchasing preferences.

It is important to explain the between the concepts of intention and behavior before the consumer purchasing behavior. Although these concepts are Decipherentially different from each other, there is a close relationship between them. Intention is defined as planning something in a person's mind, thinking in advance, making self-decisions, the desire, and thought to direct to a purpose within a person (TDK, 2019). Behavior is the result of agreed intentions. Therefore, the attitudes of consumers are determined by intentions, and intentions reveal behaviors (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1977). There is an intention behind every human behavior related to that behavior. For example, crying is a behavior. The reason for this behavior is the desire to cry. In the same way, the consumer's intention to buy is also at the bottom of consumer purchasing behavior. Consumer purchasing intention can be defined as the consumer's desire to purchase a product or service.

Intention, which plays an important role in the relationship between attitude and behavior and means consciously planning something in advance, is an important indicator of the true will to Decipher any behavior. The purchasing intention is one of the most critical stages of the purchasing decision process, which reveals the decisive reaction of the consumer to stimuli (Tek, 1999: 215). The intention is to achieve any pre-agreed outcome. Behavior is the result of agreed intentions. Therefore, it determines the attitudes and intentions of consumers, and intentions reveal behaviors (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975: 385). To Howard (1994: 41) according to the purchase intention, it is a mental phenomenon that affects the buyer's decision to purchase certain parts of a certain brand. Product evaluation, attitude, purchase intention, and purchase constitute the four stages of consumers' purchasing decision-making process. The comprehensive evaluation of the product by the consumer is the first step of product evaluation. The consumer's feelings and thoughts about a particular product enter the second stage, known as attitude. The consumer's desire to buy that product constitutes the third stage. After all, the customer buys the product. Therefore, purchasing behavior arises as a result of the intention to purchase during the purchasing decision process. Purchasing intention, which is intertwined with the decision stage in the consumer purchasing process, is often used to predict sales of existing and new products and regularly collects data on purchasing intention by enterprises. Demand forecasts are made with these collected data and some strategic decisions are made based on them.

Purchase intention manifests itself in the following ways (Odabaşı and Barış, 2002: 375):

- Identifying the product and brand
- Determining the category of the product
- Determination of the product class

Identifying a general need

Identifying a need

Factors affecting purchase intention are as follows:

Figure 1: Factors Affecting Purchase Intent (Solomon, 2013: 323)



1.4. Word of Mouth Marketing

Consumers often share their opinions and information. They constantly exchange information with each other about their service experiences with mobile phones, computers, clothes, etc, and cinemas, restaurants etc. The widespread use of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter etc. has increased the number of shares that consumers share. Word of mouth marketing is defined as the informal sharing of positive or negative experiences of consumers about products or services with each other (Berger, 2014: 587). Within the framework of word of mouth, consumers informally share their experiences about brands with each other. Word of mouth marketing has an extremely important effect in persuading consumers to buy. A comment made about a brand on social media can affect consumers all over the world (Moore and Lafreniere, 2020: 35). Consumers can be affected by the positive comments made by a family member about a brand, and they can also be affected by the comments made by a stranger they do not know. Studies have shown that word of mouth marketing is effective in the product preference of consumers, especially in clothing, food, automotive, electronics and skin care products (Bughin, Doogan and Vetvik, 2010: 5).

The main reason why consumers are affected by word of mouth marketing efforts of businesses is that they act with a rational purchasing behaviour motive. Consumers can decide to buy faster by being influenced by the positive opinions of people they know about brands (Godes and Myzlin, 2004: 545). Word of mouth marketing can affect brands positively as well as negatively. Individuals' product performance, service quality, reliability, etc. In case of the rapid spread of negative comments made on these issues, brands may experience a loss of reputation and image. For this reason, brands should examine even the smallest negative comments about themselves and eliminate the situations that cause negativity. Studies have shown that negative opinions affect the consumer more than positive opinions (Charlett, Garland, and Marr, 1995: 43). Managing negative reviews from consumers is an important task for brands. The main reason for this situation is that negative comments highly affect consumer preferences. Negative criticism can cause the consumer to be more easily directed to other brands (Allard, Dunn and White, 2020: 103).

Many studies have shown that word of mouth marketing is more reliable and persuasive than other methods like advertising, personal selling, etc. these days. In particular, positive or negative comments made on social media, blogs, forums and forums operating on the internet affect the way consumers perceive brands. The main reason why comments about brands on the internet affect consumers is that the information here spreads quickly and can be viewed for a long time if they are not deleted (Cheung and Thadani, 2012: 462). Consumers spend a lot of time, especially on social media. For this reason, consumers take every message they receive from these channels very seriously. According to a study conducted by Anderson Analytics on US social network users in 2009, it was concluded that 46% of social media users are affected by positive consumer comments about brands, while 23% are affected by negative consumer comments about brands. Positive or negative comments about brands, especially by well-known people on social media, can create a word of mouth marketing effect more quickly. Many brands cooperate with well-known people to create this effect (Baretto, 2014: 635). The consumer comments made on social media are most effective on the customers of the restaurant, accommodation, and transportation services sectors. For example, in research conducted, Travbuddy.com, TravelerSpout, Wayn and Tripadvisor.com etc. hotels, hostels, etc. on their website.

It is seen that 87% of consumers' positive comments about accommodation services are effective in their purchasing preferences. Many accommodation service providers make investments to get positive comments on these websites (Zhang, Ye, Law and Li, 2010: 695). What important brands on word of mouth marketing activities is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Activities of Important Brands on Word of Mouth Marketing

Brand	Means	Activity
BBC	BBC Boards	To promote their activities by creating specific discussion topics about themselves in the forums.
Citysearch	Entertainment Quizzes	Ensuring that businesses such as hotels, shops and restaurants are evaluated by giving points from 1 to 10 with entertainment quizzes created over the internet.
Ebay	Online Auction Houses	To enable consumers to see product reviews through online auctions.
Epinions	Online Evaluation Tests	Creating tests to see the evaluations of consumers with scores between 1-5.
Google	Search Engine Optimization	To see which product types consumers are interested in through the Google search engine.

Source: Dellarocas, C. (2003). The digitization of word of mouth: Promises and challenges of online feedback mechanisms. *Management science*, 49 (10), 1408.

2. Implementation

2.1. Purpose and Importance of the Research

This research aims to investigate the effect of corporate social responsibility projects, which is one of the public relations activities of businesses, on consumers' purchasing intentions and also to determine the role of word of mouth communication in this relationship.

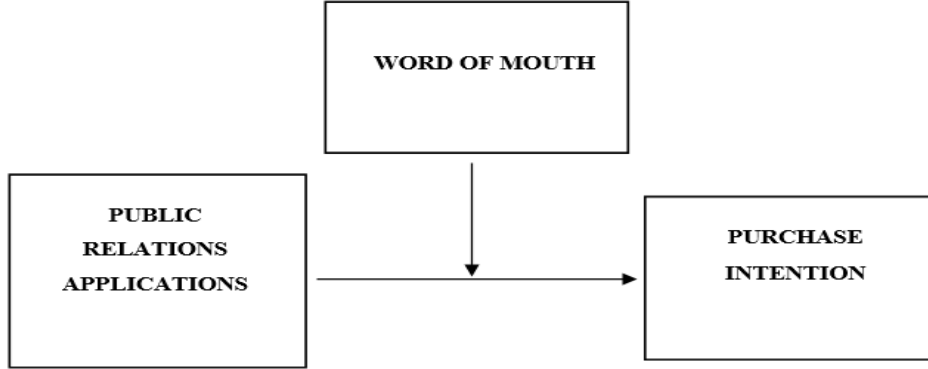
The importance and originality of the research lie in determining the role of word of mouth communication in the research model.

Studies on public relations practices, purchase intention, word of mouth communication and purchase intention were examined, and the difference and effect of word of mouth communication in this modelling were tried to be determined.

For this study, ethics committee approval was received from stanbul Gelişim University Ethics Committee Presidency with the decision numbered 2020-32-45 at the meeting dated 13.01.2021

2.2. Research Model, Used Scales

Figure 2: Research Model



2.3. Research Methodology

In this study, data were collected by survey method. To make the research data healthier and more reliable and to minimise the errors that may arise from the research process, 30 people were pre-tested with the prepared survey questions. If a question was not understood or such feedback was given to the person conducting the survey, those questions were determined and revised. The research survey consists of 4 parts.

These are;

- 1- Measuring the consumer's attitudes about Public Relations Practices
- 2- Measuring consumer attitudes towards Word of Mouth Marketing
- 3- Measuring the consumer's attitudes about Repurchase Intent
- 4- Questions about the demographics of consumers

To measure their attitudes towards Public Relations Practices, the article "The moderating effect of brand image on public relations perception and customer loyalty" written by An-Thieh Hsieh and Chung-Kai Li is used. There are 8 questions on the scale. To measure their attitudes toward Word of Mouth Marketing, the article "Extreme Makeover: Short- and Long-Term Effects of a Remodeled Servicescape" written by Elisabeth Bruggen, Bram Foubert and Dwayne Gremler is used. There are 4 questions on the scale.

To measure their attitudes towards purchase Intent, the articles "Impact of contextual factors, brand loyalty and brand switching on purchase decisions" and "The Impact on Purchase Intention and Brand Preferences-the Moderating Effects of Country of Origin Image" written by Shukla Paurav, Hadi Moradi ve Azim Zarei - which was also used in Mehmet Sağlam's "Müşteri Temelli Marka Denklği Unsurlarının Tüketici Satın Alma Niyeti Üzerine Etkisi: Gsm Sektöründe Bir Uygulama" - and used widespread besides being adapted in this survey. There are 3 questions on the scale.

The items in the scales were scaled with a five-point Likert scale and the participants were asked to answer the items in the range of "1 = strongly disagree", "2 = disagree", "3 = neither agree nor disagree", "4 = agree" and "5 = strongly agree".

This study was carried out on gas stations. The main body of the research consists of people who have visited and experienced gas stations even once. The Snowball sampling method was preferred in the study.

The main body of the research is quite large. If the number of individuals in the research population is one million or more, a sample size of 384 with a reliability of 0.95 is considered sufficient (Sekeran, 1992). In addition, since the structural equation model will be used in this study, the sample size has been tried to be kept as high as possible. In the structural equation model, it was stated that each parameter in the scale should be answered by at least 10 respondents (Hair et al.: 1998). According to this rule, since the number of variables (questions) in the research model is 15, the sample size was determined as 150 (15*10). As the snowball sampling method was chosen as the method, the expected number of 150 surveys was exceeded and 354 usable surveys were collected and the data collection process was terminated at this stage.

2.4. Hypotheses

Main Hypotheses 1: Public Relations Practices have a significant effect on Purchase Intention.

For Main Hypothesis 1, the sub-hypotheses to be tested statistically are:

H1a: Public Relations Practices have no statistically significant effect on Purchase Intention.

H1b: Public Relations Practices have a statistically significant effect on Purchase Intention.

Main Hypotheses 2: Word of mouth marketing has a moderating role in the effect of Public Relations Practices on Purchase Intention.

For Main Hypothesis 2, the sub-hypotheses to be tested statistically are:

H2a: Word of mouth marketing does not have a moderating role in the effect of Public Relations Practices on Purchase Intention.

H2b: Word of mouth marketing has a moderating role in the effect of Public Relations Practices on Purchase Intention

3. Analyzes

3.1 Frequency Analysis

Table 2. Frequency Analysis

Variant Name	N	%
Gas Brand Preference	Opet	41,0
	Petrol Ofisi	14,7
	Shell	33,9
	Other	10,5
	Total	100,0
Gender	Women	50,8
	Men	49,2
	Total	100,0
Age	18-25	43,8
	26-35	19,8
	36-45	19,8

Age	46-55	43	12,1
	56-65	11	3,1
	65 and Over	5	1,4
	Total	354	100,0
Profession	Public Sector	74	20,9
	Private Sector	131	37,0
	Other	149	42,1
	Total	354	100,0
Marital Status	Married	116	32,8
	Single	213	60,2
	Other	25	7,1
	Total	354	100,0
Educational Status	Elementary	8	2,3
	Junior High	10	2,8
	High	29	8,2
	Bachelor	188	53,1
	Master's	119	33,6
	Total	354	100,0
Income Status	under 1000 TL and	67	18,9
	1001-2500 TL	47	13,3
	2501-5000 TL	50	14,1
	5001-7500 TL	100	28,2
	7501 TL and higher	90	25,4
	Total	354	100,0

10.8% of the participants are women and 49.2% are men. 43.8% of the respondents are 18-25, 19.8% are 26-35, 19.8% are 36-45, 12.1% are 46-55, 3.1% are 56 -65, and 1.4% are in the age range of 65 and over. 20.9% of the participants work in the public sector, 37.9% in the private sector, and 42.1% in other sectors. Of the respondents, 32.8% are married, 60.2% are single, and 7.1% have another marital status. 18.9% of the respondents 1000 TL or less, 13.3% 1001-2500 TL 14.1% of them stated that they have a household income of 2501-5000 TL, 28.2% of them 5001-7500 TL, and 25.4% of them have a household income of 7501 TL and above. The educational status of the participants varies between junior high school and master levels. 2.3% of the participants have an elementary school, 2.8% junior high school, 8.2% high school, 53.1% bachelor and 33.6% master's education. In addition, 41.0% of the participants use Opet, 33.9% Shell, 14-7% Petrol Ofisi and 10.5% other gas brands.

	Factor Loadings
Corporate Social Responsibility (Disclosed Variance = 60,406, KMO= 0.899, α = 0.905)	
Csr1. The corporate social responsibility projects of this brand are featured in the media more than its competitors.	0,739
Csr2. I think that the budget allocated by this brand for corporate social responsibility activities is higher than its other competitors.	0,758
Csr3. This brand carries out its public relations activities to arouse positive feelings in consumers about itself and its products.	0,678
Csr4. I believe that this brand carries out its corporate social responsibility activities to provide solutions to the problems that concern society.	0,775
Csr5. I believe that this brand plans corporate social responsibility activities by taking into account the issues that consumers are sensitive to.	0,820
Csr6. This brand carries out various corporate responsibility activities.	0,830
Csr7. This brand continuously carries out corporate social responsibility activities.	0,789
Csr8. I believe that this brand really gives importance to social responsibility activities.	0,918
Word of Mouth Marketing (Disclosed Variance =75,655, KMO= 0.829, α = 0.891)	
Wom1. I share the positive thoughts I have about this brand with other people.	0,791
Wom2. I would recommend this brand to people I know.	0,901
Wom3. I have heard positive things from people about this brand.	0,871
Wom4. I encourage my family and friends to buy this brand.	0,911
Purchase Intention (Disclosed Variance = 77,516 KMO= 0.705, α = 0.855)	
Pi 1. I recommend this brand to my friends and I will continue to recommend it.	0,911
Pi 2. If I require a similar service again, I will choose this brand.	0,897
Pi 3. I will continue to buy the services of this brand.	0,831

Reliability analyzes of the 3 dimensions to be used in the research were made and Cronbach's Alpha ratios, which gave internal consistency results, were found to be at an appropriate level for each scale. According to the results, it was determined that the data were reliable and the internal consistency between the variables was high. Exploratory factor analysis was carried out to determine the suitability of the structures in the study to the scale and to reveal their validity. Common method variances were examined to test the validity of the data. A single factor test was used to test the existence of the problem in the common method variance. The validity of the data was determined

because the common method variances in the study consisted of a single factor structure and the factor variances were above 0.5 in general. A KMO value above 0.50 is interpreted positively. It was determined that the Kaiser-MeyerOlkin values for each variable were not below the required limit value and the Bartlett sphericity test was also significant for each variable ($P= 0.000$). According to the results of the analysis, it was concluded that the data were valid since all variables were single-factorial and all factor loadings and explained variances were above 0.50.

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the factors found after exploratory factor analysis. Figure 3 shows the AMOS statistics program image.

Figure 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis AMOS image of the Model

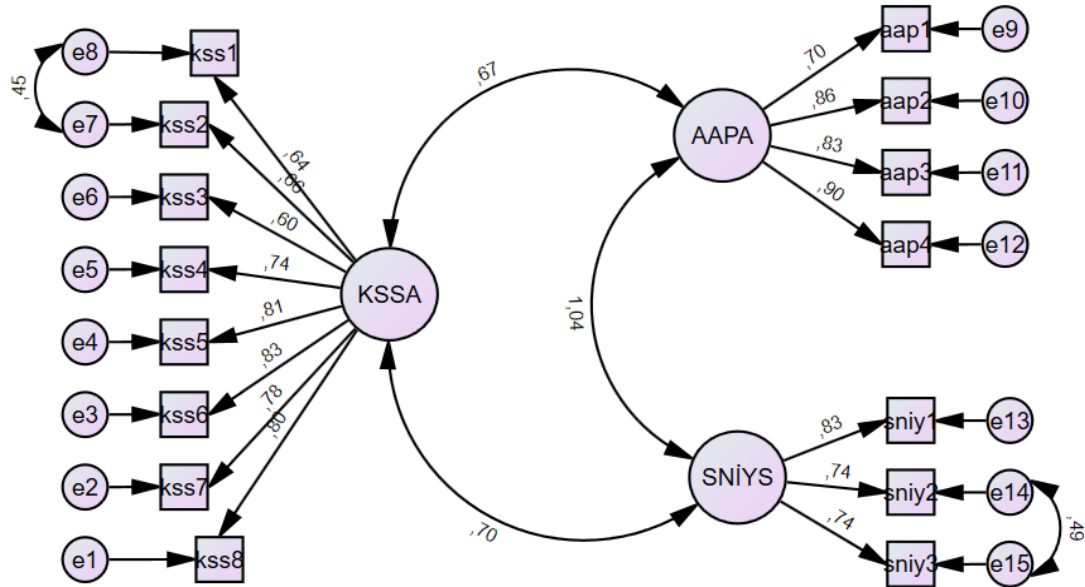


Table 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Positive Compliance Values of the Model

Compliance Index	Structural Equation Model	Perfect Fit Criteria	Acceptable Compliance Criteria	Evaluation
$\chi^2/ (df)$	280,174/(85)= 3,296	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 3$	$3 < \chi^2/df \leq 5$	Acceptable
RMSEA	0.081	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq 0,05$	$0,05 < RMSEA \leq 0,08$	Acceptable
CFI	0.948	$0,95 \leq CFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq CFI < 0,95$	Acceptable
NFI	0.928	$0,95 \leq NFI \leq 1,00$	$0,90 \leq NFI < 0,95$	Acceptable

Table 4 shows the positive compliance values of confirmatory factor analysis. The χ^2 value was determined as 280,174, the χ^2/df ratio was found as 3,296 and it is at an acceptable level of compliance according to the criteria. In addition, RMSEA, CFI and NFI values were found to be at acceptable compliance levels. These data indicate that the overall compliance of the measurement model is very good (Schumacker and Lomax, 2010; Waltz, Strickland, and Lenz 2010; Wang and Wang, 2019).

3.3. The Moderating Role of Word of Mouth Marketing in the Relationship Between Corporate Social Responsibility and Purchase Intention

Figure 4: Standard Regression Values for the Moderator Role of Word of Mouth Marketing in the Relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Purchase Intention (AMOS27 Statistical Program)

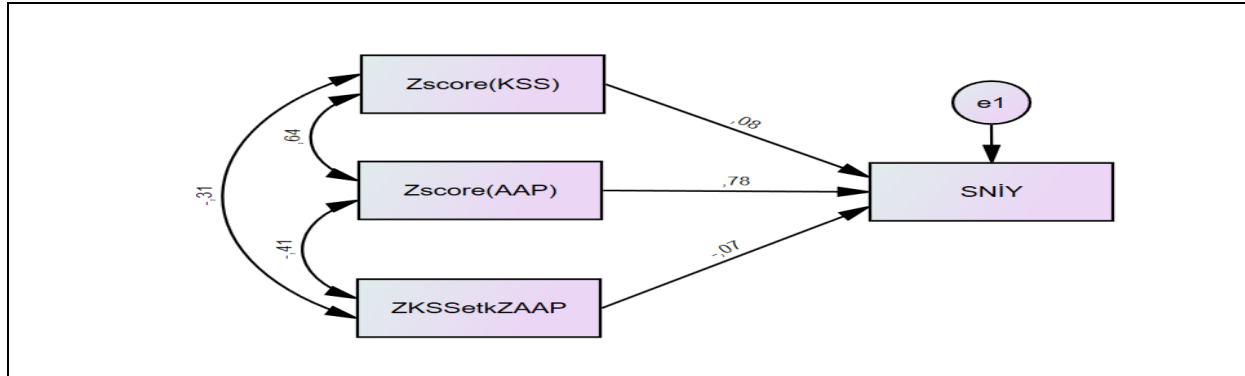


Table 5: Standardized Regression Weights and Significance Values

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
SNİY	<--	ZKSS	,082	,031	2,325	,020
SNİY	<--	ZAAP	,777	,033	21,242	***
SNİY	<--	ZKSSetkZAAP	-,066	,019	-2,216	,027

As a result of the analysis, all p values were found to be significant.

Consumers' perceptions of corporate social responsibility affect the purchase intention by 0.082, and word of mouth marketing affects the purchase intention by 0.777. Moreover; The moderator effect of word of mouth marketing was found to be significant in the effect of corporate social responsibility on purchase intention, and this interaction has a negative effect of -0.66 on purchase intention.

Both of our hypotheses are valid.

Conclusion and Recommendations

When the Regulatory Role of Word-of-Mouth Marketing in the Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility Activities on Purchasing Intention is examined from the perspective of Integrated Marketing Communication, it is concluded that Corporate Social Responsibility activities in the context of Public Relations have an impact on purchasing intention. According to the analyzed data. On the other hand, it is seen that ear-to-ear marketing does not have a regulatory effect on the relationship between corporate social responsibility and purchasing intention. Dec. It is understood that consumers who prefer the brand do not share information with each other about corporate social responsibility activities that enable the brand to establish an emotional connection with the consumer.

The research results show that consumers attach importance to the corporate social responsibility projects carried out by fuel brands when purchasing the products and services offered by the brand. It is seen that the brands that are the subject of the research create their public relations campaigns as a means of communication with the consumer within the framework of corporate social responsibility activities. The Troya Tefikiye Archeo-Village Project realized by Opet was realized with an emphasis on respect for history. Cooperation with local governments was also made in this project, which was met with interest in terms of preserving cultural values and moving historical

values to the present day. Again, the brand's Green Jul Project, Clean Toilet Campaign and the Power of Women Project are other well-known corporate social responsibility activities of the brand. In addition, the Shell brand has managed to raise public awareness with the Shell Women's Energy, Barrier-Free Service Area and Plastic Cover Collection projects. When other studies in the literature are examined, it is seen that there are similar results. Huang and others. (2014) in their study on university students, they concluded that corporate social responsibility activities conducted by enterprises positively affect the quality of service, corporate image and purchasing intention.

At the same time, the research results reveal that the corporate social responsibility activities carried out by gaz brands are not shared intensively among consumers through word-of-mouth marketing. Dec. It is thought that the main reason for this situation is that the brand does not adequately announce its corporate social responsibility activities through social media platforms. In 2021, Zhuang et al. it has been concluded that the corporate social responsibility activities of technology brands on social media are spreading rapidly through word-of-mouth marketing and positively affecting the purchasing intention of consumers.

In other words, corporate social responsibility activities lead consumers to prefer the brand, although it is not mentioned much among consumers, the result shows that it has an impact on consumers' purchasing intention, which shows that corporate social responsibility activities are a factor. Dec. it mediates the emotional connection of the consumer with the brand and influences his/her preference. he was considered to have an important place.

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