

## REPRESENTATION OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN TURKISH NEWSPAPERS

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### ABSTRACT

The new world order require companies and any kind of organizations to effectively inform their audience about their activities, to implement corporate social responsibility projects and programmes, and the media to mediate a healthy public sphere with their news content on corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is among the topics which receive the attention of media the last two decades. Eventhough the statistical data show the interest of media to CSR, it can be said that it is difficult to differentiate between the original news coverage produced by journalists and the content of corporate advertising. The aim of this study is to reveal the representation of CSR in Turkish newspapers. For this purpose, Hürriyet, which is one of the mainstream newspapers and has the highest circulation of Turkey in December 2015, was selected as a reference newspaper in order to analyze CSR related news content. With content analysis of the December 2015 news coverage of Hürriyet, it was found that Turkish mainstream newspapers included the term social responsibility in its news agenda, but CSR was not received enough coverage within the news.

**Keywords:** Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Social Responsibility in Newspapers

### TÜRK YAZILI BASININDA KURUMSAL SOSYAL SORUMLULUĞUN TEMSİLİ

#### ÖZ

Yeni dünya düzeni, işletmelerin ve çeşitli alanlarda faaliyet gösteren organizasyonların paydaşlarını faaliyetleri hakkında etkili bir şekilde bilgilendirmesini, kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk proje ve programlarını yaşama geçirmesini ve medyanın da kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk (KSS) üzerine haber içeriği üreterek sağlıklı bir kamusal alanın oluşumuna aracılık etmesini gerekli kılmaktadır. KSS son yirmi yıldır medya kuruluşlarının dikkatini çeken konular arasındadır. İstatistiksel veriler medyanın konuya olan ilgisini gösterse de, gazetecilerin ürettiği özgün haber koverajı ile kurumsal reklam amaçlı duyurum içeriğini birbirinden ayırt etmenin güç olduğunu söylemek mümkündür. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türk yazılı basınında KSS'nin temsilini ortaya koymaktır. Bu doğrultuda, KSS odaklı haber içeriğini analiz edebilmek için Aralık 2015'de Türkiye'nin tirajı en yüksek ana akım gazetesi Hürriyet

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referans gazete olarak seçilmiştir. Hürriyet gazetesinin Aralık 2015 KSS haber koverajı içerik analizine tabi tutulmuş ve analiz sonucunda Türk ana akım yazılı basınının haber gündeminde sosyal sorumluluk kavramına yer verdiği, ancak KSS'nin haberlerde yeterince koveraja sahip olmadığı bulgulanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sosyal Sorumluluk, Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk, Yazılı Basında Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk

## Introduction

Today media is the shortest description of various communication vehicles such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television, film, recorded music. Media's wide and anonymous production for the masses which nearly reach everyone in a society is the main characteristics to define them. The production of the mass media, which are the images of television and radio shows, newspaper articles, magazine ads, social media shares, YouTube videos, and twitter texts, saturate our daily life.

The Canadian communication theoretician Marshall McLuhan describe our relation with media as fish who do not aware that surrounded by the water. The main goal for the readers and audiences who consume them to have information and entertainment. So the media foremost inform us, entertain us, surprise us, mislead us or even annoy us. Thus as a powerful information agent it sets our agenda by its content, it defines our everyday lives. The media is also important for the social, economic and political actors which creates an arena for the visibility of them in the eyes of public. Shortly, what we know about society and what we know about the world we learn through the mass media's lenses.

One of the topic that receive media attention since 1970s has been corporate social responsibility (CSR) which is related mostly with the corporate world and the society. However there has been no single, global definition of CSR, which was stated in Business for Social Responsibility Report, the term refers "A business decisionmaking linked to ethical values, compliance with legal requirements, and respect for people, communities and the environment." (2002: 1). Another well framed definition of EU emphasized CSR as a voluntary interaction and stated as "A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis." (EU Commission Green Paper, 2001). The reason behind the CSR interest of the society is the ever increasing

global problems of the world such as climate change, child labor, genetically modified foods, recycling, renewable resources, ozone depletion, unsustainable forestry, and etc. The existence of well informed mass on the global troubles, sensible companies on social responsibility projects and programmes and the responsible media to create public sphere on CSR are important in today's world. Corporate social responsibility is about helping society for all this concerns beyond the profit maximisation and hence the media which is a guardian of public good, has a distinguished role to play in this endeavour.

The idea that corporations have social responsibilities appeared with early 1960s, with of Amnesty and the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) efforts and *Silent Spring* which was authored by Rachel Carson. Then, in 1970s it has been covered regularly in the press. According to the study of Hamilton, there were only a few articles that used the words corporate social responsibility from 1900 through the 1960s in *New York Times* (Hamilton, 2003: 5). After the awareness rising activities in 1970s there was explosion of coverage using this term, with stories focusing on pollution, and shareholder actions surrounding CSR debates which we can call the era of 'wild interest' toward CSR. However there was still an intense coverage when we compare with 1950s or 1960s, the media's coverage was declined between 1974- 1987 and labelled as the first great downwave. After the 1970s, the peaks and downs in coverage of CSR in the 1980s and 1990s in the *New York Times* might be explained by the acceptance of CSR part of the expected costs of doing business which we can call the era of 'mainstreaming CSR'. The similar coverage variation in *Wall Street Journal* in 1970s and then a decline was also detected by the other researchers (Hamilton, 2003: 5). In parallel to the growing number of social and environmental problems, today business organizations start to adopt more sustainable and socially responsible ways of doing business and thus increasing their media coverage, consequently CSR and sustainable development issues have been the part of the regular media agenda since 1990s. Of course media coverage of major conferences- 1992 Earth Summit, 2002 World EconomicForum's New York event and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg all help to increase the media coverage of CSR issues. These international conferences also set the agenda for the CSR coverage. Indeed, the

media have a huge role to play in how CSR is published or broadcast to the world at large. It is simply not enough for corporations to do their bit for social causes. More importantly, they must also share it with general audience and be an example for the others to follow.

The foremost reason to the increasing coverage on CSR by the media is that the given importance of the topic by the society at large. The increasing awareness level of society toward global problems of the world and the companies' role and responsibility to solve them force companies to be more active in CSR projects and programmes. We can easily observe the trend of CSR interest in the universities' CSR and ethics titled courses, increasing report pages of company CSR and sustainability reports, diversified company strategic communications, newly emerged CSR consultancy firms, changing company organisational and management structures, CSR interest in government policies, and extensive media interest and coverage on CSR related topics (Matten and Moon 2004: 324). We know there is a growing CSR related interest in business and academia in North America and Europe (Carroll, 1999; Wolf, 2002; Matten and Moon, 2004), and Turkey (Küskü and Zarkada, 2004; Toker et al, 2016).

The aim of this research is to investigate the CSR related news in Turkish newspapers and try to understand the main characters of the content. The intention of this paper is to analyse the CSR related coverage in news media in Turkey and present fresh data for the researchers about representation of the CSR in the news articles. We conducted content analysis of the December 2015 news coverage of leading mainstream Turkish newspaper, namely Hürriyet.

### **1. The Raising Interest on Corporate Social Responsibility**

Before a comprehensive review of the conditions that bring a raising interest on corporate social responsibility, it's useful to review the historical roots of the concept. It may be said that the interest in social issues is as old as the human history. King Hammurabi of Ancient Mesopotamia ruled that builders, farmers, and innkeepers damaging the local people will be heavily punished.

The concept of social responsibility has been dealt with in the administrative framework in ancient Egypt. In the Egyptian inscriptions, the thoughts about the management and the responsibilities of the employees are presented. It is also possible to pursue the traces of the premise of the concept in the advices of religions to humanity. Religions have taught people to provide benefit in their society by doing charity works such as giving donations, giving zakat and establishing a foundation (Aydede, 2007: 16).

The great depression of 1929 is an important threshold for transformation from social responsibility to corporate social responsibility conception. Along with the economic measures taken after the crisis, laws regulating the social and environmental effects of businesses have been made, and the business world has started to carry out its activities according to these laws (Alparslan, 2013: 438).

In 1953, American economist Howard R. Bowen wrote his famous book “Social responsibilities of the businessman”. He is the one who spoke about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for the first time. He helped educate the businessmen in a new sense of social responsibility (Bowen, 1953). The agenda of the 1960s were human rights, employee rights, unionization, green movement, conscious consumerism. In 1962, American biologist Rachel L. Carson's book *Silent Spring* influenced the environmental movement. Much of the data that Carson drew from weren't new; the scientific community had known of these findings for some time, but Carson was the first to put them all together for the general public (Griswold, 2012). Carson's book promoted a paradigm shift in how chemists practice their discipline and helped to establish a new role for chemists in investigating the impact of human activity on the environment (American Chemical Society, 2012). A ground-breaking contribution to the concept of CSR came from the Committee for Economic Development (CED) in its 1971 publication *Social Responsibilities of Business Corporations*. The CED introduced this topic by observing that ‘business functions by public consent and its basic purpose is to serve constructively the needs of society—to the satisfaction of society’. The issues embraced as important for the 80's included business practices with respect to environmental pollution, employment discrimination, consumer abuses, employee

health and safety, quality of work life, deterioration of urban life, and questionable/abusiveness practices of multinational corporations. During the late 1990s, new concepts, such as global social investment, corporate reputation, community partnerships, corporate social policy, and others, became evident in large companies (Carroll, 2008: 29-36-38).

After reviewing milestones in the history of CSR, we would like to mention four dimensions which is attached to the growing media attention toward CSR. Firstly, the increasing public awareness level toward sustainability and CSR; secondly, the new graduate and master programmes on this topic in all over the world; thirdly the increasing number of NGOs who advocate the issue; fourthly the companies' high interest toward the CSR and sustainable development investment and fifth and finally the volatile but growing media interest on the issue are a few points we would like to argue in order to frame the concept.

The researchers in CSR communication emphasize that stakeholders are interested in companies' CSR activities (Capriotti and Moreno, 2007; Coombs and Holladay, 2012; Morsing and Schultz, 2006). It is the repeated finding all over the world that the general society is more aware and interested in social responsibility and therefore the CSR activities of business. According to a survey in 2002, 80 % of people thought business enterprises had a moral responsibility regarding to society and ten years later in a survey similarly the public emphasized honesty, integrity and reputation as the three fundamentals to judge the company (IPSOS MORI Reputation Center, 2012). Other researches on the topic give the similar findings with varying degrees in all over the world. In the UK, 90 % of Britons consider all kind of pollution (water, air) was serious problems and 74 % of them say more information on a company's social and ethical behaviour would influence their purchasing decisions in 2003 (IPSOS MORI, 2003). In a survey made in the US, six in ten say they have selected an environmental friendly product because of the companies' environment policies and seven in ten declared that they believe, "industry does not pay enough attention to its social responsibilities" and "90 % of consumers want companies to tell them the ways they are supporting causes" (Cone, 2010: 5). The survey has also revealed that nearly 61 % of the respondents "don't think companies are giving them enough details about

their efforts, including the amounts donated and the length of the promotions”. Furthermore, 34 % of consumers have been found to choose another brand or not to buy the product at all, if there is not enough information provided by the company (Cone, 2010: 24). Other studies also have found that consumers’ awareness and knowledge of CSR activities are positively connected to their purchase intentions (Lee and Shin, 2010; Wigley, 2008; Jablonkai, 2014: 214). However the society’s CSR related information needs are also varied from country to country, the general information desire of audience is apparent. Americans are ready to hear all CSR activities of the companies as frequent as possible but another survey among Scandinavian consumers revealed the fact that on average 40 % of respondents in three countries (Denmark 30 %, Sweden 47 %, and Norway 42 %) think that companies should publicize their CSR activities through corporate advertising, however an average 51 % (Denmark 59 %, Sweden 46%, and Norway 49%) prefer minimal releases on websites (Jablonkai, 2014: 215), which clearly show us the public want CSR related content after a careful analysis of target stakeholders in every country thus invite the media as an important player in CSR communication. In line with global awareness on CSR, Turkish society has also an increasing interest on the issue. According to 2015 survey among 550 participants of three big cities in Turkey, 67 % of Turkish people were interested and following the social results of CSR projects which was conducted by the companies in Turkey (Xsights, 2015). Moreover only 9 % of the respondents were declared that they were not interested, but 61 % of them found these projects real and sincere.

Beside the growing public interest all over the world the second contributor is education institutions, especially universities which are key providers of business education are also developed courses and programmes in their curriculums, supply the specialists in CSR education for industries and do researches to advance the knowledge in CSR field (Matten and Moon, 2004: 324). However CSR is a new phenomenon for the Turkish business enterprises, the universities’ role and responsibilities toward the society is a general acceptance in Turkey. It has valuable sources to create a synergy with the social community for social, cultural and economic transformation as it was expected from universities for centuries. As the universities which are the key provider

of business education which graduate the business students with CSR skills and education, these are valuable attempts to acquire and develop appropriate skills and competencies as a response of the new requirements of business world's CSR agenda. There are plenty of researches investigate social responsibility courses, and programmes in universities in all over the world (Matten and Moon, 2004; Hill, 2004; De Keizer, 2004) and in Turkey as well (Atakan and Eker, 2007; Çetindamar and Hopkins, 2008; Özdemir and Sarıkaya, 2009; Toker and Tat, 2013; Toker et al, 2016). Through these courses and programmes current business schools educate individuals and raise their awareness regarding roles and responsibilities of business organisations in society (Özdemir and Sarıkaya, 2009: 316; Hawawini, 2005). With these courses the educational programs are integrated with the real world demands and they prepare them for business life which is compatible with the increasing awareness level of society and company on CSR.

In Turkey social responsibility education is still at the development phase in the educational quality of public and private universities but every year more higher education institution offer social responsibility related course in their curriculum. According to a recent report in Turkey (Toker et al, 2016: 3) CSR titled courses are offered in 23 universities and it is the second popular course title after the business ethics which is the most available course in 63 universities among 179 universities in Turkey. Totally 91 courses are offered which are CSR or ethics related courses in the curricula and 19 institutions declared them as compulsory courses but 49 courses are elective in the curriculum. Via the compulsory and selective social responsibility titled courses Turkish universities aim to generate to growth in its students' individual and collective sense of social responsibility by engaging these activities and they are practicing what they have learned in the courses with participating real life philanthropic actions.

As we observe from an internet research that we make within the scope of the social responsibility related courses in Turkish Universities, students design and implement social responsibility projects in the fields of children, elderly, woman, environmental problems, education, street animals, health problems etc. In these courses, students choose a social need they observe in their local area and design a project or they participate and take responsibility on a non-governmental organization's ongoing



project. Projects consist of single activity or activities. For illustrate, in a social responsibility project implemented by public university students for a primary school with disadvantaged students, clothing support were made then buildings belonging to the school were painted. In the last activity, a library book collection campaign was launched. With the books collected, a library was established in the school ([www.sosyalsorumluluk.org](http://www.sosyalsorumluluk.org)). Another social responsibility project implemented by foundation university students, children who were treated at the four hospitals in İzmir are visited every week and gifts are presented prepared by the students ([www.iha.com.tr](http://www.iha.com.tr)). Also, in some social responsibility courses students make debates on concepts such as democracy, human rights, youth and social rights. Through participation and contributions of the relevant non-governmental organizations, workshops on children's rights, women's rights / gender, environmental rights are realized.

Another interesting finding also shows how these courses effect the university policies. The universities which offered CSR courses in their curriculas also implementing social responsibility projects as an societal institution, established social responsibility centres, seperate web pages about it, and even integrated social responsibility in their mission and vision statements.

After the educational field we need to underline the third societal development that the growing number of national NGOs including KSS Türkiye (Türkiye Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk Derneği - CSR Turkey), Genç Liderler ve Girişimciler Derneği (JCI - Junior Chamber International), TEMA (Türkiye Erozyonla Mücadele, Ağaçlandırma ve Doğal Varlıkları Koruma Vakfı - The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats), TOG (Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı - Community Volunteers Foundation), TÜSİAD (Türk Sanayicileri ve İş İnsanları Derneği - Turkish Industry & Business Association) and international NGOs including Greenpeace, WWF, Oxfam, Amnesty International, which clearly show the rise of NGOs as relevant players in CSR development, in addition to private and public sector actors. The drastic increase in the number of NGOs in the last ten years is another reason to explain the expanding business - NGO cooperation. As a result of this, there are currently “more than 50,000 international NGOs, compared to fewer than 20,000 only a decade ago” (Hart, 2005: 19). In Turkey, there are 5.054

new foundations, 113.392 association, a total of 118.446 civil society organizations ([www.vgm.gov.tr](http://www.vgm.gov.tr), [www.dernekler.gov.tr](http://www.dernekler.gov.tr)). In addition to the expansion in the size of NGO sector, the scope and nature of NGO activities are also changed. NGOs become more active actors and transform themselves from traditional charity organizations to the social contributors in addressing issues in education, child labor, environmental preservation, poverty etc. They are also important players for the securing media attention to CSR initiatives of companies. After 90s with increasing global awareness there is also an increase in NGO activism, cooperation and collaboration with companies on issues such as child labour, human rights, sustainable development, environment protection and lately nuclear pollution. After 1996 the companies started to include NGOs in their stakeholder dialogue following the example of The Body Shop, World Wide Fund. In 1997 The Global Reporting Initiative was launched and NGOs and businesses for the further dialogue and action. The demands of the new era have brought stakeholders more closely together. Some international initiatives of OECD and EU also supported the process of collaboration from 2000-2006 (Arenas et al, 2009: 180). The NGOs are both supporting and monitoring decision making actors in this process. Moreover NGOs which usually accepted more trusted and reliable organisations by the public, a company associated with an NGO can have a more positive public image and trust. Edelman's Trust Barometers in 2006 and 2012 also confirmed the same general acceptance and declared NGOs which is the most trusted institutions than politicians and media in the whole globe (Edelman, 2012). As the opinion polls revealed that NGOs are having the best image, credibility in society thus receive more sympathy and attention from media. Media echoes the views of NGOs and enhances their credibility even further. For the media NGOs are much more easy and accessible source than companies. The NGOs should continue their central role in advocacy and campaigning, but also "forms news partnership models to promote social and environmental actions, provide technical assistance to companies, promote and design CSR standards and participate in the management, reporting, monitoring, auditing, and advising processes of CSR strategies and activities" (Toker, 2013). In line with this global trend, NGOs in Turkey are also collaborative partners of Turkish companies in CSR related activities since 2000 (Türkiye Sosyal Sorumluluk Raporu, 2008). The first

well known and long standing CSR project is a joint national education project developed and managed by the Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği (Association in Support of Contemporary Living) (NGO) and Turkcell (leading Turkish telecommunication firm), namely “Kardelenler - Snowdrops” has been started in 2000. The project received extensive media attention, won IPRA Golden World Awards in 2007 and still an important reputation issue for Turkcell. Since then collaborating with an NGO in CSR activities is a well framed practice in Turkey.

Fourth social and economic development towards CSR is the companies’ growing economic power and their high interest toward the CSR and sustainable development investment which resulted increasing media attention in all over the world. Today there are more than 100,000 MNCs (Multinational Companies) and 900,000 foreign affiliates. The total assets of foreign affiliates as of 2010 are valued at approximately \$57 trillion, more than ten times their value in 1990 (Hormatz, 2012). Even in the less developed world, corporations may have more economic power than governments. Contradictory with this great power, “58% of the general public believe that business do not pay enough attention to their social responsibilities” (Business for Social Responsibility, 2002). It is the fact that international corporations are responsible for about one fourth of the Earth’s products, which mean they have extraordinary resources at their disposal. CSR actually seen as a contributor to change the balance with the help of powerful international NGOs. In addition to that business-led organisations are increasing such as, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), Business in the Community (BitC), CSR Europe and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). With these newly formed initiatives and NGO collaborations companies switching their CSR focus from charitable donations to socially involved stakeholders which has caused the increasing media attention in all over the world. Moreover, beside the companies’ growing CSR interest, their socially responsible investment (SRI) is also expanding and the other end of the issue, the ordinary people prefer to invest socially responsible companies through ethical pensions and stock portfolios are also increasing. There were more than 40 SRI funds in the UK, around

60 funds in Europe and expanding to other countries including Australia, Canada, Japan and South Africa (Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility Cranfield School of Management, 2009; Ketchum and the UN Environment Programme, 2001: 23).

Shortly corporate social responsibility is in the agenda of companies, education institutions, investors and the general public. From this point we expected that it is also well covered and promoted issue by the media.

## **2. Media and the News on CSR**

Mass media industry is one of the dominant structures of our economic, social and political system, and even without any empirically proven mega theory, however general agreement remains that the media, like family, education and occupation, are a powerful socializing institution in all over the world (Toker, 2004: 10). The lesson of common sense and everyday observation, as well as of research, should tell us that mass media constitute a public institution that may rarely initiate change independently but that does provide the channels and an arena for playing out of society-wide process in which many actors and interests are involved, often in competition (McQuail, 1988: 291).

Denis McQuail distinguished two main media approaches within the theories depending on the media's role in society. The first version called functionalist approach and proposes that the media either reflects the status quo, thus contributing to its maintenance in society, or that they reinforce it. According to McQuail mass media theories and researches can be distinguished from 'mainstream' to 'critical' standpoint against media and effects to the masses (2002: 6). In sum, theorists divide media theories into two basic division; media emphasized theories which called media-centric theories; attributes a specific role to the medium as a particular vehicle or carrier of meaning, so they mostly focus on the texts and meanings in media outputs. On the other hand, socio-centric theories accepted technology and culture as dependent more fundamental forces.

From these contradictory perspectives this study focuses on liberal-pluralist approach that says that media functioning as the 'fourth estate', play an important part in the democratic process in constituting a source of information that is independent

of the government (Bennett, 1982: 31). Moreover among the media product news which is the “central ingredient of the newspaper” and need to be analysed to understand the development of societal phenomenon. According to Tunstall, the newspaper is “the archetype as well as the prototype of all modern mass media” and ‘news’ is the most important part of the newspapers (Tunstall, 1977: 23). Interestingly Gaye Tuchman defines news as a window on the world, but she adds that the view through a window depends upon whether the window is large or small, whether the window faces a street or a backyard (Tuchman, 1978: 1). Newspapers interact with their environment, and they are themselves affected by the very changes in the social world that they claim to record. Although newspaper presentations are not, and can never be, synonymous with everyday reality, they report a tiny part from the daily reality of events and institutions. Similarly Stuart Hall stated that millions of events which occur every day in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as ‘potential news stories’ and again only a small fraction are actually produced as the day’s news in the media (Hall, 1973: 181).

As such, we try to assert that mass media in general and news content in particular have an important power and responsibility. Beside their power of influencing to the perceptions of society, they are also responsible for making representations of society in all its diversity. They have to inform citizens on events and processes taking place in that society; in that way, they should provide a forum for critical debate on matters of interest. When the media do not fulfill any or all of their prescribed roles, they not only reflect default of the reality but also help to reproduce the relations of injustice and inequality. Corporate social responsibility and sustainability topics are among in this gray zone. According to many reports and researches media have a critical role to play in the transition towards CSR and sustainability because with intelligent and broad coverage of CSR agenda will only help to change the general mindset of society which will mainstream the topic. To bring an issue in public sphere will move into political, economic and cultural mainstream and form the public opinion which lead change in the public behaviour. However there are plenty of researches and reports stated that CSR related issues are not received the importance or the serious-

ness that the topic now deserves (Doughty Centre for Corporate Responsibility Cranfield School of Management, 2009; Ketchum and the UN Environment Programme, 2001).

The broad and intense coverage on CSR issues is important but the quality of media coverage still varies from the business and management media to the general media, and even from country to country. Press, TV channels and web sites are widely used by national and international NGOs to create public awareness for collaborative corporate social responsibility practices of companies. Moreover, the last twenty years there are several publications, initiatives that highlight the best and the worst corporate social and environmental responsibility practices and giving awards with celebrations. Bloomberg and Reuters provide “environmental, social and governance” ratings directed to the financial data screens of hundreds of thousands of stock market traders, non profit organisation Ethical Consumer Research Association continues to publish Ethical Consumer magazine and its associated website, which provides free access to ethical ratings tables, to help consumers to make ethical purchases. The companies are giving more importance their CSR reporting to gain legitimacy and attract new consumers (Türker, 2018: 125). Media coverage is also part of this growing CSR communication efforts.

Whilst some researchers are criticising the limited or negative coverage of corporate responsibility in the media as reflecting media hostility or ignorance about business, but in fact the problem is more complicated than accusing the actors in the process that both business and the media have to work harder to find ways to explain responsible business and corporate sustainability issues that relevant to readers.

The main accusation towards media’s treatment to CSR issues is covering the topic mostly as a community involvement and charitable giving by companies. Of course there are some notable exceptions such as The Financial Times’s and The International Herald Tribune’s serious, broad and distinctive focus on the topic and the niche and specialist media’s devoted coverages such as Ethical Corporation, Corporate Citizenship Briefing, Ethical Performance, ENDS Daily, CSRWire and etc. Moreover another criticism is that the media’s preferred treatment of companies which already known the pioneers in CSR activities such as The Body Shop, Ben & Jerry’s or

focusing only mishaps of major companies in this area such as Shell (marine ecology, human rights), Norsk Hydro (environmental contamination), Mitsubishi Motors (sexual harassment), Texaco (racial discrimination), Nike (child labor), ExxonMobil (climate change), and Volkswagen (environmental corruption) (Ketchum and the UN Environment Programme, 2001: 22).

Shortly we can claim CSR become an important part of business-society relations and media is a mediator actor in this process. Media companies, in short, are both carriers and barriers when it comes to the CSR and social development agendas. To understand the relationship between business and media the news articles should be investigated.

### **3. Research Design and Methodology**

Newspapers and television are the main sources of information for the general public on many issues. Especially newspapers, historically are the oldest and contain more news item than the other media. To some extent, radio and television were modeled on the newspaper, with regular news as their chief anchor point (Toker, 2004). Therefore newspapers were chosen as first and traditional research medium under this study because of this special attribute. However the general tendency declares that social media has powerful mediated effect among the masses, it still has limited power with younger generation and needs technological literacy to reach in every segment of population in developing countries as Turkey. The news content of the dailies has been regarded as reliable evidence of the culture and society in which it is produced. Therefore, the point of departure in this study was news of the selected print media.

The vast majority of agenda-setting researches have found support for the idea that the public learns the relative importance of issues from the amount of coverage given to the issues in the news media. According to the related theory, by making some issues more salient in people's mind mass media can also shape the ideas that people take into account when making judgments about events or issues that will affect their opinions, which might cause "change in the standards that people use to make their evaluations" (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987: 63). As the theory stated that news selection is at the heart of the agenda-setting process since the issues that fail to pass through

the gatekeepers of the news also fail to give salience cues regarding the relative importance of the issues. Departing from this perspective to analyse CSR related news in Turkish newspapers, Hürriyet is selected as a reference newspaper which has the nation wide and highest circulation in 2015. The number of CSR related news content in the Hürriyet will be an important indicator to show the level of media interest toward the issue and thus will affect the public opinion in the long run.

The research question of this study is that whether the print media making the CSR word available in their news? How the traditional media reflect the word “corporate social responsibility” and “social responsibility” in their news articles? What are the news topics related with CSR and who are the main actors? The questions and the variables in this research were designed according to similar research reports in the field.

The news included words of “corporate social responsibility”, “social responsibility” in the texts are selected from the Hürriyet’s database and categorised. The news articles are analysed with the content analysis. Content analysis, inquire into social phenomena by treating data not as physical events but as communications that are created and disseminated to be seen, read, interpret, enacted and reflected upon according to the meaning they have for their recipients. It examines data, printed matter, images, or sounds -texts- in order to understand what they mean to people, what they enable or prevent, and what the information conveyed by them does (Krippendorff, 2013)

#### **4. Results and Findings**

Under the analysis of this study 8.766 news items were included the word “social responsibility” in Hürriyet database and among them 893 news articles were appeared in 2015. The second term “corporate social responsibility” was covered in 866 news items and 53 of them published in 2015. When we excluded repeated news articles we have reached and analyzed 23 articles included the term CSR in 2015 and moreover we conducted the same analyses to the term “social responsibility” within the 53 articles which was appeared in December 2015. The researcher applied selective sampling in 2015 because of very rare use of the term “corporate social responsibility”



(only 23 in the whole 2015) but on the other hand, more broad use of the the term “social responsibility”. Otherwise it will create less balanced sampling with overrepresentation of the word social responsibility. Totally, we selected 76 news articles which includes the word “social responsibility” and “corporate social responsibility” in its news coverage.

Table 1. Placement of the CSR Mentioned News

Section of the news	Number
Local news	3
Spor	2
Current affairs	2
Economy	5
Column	6
Human source and technology	5
Total	23

The main finding was the mainstream media included the term social responsibility in its diverse news agenda but corporate social responsibility (CSR) was still spesific jargon for the journalists and therefore for the Turkish audiences as well. Thus, CSR was not received enough coverage within the news in Hürriyet. The placement of the news which included the term were not appeared the current affairs but economy or other spesific niche sections of the dailies (Table 1). Thus CSR term was still covered in spesific sections of the Hürriyet such as human source, technology or the journalists mentioned in their columns which was also an important finding that clearly shows scarce coverage of the term. Interestingly under the local news section in Turkey the term was mentioned in tree articles, but when we analysed these news articles we found that the term was mostly used as the title of the job definions “department of CSR” “CSR director” or “CSR award of 2015” etc. In economy pages still the CSR was mostly refered term within the articles which were mentioned CSR awards of different initiatives in Turkey. As the table below indicated that there were only 2 news items which appeared in the current affair pages that included the term CSR (Table 1).

After the dispertion of the sections which were included CSR in the articles we need to focus on the main actors which receive the most attention in CSR related agenda in Turkey. Totally 16 actors were mentioned in 23 news items (we excluded the columns). In CSR mentioned news articles, economy actors were the main figures

of 11 news and after the economy actors, NGO related actors were represented in 2 news as the main actor and in another 2 news as second actor (Table 2). The findings related with the actors also confirms the recent NGO-company collaborations for the CSR initiatives in Turkey in line with the international trend (Toker, 2014: 138).

Table 2. Actors in the CSR Mentioned News

Actors	1. Actor	2. Actor	3. Actor
Economy actors	11	2	1
National NGOs	2	2	0
Artists	1	0	0
Sport related actors	2	1	0
Total	16	5	1

When we categorized the content of these news, ceremony and award related news were mostly referred CSR term in the texts. Thus the term CSR placed in the news as it was referred as a title of the award or job position. Journalists were not familiar with the word of CSR and companies were mostly used the term in their interviews. As an example the news from 19 November 2015 titled as “Samsung Selected As the Most Sensitive Company in Asia” in the page of technology in Hürriyet was categorised under the ceremony and awards theme.

Table 3. The Themes of the CSR Mentioned News

Theme	Number
Ceremony and Awards	5
Environment	1
Women	2
Education	3
Social responsibility mentioned	7
Others (columns etc)	5
Total	23

Another interesting finding was that the word of CSR used with defining the CSR related projects in 7 news items (Table 3). The companies tried to make the word of CSR visible in their news interviews and moreover they were also carefully try to add corporate social responsibility projects in their very end of interviews with the

journalists. Thus in these news articles, CSR was a complimentary subject for the companies' communication strategy and after defining economic endeavours the company directors were explaining their social responsibility projects and with mentioning the term CSR.

However giving a byline is not a frequent practice for the Turkish dailies, the gender of the byline also gives us some important detail regarding the level of interest toward CSR related coverage. Totally, 7 news articles included byline and news were mostly covered by female journalists. 5 news appeared with female byline and 2 news had the male byline, the rest covered as anonym. This finding also showed us CSR related news were still treated as soft news which were either have female byline or do not contain any names of journalist under the coverage.

After the CSR, the second term "social responsibility" was a more general term and the coverage was also broad and allocated in different sections of the daily. We found out 53 news articles and columns only in December 2015. The section of local news which presented mostly social responsibility projects of students and education initiatives (high schools and universities) covered with 10 news in the paper (Table 4). The term was visible among education institutions in total 16 news items. We can say that nearly one fifth of all news items were placed in the local pages of the Hürriyet. Additionally, education section of the paper also included the social responsibility courses or projects of education institutions and placed 6 news items. Social responsibility related news were not represented in only economy pages, contrary all sections included news which related this topic such as magazine, sport, economy etc. Moreover columns and contribution pages also contain 12 news items which included the word social responsibility. Most of these news or contribution articles are presented social responsibility projects and included social messages. The term social responsibility is more shared social reality with broad coverage in the newspapers and even in current affair pages included 9 social responsibility projects of varied economic and NGO actors as Table 4 reveals.

In line with broad coverage of social responsibility, there were many actors in the coverage. Contrary to the CSR term, social responsibility mostly presented with education related actors instead of economy actors. Totally 50 actors were visible as

main actor in 53 news items. 16 actors (32 %) of them were education related actors and they represented education institutions and their social responsibility projects. Again 9 national 1 international actors were visible as the main actor in many social responsibility projects. Similarly, 14 national and 2 international NGOs were also presented as second mentioned actor in social responsibility related coverage (Table 5).

Table 4. Placement of the SR Mentioned News

Section of the news	Number
Magazine	6
Local news	10
Education	6
Sport	3
Current affairs	9
Economy	6
Contribution	10
Column	2
Others	1
Total	53

NGOs and educational institutions are the main contributor of the social responsibility topic in the news agenda. Totally 50 % of the main actors were represented by education institutions or NGOs under this topic. The general finding from this sample was that main contributor of social responsibility was educational actors, the second actor group was the NGOs and the third big group was economy actors. Moreover NGOs were also supporter of social responsibility related subjects as the second main referred actor group with 14 actors. Other actors were far behind the NGOs as a second important actor group. The most visible actor in three category were education actors; nearly one third of the total actors were education institutions in the sample.

Table 5. Actors in the SR Mentioned News

Actors	1. Actor	2. Actor	3. Actor
Education related actors	16	9	6
Economy actors	12	5	2
National NGOs	9	14	1
International NGOs	1	2	2
Artists and singers	5	3	1
Local government	4	3	0
Sport related actors	3	3	0
Citizens	0	2	3
Total	50	41	15

After analysing the content of these news, education and philanthropic activities are the most common theme and nearly half of the news whether devoted under the educational contribution to the society or philanthropic activities of the NGOs, companies or education institutions. Different than CSR, social responsibility term under the dominance of NGOs and education institutions therefore the topics were also categorised under the education and philanthropy themes (Table 6). Similar with the word CSR, social responsibility also referred with the various social responsibility projects but mostly these projects were not belong to companies, but to the educational institutions (high schools, universities, NGOs, Ministry of Education in Turkey). Different than CSR, social responsibility was not referred as a complimentary subject for the education institutions and NGOs, through social responsibility projects NGOs and education institutions try to communicate with the society.

Table 6. The Themes of the SR Mentioned News

Theme	Number
Education	12
Philanthropy	12
Environment	3
Violence against women	5
Ceremony and awards	5
Social responsibility mentioned	5
Others	9
Total	51

In order to understand the education related news which mentioned social responsibility in its coverage we can give a news titled as “Support to Garbage Man Design” which was published on 14 December 2015 in Hürriyet’s Ege supplementary pages. The news is about Yaşar University’s student project of Industrial Design Department. The students are designed different accessories, bags to create innovative jobs for women entrepreneurs in İzmir. The project’s aim is to reuse and recycle the materials and teach women for creating jobs for the disadvantaged groups in İzmir. Since an education institution was highlighted for project, this news was categorised under the social responsibility and the main theme was the education.

When we further analysed the gender of the byline within the coverage, 9 news items contained female byline, and 6 of them has male byline, the rest of the articles are appeared anonym in Hürriyet. Similar with CSR, social responsibility coverage also treated as soft news with a few byline who were mostly females.

## **Conclusion**

From the 16th century’s revolutionary pamphlets to social media shares media content, in all its forms, touches the daily lives of almost every human being on the planet. Promoting sustainable lifestyles, changing the behaviour on environment issues and shaping the public opinion are all the media’s great contributions to the humanity (Toennesen et al, 2013: 7). To reach and effect on the broad and diversified audience is the unique differences of media that no other sector have and might have in the future. Social responsibility is among these topic that needs media interest to reach the larger segment of society for the survival of the humanity.

Findings also show that with the invention of web 2.0, both social and traditional media has become an important tool and companies use to communicate to their publics about their corporate social responsibility efforts. This new media add speed and accessibility and feedback possibilities of the companies CSR related communications. Besides the media effect, consumers now more than ever can affect the way corporations do business, and this necessitates a strong focus on CSR. Because consumers now have much more knowledge available at their fingertips, they can be more discerning about the companies whose products they purchase (Merrifield, 2003). It is

vital, therefore, that the media understands and covers CSR, not as a stand-alone topic but as an integral part of the role of business in today's connected, global economy and society. Some researchers who are concerned about social responsibility don't feel the media is giving the topic sufficient attention, in either quantity or quality. Moreover when we identify the weaknesses in media messages, lack of clarity of definitions, being too diffused, insufficient targeting of messages are some obstacles for the corporate social responsibility related messages of media.

There is an increasing business, education and public attention to CSR, the aim is to analyse the news content of Turkish press and make some comparisons and generalizations about representation of the CSR in the news articles. We conducted content analysis of totally 73 news items which included the word "social responsibility and corporate social responsibility" in news coverage of leading mainstream Turkish newspaper, Hürriyet in 2015.

For the CSR term we can state that the use of word is only mainstreamed in the discourse of economy actors and they try to make it popular among the society. The initiatives, NGO's organize CSR awards and ceremonies to familiarize the issue with general audience. Moreover the CEOs or other company directors try to add CSR related projects in their media interviews in order to add the term to the collective societal memory. Since the CSR term was not mainstream in Turkish news environment, it was mostly covered in spesific pages of the dailies mostly by economy related actors and have female bylines. NGOs or the sport actors was the second refered actor group in these news.

Contrary to the CSR, the second term "social responsibility" is a more general term and the coverage was also broad and allocated in different sections of the daily. The section of local news which presented mostly social responsibility projects of students and education initiatives (high schools and universities). The term social responsibility seems more mainstreamed theme among the public and received far more media attention. The main reason behind this heavy coverage is that the social responsibility subject was mostly dominated by the education institutions and NGOs and the media show more interest to these institutions than the companies and their corporate social responsibility actions. In line with international findings, media reflect

the social responsibility issues as an action of NGOs or non profit organisations. In Turkey since the NGOs are less economic power, universities and other private and governmental education institutions fills this gap and make the social responsibility theme visible in their communication strategy, thus the general public found them trustworthy and so the media newsworthy.

However there is a criticism to the corporate social responsibility related projects and other combined philanthropic activities increasingly utilized as a form of public relations and basically a marketing tool for promoting a company's image through cause related marketing (Porter and Kramer, 2002). And in some articles it is labelled as "window dressing", "cosmetic treatment" or the latest "hype" or "fad" of the organisations (Economist, 2005; Çetindamar and Hopkins 2008: 402). Despite all these harsh criticism it seems that through social responsibility projects of educational institutions, CSR awards or celebrations of different institutions, the companies' persistent emphasis on their CSR projects in their interviews will lead and shape media's interest and thus will contribute the future perception of social responsibility.

Further studies on the representation of CSR related news on print and visual media may compare newspapers, broadcasting media, magazines in the field of economy and PR marketing sector and in the internet publishings in the representation of social responsibility and corporate social responsibility oriented news according to the policies of the written and visual media.

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