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## Social Responsibility as a Point of Difference on Brand Positioning: A Study on Chain Restaurants

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### **Abstract:**

*Tourism enterprises using environmental resources are expected to ignore social and environmental problems. In the research, it has been measured how the consumers place themselves in the memory by turning the social responsibility activities of chain restaurant brands in Turkey into a marketing strategy. The main purpose of the research is to contribute to the knowledge of the relevant area by examining the effect of social responsibility in the positioning of chain restaurant brands operating in Turkey. In addition, this study is important in terms of increasing the awareness of social responsibilities in business, giving social responsibility campaigns more room by putting the effects of social responsibility in brand positioning.*

*It is aimed to provide social and sectoral benefits in this direction. In the literature, it is seen that branding of chain restaurants and academic work in the direction of the brand positioning of chain restaurants are very few. In this study; it is thought that it will also be a source for branding, brand awareness and brand image on chain restaurants. The present study was carried out in the entire country of Turkey. An examination of the effects of social responsibility on brand positioning at different destinations will contribute to the literature.*

*In this research, consumers in Turkey having consciousness of social responsibility and selecting chain restaurants brands which organize social responsibility activities and how they imagine those brands in their minds. We also find that consumers are attracted to those chain restaurant brands which are very sensitive towards social and environmental activities; Social responsibility has a positive influence on brand perception and brand loyalty in consumers mind and positive effect in brand positioning to a great extent.*

*The study has been taken by the quantitative method of research by conducting an online questionnaire survey. The questionnaires were completed by consumers. The outcomes of quantitative study procedure methodology taken were applied to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to establish the outcomes of the research. The results of the research presented that social responsibility has a positive impact on the brand positioning of chain restaurants brands in Turkey.*

**Keywords:** Social responsibility, brand positioning, brand, chain restaurants

### **1. Introduction**

In the past, marketing and product sales were the front-line is no longer the focal point, the consumer and consumer needs to be properly met. Marketing concept shaped by the demands of consumers aiming at new developments in order to meet these different demands State. Modern consumer's global warming, hunger, deadly diseases, various environmental problems, disruption of cultural and historical structures, etc. not to keep businesses behind such a conception of consumption. They have an important influence on fulfilling their social responsibilities. They are interested in what they do for society as well as the price and quality of the brand they buy consumers play an active role in shaping the social responsibilities of businesses plays.

Many discussions on the aims of enterprises are they can show differences from day to day. The prior was an accepted view that the only goal was to maximize profits. Investors because they have more rights among all stakeholders and profit from operating the maximization of profits due to the holdings was seen as the only important target for businesses (Ay, 2003; 13). However, to be able to maintain profitability today. The necessity of managing the success factors required for a competitive environment in a traditional competitive environment is driving businesses to different pursuits. Now the markets of businesses are increasing, the increasing intensity of competition, rapid technological changes, capital and information-based economy, changes in demographic and psychographic characteristics of consumers, environmental

challenges, value system and consume they have to deal with issues such as the differentiation of their preferences (Kärnä et al., 2003; 848).

Social responsibility refers to the fact that businesses in this sector are working to meet the changing expectations of the society while at the same time providing a competitive advantage has become a concept. Social responsibility in general sense; the whole of the efforts of businesses in social, cultural and environmental issues that can affect the prosperity of the society be considered as.

Especially Corporate Social Responsibility has become one of today's most popular concepts as a dimension of social responsibility. Corporate social responsibility according to Kotler; the prosperity of society through the contribution of voluntary work practices and institutional resources is an obligation undertaken to heal. Corporate social initiatives are social supporting objectives and completing corporate social responsibility obligations (Kotler and Lee, 2006; 2-3).

The values of brands that are serious about the concept of social responsibility and therefore the market values are also increasing. Because the brand value and quality of the product for the consumers is no longer enough to buy it. Today, consumers are looking at what the companies behind the brand they buy are doing for society. This expectation, of course, is increasing depending on the level of development of the society (Göksu, 2006, 21).

As the researches in different periods show, the consumer's expectations from the companies and brands reveal that social responsibility has become a favorite field of activity recently. Since consumers are the anticipation of the outcome of modern marketing, it will be in favor of brands to consider social responsibility with a serious marketing policy.

## **2. Literature Review: Social Responsibility as a Point of Difference on Brand Positioning**

The changing perception of businesses after the industrial revolution started to show more influence from the second half of the 20th century (Trout and Ries 1986). Today's marketing concept is consumer-focused. Conscious consumption has emerged with a changing consumer understanding. Consumers reshaped their consumption habits by sensitizing them (Kotler 2003, page 308). Consumers also purchase the image of brands while purchasing products and / or services. Businesses that want to make their brands indispensable are trying to develop and strengthen their communication with consumers by establishing an emotional connection. The most effective emotional bond that can be established with consumers in terms of businesses is provided by social responsibility (Lembet, 2006: 2).

### *2.1. Social Responsibility Prior to the Nineteenth Century*

In the pre-industrial era (between the 12th and 18th centuries), businesses are small-scale. Production is made according to the order received. In this period, the concept of distant commercialism was shaped by the norms of religion. Commercial responsibility is determined according to the ethical values of the person. However, there is no concept of social responsibility that is evident in this period Harsha (1997). According to the Socrates (469-399 BC), the righteousness is to grant everyone the right, and the truthfulness is to do good to friends. Platoon defends equality. It sees the existence of a large number of rich and poor in the state as the greatest evil for the state (Kara, 2012: 10). Aristotle (384-322 BC) approaches economic events in an ethical way. It argues that equity equilibrium must exist between exchanged goods or services. It contributed to the development of the sense of responsibility by arguing that the prices and profits obtained are fair and that interest is unfair profit (Taşlıyan, 2012: 24). B.C. Between 1792 and 1750, the first law regulating commercial activities was written by the King of Babylon as 'Laws of Hamurabi'. In the Hammurabi Law it is mentioned about accounting, recording, payment systems. Merchant-customer and employer-employee relations are arranged. (Hair, 2009: 10). Between 1500 and 1800, Mercantilist understanding was influential in the West. According to the commercial understanding of the mercantilist era, the economic well-being of the country depends on the mines it owns. According to this understanding, the state is obliged to find jobs for the poor and the unemployed. Trade activities between the same years are also determined according to religious principles in the East. The concept of social responsibility has developed in the East to a greater extent than in the West (Islam and Börü, 2007: 23), as Islam emphasizes co-operation and social solidarity, and prohibits interest and mandates zakat for those in need. In the Ottoman period, the concept of social responsibility within the trade came to the fore with the establishment of ahilik and localar. Ahilik is the organization of craftsmen whose moral values are taken into consideration. The ahilik which was adopted for a long time during the Ottoman period; honesty, perfection in art, collecting is essential to being virtuous in service. This has been effective in the development of business ethics in Anatolia. (Hair, 2009: 11-12).

### *2.2. Social Responsibility after the Nineteenth Century*

By the industrial revolution that started in the middle of the 18th century, the human power began to take its place in machines. The transfer of agricultural life to industrial life is provided. In this period when the concept of business is formed, the economic field has become an important institution. The resulting excessive unemployment and lack of qualified workforce increased the value of employees by increasing state education spending and union organizations emerged. The activities related to social responsibility have gained a new dimension by helping these organizations to work unemployed due to the economic crises experienced during the first and second World War (Safdil, 2010: 48). The concept of social responsibility has become widespread in the 1950s and has become more important as the economic powers of enterprises increase (Marketing Communications: A Brand Narrative Approach, 2007). After the Industrial Revolution, the problems that the industrialists have revealed have increased rapidly and reached to the day. Organizations and corporations working to

overcome economic, social, cultural, environmental and political problems have begun to use the existing human and economic resources to solve problems. Thus, the areas of responsibility of the enterprises have changed and gained a larger dimension (Lembet, 2006: 4).

### *2.3. Social Responsibility Campaigns for Chain Restaurant Brands*

There is a large-scale marketing-based management in food and beverage companies (Bölükoğlu and Türksoy, 2001: 23). The developing food and beverage sector has a wide range of consumers. Consumers are choosing brands that are the most popular among restaurant brands with a lot of choices. Businesses create positive brand perception in consumers' minds through brand positioning activities. Chain restaurant establishments that provide social benefits by choosing a brand positioning prefer social responsibility campaigns, advertising and promotions will provide double-sided benefits by using the budget for social responsibility campaigns.

#### 2.3.1 Examples of Social Responsibility Campaigns for Chain Restaurant Brands

##### 2.3.1.1. Hacıoglu Restaurants

Hacıoglu Restaurants started serving in 1965 with Turkish capital in Bursa. There are many restaurant chains in 11 different countries in Turkey. Hacıoğlu Restaurants, one of the restaurant brands that organize various social responsibility campaigns, welcomed disabled children and their families at restaurants and organized activities for disabled children and their families in the entertainment center on World Disability Day. In the field of culture and arts activities, 23 April Art Competition was held for children with disabilities. In addition, elderly people in the nursing homes of the Elderly Week have offered catering services in their restaurants.

##### 2.3.1.2. TAB Food (TAB Gıda)

TAB Food has many chain restaurant brands. Sbarro, Popeyes, Arby's, and Burger King have added their own brand Master Turner. Tab Food, which operates many chain restaurants, organizes social responsibility campaigns especially targeting the young audience. In order to contribute to the healthy development of young people, to encourage sports and to love basketball TAB Food has organized the Hoopfest organization with the brand Burger King.

##### 2.3.1.3. Panera Cares

The Panera Cares restaurant has 4 chain restaurants in the United States. Panera Cares restaurants serve as a non-profit enterprise with the slogan "paying it forward". Customers are able to pay the amount of the incoming account. It also gives the business an opportunity to receive free services. It is aimed to ensure that customers who have an insufficient economic power in carrying out their social responsibility campaign can easily eat together with other customers.

##### 2.3.1.4. Meram Cafe Restaurant Catering

Meram restaurant chains have opened their first restaurant in Amsterdam with the concept of a non-alcoholic family restaurant. The restaurant chain presents Turkish cuisine to its customers through its six branches abroad. Meram Restaurant, which has contributed to numerous social responsibility campaigns, has established the "Meram Friends Association" in order to make the social aids institutionalized. The restaurant contributes to Muslim charities. They are also helping people who are in need of assistance in Turkey (Meram Cafe Restaurant Catering).

### **3. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses**

The relationship between the perspectives of participant customers on social responsibility consciousness, social responsibility preferences and chain restaurant brands that organize social responsibility campaigns and that affects positively on the brand positioning.

H1: There is a relationship between the social responsibility preferences of the consumers and the social responsibility consciousness which has positive effect on chain restaurant brand positioning.

H2: There is a relationship between the perspective of consumers on chain restaurant brands that regulate social responsibility campaigns and social responsibility consciousness.

The Research Model (See Figure)

- Social Responsibility Consciousness (SRC) Dependent variable
- Social Responsibility Campaigns (SRC) independent variable
- Social Responsibility Preferences (SRP) independent variable

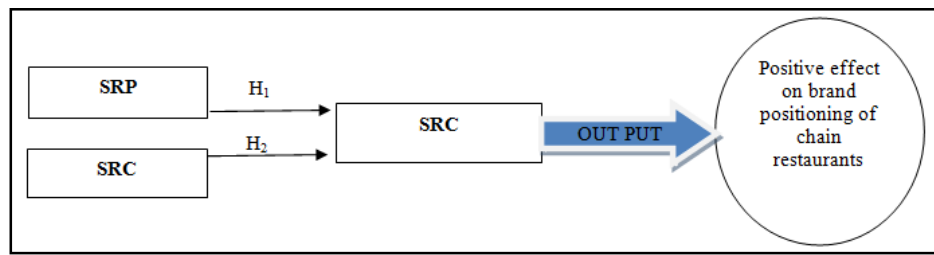


Figure 1: Research Model (self-generated)

### 3.1. Purpose of the Study and Requirements

Today, brands are differentiating marketing methods as a result of changes in consumer purchasing preferences that are sensitive to environment and contribute to the solution of social problems. Social responsibility is a positioning strategy aimed at providing a competitive edge that aims to create brand loyalty by establishing an emotional relationship with consumers of brands. This strategy puts social responsibility campaigns in the forefront of brand advertisements that consciously use.

The main purpose of the research is to contribute to the knowledge of the relevant area by examining the effect of social responsibility campaigns in positioning of chain restaurant brands operating in Turkey. The social responsibility activities of chain restaurant brands, which are expected to remain indifferent to social and environmental problems, have been transformed into a marketing strategy to measure how consumers are placed in memory. In line with this objective, information was collected about brand positioning and social responsibility campaigns in the summer. The data needed for the research were compiled by conducting a survey based on a survey on domestic consumers who prefer chain restaurants in Turkey province. In the survey, it was determined that consumers who prefer chain restaurants in Turkey prefer social responsibility campaigns that have social responsibility consciousness and they do not prefer chain food and beverage transactions and how these brands revive them in their minds.

Although there are many academic studies on the application of social responsibility in hotel business, the lack of studies on the effect of social responsibility and social responsibility on brand - brand positioning in restaurant business is remarkable. Since the impact of social responsibility on brand positioning has not been mentioned much in the sectoral and academic terms, it is thought that this study will contribute to the increase of interest in this direction.

## 4. Research Methodology and Findings

### 4.1. Research Methodology

The questionnaire was prepared according to the five-point Likert scale. For the 47 expressions prepared in the first section, the survey participants were asked to select the appropriate option from the options (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree). The second part is aimed at identifying the factors that influence the participant's choice of restaurant brands. The third part; is intended to reveal where the participants expect the restaurant brands to organize their social responsibility campaigns. In the second and third sections, it is required to indicate the appropriate places (1 = Too weak, 2 = Weak, 3 = Medium, 4 = High, 5 = Too high). In the last part, participants were asked about the socio-demographic characteristics (gender, marital status, age, educational level, profession, monthly income coming into the household). The questionnaire was prepared for domestic chain restaurant customers.

#### 4.1.1. Research Scope

Research is aimed at determining the SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AS A POINT OF DIFFERENCE ON BRAND POSITIONING A STUDY ON CHAIN RESTAURANTS. In this sense, the data needed for the research were compiled by conducting a survey based on a survey of the domestic consumers who prefer chain restaurants in Turkey.

#### 4.1.2. Sampling

The main mass of the research is domestic consumers who prefer chain restaurants in Turkey. Eskişehir with different demographic structures have been selected in Turkey for the purpose of representing the population by taking the expert opinion and the number of chain restaurants and addresses taken from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. It is assumed that the sample group is sufficient and represents the mass in a meaningful way. In April and May 2017, a questionnaire was applied to customers of chain restaurants in Turkey.

#### 4.1.3. Statistical Methods

Using the IBM SPSS 20 package program, data entry was performed, data were compiled, data scales were classified, dirty data were cleared, and statistical analysis was made available. The data of the sampling group is passed through the reliability analysis process and necessary corrections are made and reported. In the second stage, strong factors with factors

determined by factor analysis were analyzed in groups. The distribution of socio-demographic variables was reported with the necessary analyzes. Descriptive statistical, correlation analysis was applied to analyze and examine the inter-variable.

#### 4.2. Research Findings and Analysis

##### 4.2.1. Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	89	52.4	52.4	52.4
Female	81	47.6	47.6	100.0
Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Table 1: Gender

The research was conducted between 170 respondents. And the first demographic question was gender. Majority of the respondents was male. The number of males is 89 which show 89.16 percent are males. However, number of females are only 81 which shows the 80.84 percent are female out of 160 respondents

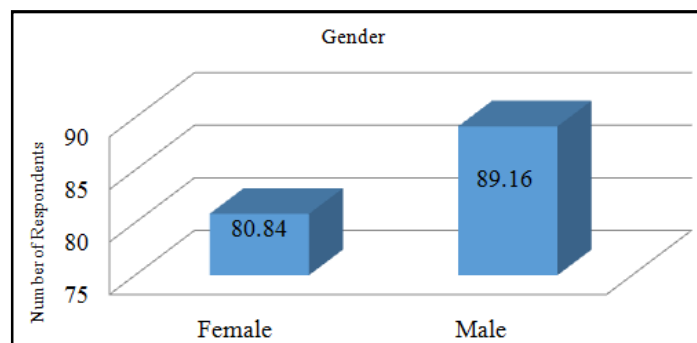


Figure 2: Gender

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-25	46	27.1	27.1	27.1
26-30	43	25.3	25.3	52.4
31-36	44	25.9	25.9	78.2
37-40	19	11.2	11.2	89.4
41-45	8	4.7	4.7	94.1
46-50	5	2.9	2.9	97.1
51 and over	5	2.9	2.9	100.0
Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Age

According to the table we can see the range of age is divided into 7 levels. The large number of respondents is between 20-25 and 26-30 which shows 46 and 43 percent are mostly youngsters. Second large number of respondents is between 31-36 which shows 44 percent of respondents belong to this age group. And 19 percent of respondents belong to 37-40 age groups. And there are only 8 respondents between age group of 41-45. Between age group of 46-50 available number of respondents was 5. And same in the last age group we have only 5 respondents.

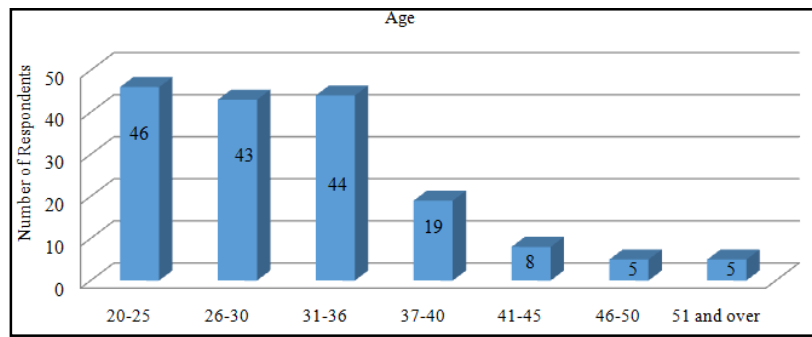


Figure 3

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
single	115	67.6	67.6	67.6
married	55	32.4	32.4	100.0
Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Marital Status

The next demographic variable was marital status. The majority of the respondents were single who 115.6 percent of total were. While 54.4 percent respondents were married.

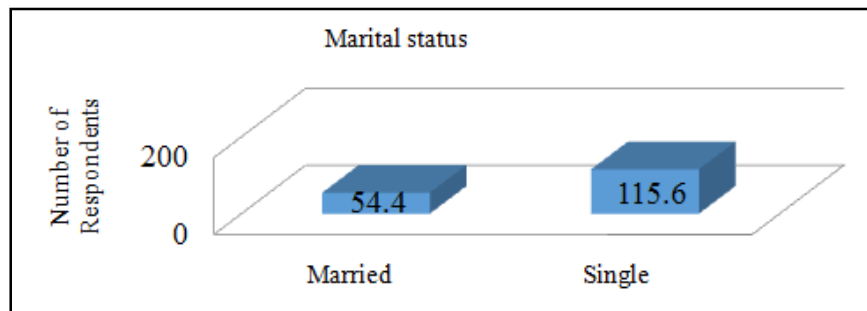


Figure 4

Educational Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Middle School	5	2.9	2.9	2.9
High School	7	4.1	4.1	7.1
Bachelor	44	25.9	25.9	32.9
Master	90	52.9	52.9	85.9
PHD	24	14.1	14.1	100.0
Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Educational Status

The table shows the educational status of the respondents. Here most of the respondents were students of bachelor 44.2 %. And huge number of respondents was students of master which is showing high percentage 90.1% and 23.8% have Ph.D. qualification.

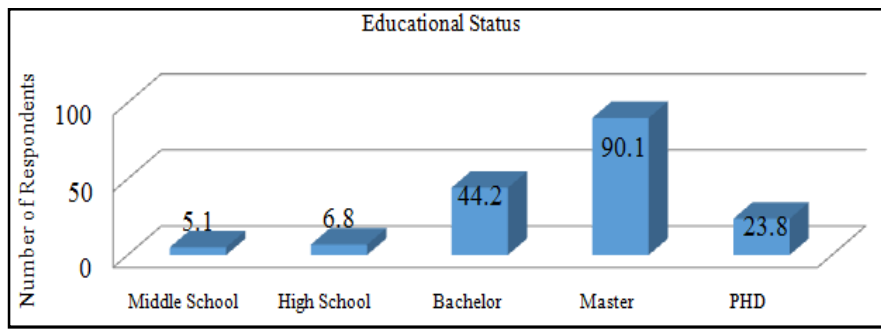


Figure 5

Income	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1000 TL	19	11.2	11.2	11.2
1001-2500 TL	29	17.1	17.1	28.2
2501-4000 TL	46	27.1	27.1	55.3
4001-5500	44	25.9	25.9	81.2
5501TL and above	32	18.8	18.8	100.0
Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: Income Status

Income table illustrate the monthly income of the respondents .it show that people with 2501-4000 were 45.9%. And respondents with the income of 4001-5500 were 44.2%. And with the family income of 5501 and above were 32.3%.

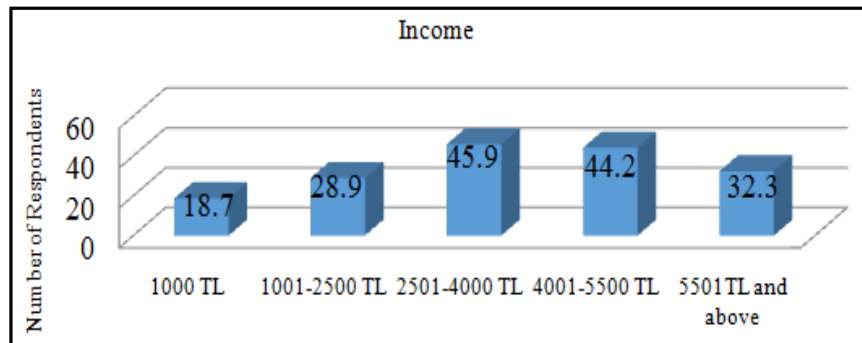


Figure 6

Variables	Average	Standard deviation
Service Quality	4.27	1.014
Location	4.06	1.013
Accessibility	3.94	1.043
Image	3.93	1.085
Prestige	3.74	1.186
Price	3.63	1.212
Other	3.44	1.297
Social responsibility	3.22	1.252
Advertisement	2.67	1.240

Table 6: Factors Affecting Chain Restaurant Preferences

In Table, it is seen that "service quality, availability, accessibility and image" variables are the main determinant when the opinions that are effective in the preferences of restaurant customers are examined. These variables are followed by prestige, price, other variables, social responsibility, and advertisement respectively. The important outcome from this analysis is; is a low-level factor influencing restaurant customers' selection in the second line of social responsibility, and it is necessary for restaurant businesses to communicate with their customers by creating more consciousness in this regard and to refresh the image of service quality that will be created in the minds of customers by using advertising channels of restaurant businesses more effectively.

Variables	Average	Standard Error
Education	4.05	1.086
Health	3.99	1.133
Environment	3.91	1.311
Food and Workplace Safety	3.90	1.275
Cultural heritage	3.85	1.175
Help the poor	3.69	1.300
Art	3.65	1.250
Animal Protection	3.57	1.225
Sports	3.56	1.209
Ethnic Origin Discrimination	3.27	1.632
Other	3.05	1.381

Table 7: Areas Consumers Need to Organize Social Responsibility Campaign for Chain Restaurants

"Restaurant, health, environment, food and workplace safety" is the area where the most campaigning is required when restaurant customers want to organize chain restaurant campaigns. The second important social responsibility campaign anticipation was in the fields of "cultural heritage, assistance to the poor, arts, animal protection and sports" respectively. At the third level, the important social responsibility campaign anticipation has become "ethnic discrimination and other fields" respectively. The most important conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is; customers prefer social campaigns such as sociological campaigns, sports campaigns, and animal protection in the last order, while ethnic background discrimination is the primary choice for chain restaurant businesses to focus and participate in social responsibility projects in education and health.

#### 4.3. Hypotheses Test

The relationship between the perspectives of participant customers on social responsibility consciousness, social responsibility preferences and chain restaurant brands that organize social responsibility campaigns and that affects positively on the brand positioning.

H1: There is a relationship between the social responsibility preferences of the consumers and the social responsibility consciousness which has positive effect on chain restaurant brand positioning.

H2: There is a relationship between the perspective of consumers on chain restaurant brands that regulate social responsibility campaigns and social responsibility consciousness.

The Relationship between Consumers' Social Responsibility Consciousness, Social Preferences and Social Responsibility Campaign Organizational Chain Restaurant Brand Attitudes.

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient is used to measure the number of linear relationships of two continuous variables. The answer to the question "Is there a meaningful relationship between the two variables?" is sought. Interpretation of the Pearson Correlation Coefficient:

Relationship	R*
Too weak	0.00-0.25
Weak	0.26-0.49
Medium	0.50-0.69
High	0.70-0.89
Too High	0.90-1.00

\* R: Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

Table 8: Correlation Coefficient Interpretation

Source: Sungur, 2005: 116



H1: There is a relationship between the social responsibility preferences of the consumers and the social responsibility consciousness which has positive effect on chain restaurant brand positioning.

Correlation Analysis			
		Social Responsibility Campaign	Social Responsibility Consciousness
Social Responsibility Campaign	Pearson Correlation Value	1	0.994**
	Number of Sampling (n)	170	170
Social Responsibility Consciousness	Pearson Correlation Value	0.994**	1
	Number of Sampling (n)	170	170

\*\* p < 0,05

Table 9

Pearson Correlation analysis tested; there is a significant positive and significant level of relationship between Pearson Correlation Coefficient 0.994 between "social responsibility consciousness and perspective on chain restaurant brands that organize social responsibility campaigns". The perspective of the chain restaurant brands that make up the responsibilities campaign of the customers' social responsibility consciousness level is increasing linearly.

H2: There is a relationship between the perspective of consumers on chain restaurant brands that regulate social responsibility campaigns and social responsibility consciousness.

Correlation Analysis			
		Social Responsibility Consciousness	Social Responsibility Preference
Social Responsibility Consciousness	Pearson Correlation Value	1	0.992**
	Number of Sampling (n)	170	170
Social Responsibility Preference	Pearson Correlation Value	0.992**	1
	Number of Sampling (n)	170	170

\*\* p < 0,05

Table 10

The relationship between social responsibility consciousness and social preferences of chain restaurant customers has been examined, analyzed and reported by Pearson Correlation analysis. When Table is examined, Pearson Correlation value is found to be "0,992" which means that there is a meaningful positive high importance level between social responsibility consciousness and social preference, that social responsibility consciousness increases social preference, and social preference increases social responsibility consciousness linearly.

	Hypothesis	Results
H <sub>1</sub>	There is a relationship between the social responsibility preferences of the consumers and the social responsibility consciousness which has positive effect on chain restaurant brand positioning	Accepted
H <sub>2</sub>	There is a relationship between the perspective of consumers on chain restaurant brands that regulate social responsibility campaigns and social responsibility consciousness.	Accepted

Table 11: The Results of the Tested Hypotheses

## 5. Conclusion

As a result of the study, brand positioning revealed that social responsibility campaigns were positively influenced by consumers. It appears that businesses that organize social responsibility campaigns are following an effective strategy for brand positioning. It is thought that if consumers do not make their choice in the direction of chain restaurants that organize their social responsibility campaigns, they have the perception that these restaurants are more expensive in the consumer mind and they do not want to pay too much for their social responsibility campaigns. In addition to positively positioning restaurant brands that organize social responsibility campaigns, social responsibility should enhance restaurant attractiveness on developed consumers by offering advertising activities and advertising activities in order to attract customers to them. They want the brands of businesses to be evaluated without prejudice and placed in the consumer's mind with confidence. It has become clear that corporate brands that organize social responsibility campaigns are placed as

"reliable, reputable, and respectful" in the consumer perception, and therefore brand positioning in the consumer is made with confidence in social responsibility campaigns.

Tourism enterprises using environmental resources are expected to ignore social and environmental problems. In the research, it has been measured how the consumers place themselves in the memory by turning the social responsibility activities of chain restaurant brands in Istanbul into a marketing strategy. The main purpose of the research is to contribute to the knowledge of the relevant area by examining the effect of social responsibility campaigns in positioning of chain restaurant brands operating in Turkey. In addition, this study is important in terms of increasing the awareness of social responsibilities in business, giving social responsibility campaigns more room by putting the effects of social responsibility campaigns in brand positioning.

It is aimed to provide social and sectoral benefits in this direction. In the literature, it is seen that branding of chain restaurants and academic work in the direction of brand positioning of chain restaurants are very few. In this study; it is thought that it will also be a source for branding, brand awareness and brand image on chain restaurants. The present study was carried out in the entire country of Turkey. An examination of the effects of social responsibility on brand positioning at different destinations will contribute to the literature.

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