

Chapter 63

Corporate Social Responsibility and Talent Management in Turkey

Elaine Farndale

Pennsylvania State University, USA & Tilburg University, The Netherlands

Dincer Atli

Pennsylvania State University, USA & Uskudar University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Addressing the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and talent management, we examine these fields largely from the perspective of employee attraction. We first present the historical development of CSR, detailing its current standing in Turkey. We then go on to describe how talent management has developed, and its particular relevance in emerging markets. Pulling these two fields together, we explore how a firm's CSR activities can improve employer branding to attract and retain key human resources. Comparing the results of Capital Magazine's "CSR Leaders in Turkey" and "Most Admired Companies in Turkey" research (both conducted annually from 2009 to 2013), we are able to identify how corporate reputations are related to CSR in the specific context of Turkey.

INTRODUCTION¹

Companies operate in sync with their surrounding communities. In fact, their success is greatly dependent on the characteristics of the communities where they operate (Porter & Kramer, 2002). In an effort to meet the needs of their stakeholders and strengthen their business strategy, organizations have been incorporating social and environmental responsibility objectives into their service framework (Inyang, Awa, & Enuoh, 2011). In developing such corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies, little attention has, however, been paid to date to how this affects the current and potential future employees of the organization. The exploration of CSR and talent management in Turkey that we present here helps to address this gap.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-6192-7.ch063

Organizational characteristics have an impact on the popularity of the organization as a potential employer (Turban & Greening, 1996). In recent years, CSR has been gaining relevance in academic and professional fields as an asset that delivers positive impressions of the organization to prospective employees (Jesus, Contreiras, Jorge, & Carrasco, 2013). Evidence suggests that job-seekers prefer to pursue careers in socially responsible companies over ones lacking in this area (Aiman-Smith, Bauer, & Cable, 2001; Albinger & Freeman, 2000; Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002; Ray, 2006). Therefore companies interested in expanding their candidate pools are focusing on strengthening their social responsibility efforts (Albinger & Freeman, 2000) and are investing heavily in CSR campaigns (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2008). Once a person has been recruited, CSR activities are also argued to affect positively employee motivation and retention (Commission of the European Communities, 2001; Turban & Greening, 1997; Weber, 2008).

This process of talent management is “an integrated set of processes, programs, and cultural norms in an organization designed and implemented to attract, develop, deploy, and retain talent to achieve strategic objectives and meet future business needs” (Silzer & Dowell, 2011, p.18). The starting focus of talent management is on the attraction of talent both from inside and out, with priority given to employee development and retention to gain sustainable competitive advantage in a global knowledge economy (Scullion & Collings, 2010; Silzer & Dowell, 2011; Tansley & Tietze, 2013).

This chapter addresses the relationship between CSR and talent management, both of which are relatively new fields of study, but which are increasingly influential. We examine CSR and talent management largely from the perspective of employee attraction. Given the focus of this chapter on emerging markets and Turkey, the historical development of CSR and its current standing in Turkey is presented in detail. In the final section of the chapter, we compare the results of *Capital Magazine*’s “*CSR Leaders in Turkey*” research and the same magazine’s “*Most Admired Companies in Turkey*” research (both conducted annually from 2009 to 2013). Our goal here is to demonstrate how important CSR is in Turkey in being viewed as a popular employer, highlighting the relationship between talent attraction and CSR initiatives.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Although the history of CSR is rich, descriptions of the construct have been somewhat vague. Various definitions of CSR have developed over time (Albinger & Freeman, 2000), initially being called social responsibility (SR). This may have been due to the reputation and intensity of the modern corporation not having existed or not being recognized at the time (Carroll, 1999). To date, there remains no universal agreement on the definition of CSR (Scherer & Palazzo, 2007). According to Albinger and Freeman (2000, p.243), CSR is defined as a “business entity’s attention to and fulfillment of responsibilities to multiple stakeholders” Carroll’s (1991) definition describes these responsibilities—economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic—explaining how they are interconnected, forming sequential steps in a pyramid in such a way that CSR can be achieved only when all four steps are taken consecutively.

CSR is an umbrella term, including sets of values and duties that are related to issues such as “business, ethics, accountability, transparency, human and worker rights, occupational health and safety, gender equality, corruption, environmental awareness, and social dialogue” (CSR Turkey, 2010, p.10). According to the European Union, CSR is “a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis” (European Commission Green Paper Report, 2001, p.6). CSR can thus be applied in all social

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