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How Much *Cultural Assumptions* Matter In *"Corporate Reputation Dimensions"* of the Firms: A Study from Turkish Telecommunication Industry

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Abstract *The main purpose of this study is to examine the impact of cultural assumptions on corporate reputation perception of Turkish citizens mainly in Turkish telecommunication industry. Today in the globalised markets, in which the life cycles of products becomes shorten and differentiation between products diminish, as a company to be preferred, the key of the success lies in intangible assests. "Reputation" is such an intangible and valuable asset which makes a company preferred by whole stakeholders and which creates a competitive advantage for the companies. During the process of building of the reputation perception, cultural assumptions and values of the stakeholders are going to be influenced by national cultural values of the stakeholders (customers, suppliers, citizens, society, rivals..) Within the scope of this study impact of two cultural dimensions are tested namely: Individualism/ Collectivism and Masculinity/ Feminity. According to study results, horizontal individualism and feminity are the dominant cultural assumption prevaling in Turkish telecommunication sector in determining corporate reputation perception, whereas horizontal collectivist assumptions are the most prevailing one in determining the sector free general perception of reputation quotient. The people who have horizontal collectivist cultural assumptions, give importance much more to the inner dynamics of the company (i.e, workplace environment, leadership and financial performance) in their perception of RQ (reputation quotient). This study's theoretical contribution is the examination of effects of cultural dimensions on corporate reputation perception of the companies in a comprehensive model; proposing new variables (affect of corporate reputation on employee attitudes and behaviors like organizational commitment, intention to turnover, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior etc in terms of organizational behavior; and on customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and company performance as strategic management variables) in the model and filling this gap in the research.*

Key words: *Cultural Assumptions, Masculinity/Feminity, Individualism/Collectivism, Dimensions of Corporate Reputation, Telecommunication Sector*

1. Introduction

1.1 Importance and Definition of Corporate Reputation Concept

Today in the globalised markets, in which the life cycles of products becomes shorten and differentiation between products diminish, as a company to be preferred, the key of the success lies in *intangible assests*. *"Reputation"* is such an intangible and valuable asset which makes a company preferred by whole stakeholders and which creates a competitive advantage for the companies. Converging trends are making stakeholder perceptions more critical to companies. This invite today's managers to take a more active, centralised, focused and scientific approach to *communicating with their stakeholders*- an approach that Fombrun et al. stated under the label of *"reputation management"* (Fombrun, Gardberg & Sever, 1999; Fombrun&Rindova, 1996; Fombrun&Shanley, 1990; Fombrun & Zajac, 1987). Reputation is a company specific value. You can imitate a company's goods& services, strategy and company policies, buildings, human resources and its logo but you can't imitate a company's reputation. There is a tacit contract between highly reputated company and stakeholders which is based on social exchange and mutual trust constructed with a long period of time. Once this reputation is built, it is a real impediment to rivals and barriers in the market since reputation is the only source which can't be imitated and reproduced by the other firms.

As managerial interest in valuing and managing corporate reputation has grown, so too have academicians begun incorporating corporate reputations into their theoratical models. Various fields, including ecomomics, strategy, marketing, organization theory, communications and accounting are contributing to the literature on corporate reputations. From the perspective of business management, corporate repuation has a direct impact on companys' *sales performance* (increasing level of companies' services and products); *financial performance* (investments & rapidness of cash flow);

human resources management functions and policies (recruitment of most talented employees and candidates, working with a high qualified staff with relatively low amount of salaries and decreasing labor costs; *increase in internal (employee) and external customer satisfaction* as a result of the high performance levels of the qualified, talented employees); *strategic desicion making*, *crisis management* (i.e. taking support from internal and external stakeholders during crisis period creating a powerfull synergy), and having influence on even govenmental policies and law ag*ents*. All of these advantages decreases the total costs of the company by increasing total productivity, effectiveness and efficiency which brings higher profit maximization.

1. 2 Components of Corporate Reputation (How to measure the concept?)

Eventough there are various methods to measure corporate reputation, within this study Fonbrun's reputation dimensions are going to be used to operationally define the concept. According to this definition corporate reputation composed of six main components:

1) Corporate Social Responsibility; being environmentally responsible company, support good causes, maintain high standards in the way it treats people,

2) Financial Performance; has a strong record of profitability, looks like a low risk management, tends to outperform its competitors, looks like a company with strong prospects for future growth,

3) Products & Service; stands behind its products and services, develop innovative products and services, offer high quality products and services, offers products and services that are a good value of money,

4) Visionary Leadership; has excellent leadership, has a clear vision for its future, recognizes and take advantage of market opportunities,

5) Workplace environment; is well-managed, looks like a good company to work for, looks like a company that would have good employees,

6) Emotional appeal (atractiveness); having a good feeling about the company, admiring and respecting to the company, having trust in company (Fombrun et.al., 1999).

1.3 How culture matters in corporate reputation perception?

Culture is one of the important, most researched and influential *contingent variable* within the scope of management & organization studies and research models, especially after the classical study of famous Geert Hofstede's "Culture's Consequences" in 1980. Hofstede's basic assumption was that *"national culture"* has an impact of organizational culture and success of managerial implications are influenced by national and organizational culture dimensions. In other words, there in no an ideal and universal management or organization structure which is available in every context; culture may create different leadership styles, managerial styles, motivation policies, human resources management applications and it affect the implication and success of some management models like which are very popular but don't succeed in every kind of culture. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are: individualism/collectivism; power distance, masculinity and feminity and uncertainty avoidance. Like internal and behavioral dynamics, reputation perception may also be influenced and differ according to cultural dimensions. As it is stated before, reputation is composed of and built by the some total perceptions of *company stakeholders*. So during the process of building of the reputation perception, cultural assumptions and values of the stakeholders are going to be influenced by national cultural values of the stakeholders (customers, suppliers, citizens, society, rivals.) Within the scope of this study impact of two cultural dimensions are going to be tested namely: Individualism/ Collectivism and Masculinity/ Feminity.

Individualism is contrasted with *collectivism,* and refers to the extent to which people are expected to stand up for themselves and to choose their own affiliations, or alternatively act predominantly as a member of a life-long group or organisation. The prevailing debate over the dimensionality of I–C has mostly centered on whether or not I–C are two separate constructs/dimensions. In Cultures' Consequences, Hofstede (1980) considers I–C as the opposite ends of a single cultural dimension. The underlying assumption of this conceptualization entails that individualism and collectivism can be measured using the same set of scale items. Any indicator (measure) of collectivism is presumed to be a measure of individualism as well. Many researchers still favor this conceptualization of I–C (Wagner, 1995). On the other hand, a growing number of researchers are disenchanted with the plausibility of such a conceptualization. Triandis and his colleagues (Triandis, 1995; Triandis, 1996; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asaim, & Lucca, 1988; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998) argue that individualism and collectivism are both multidimensional constructs; they differ from each other but may coexist (Kim, Triandis, Kağıtçıbaşı, Choi & Yoon, 1994). Accordingly, one can be an individualist on one occasion and a collectivist on another. Similarly, individualism may exist in a predominantly collectivist culture and collectivism in an

individualist culture. Based on the idea that individualism and collectivism may be different constructs but share something in common, Triandis and his colleagues (Singelis et al. 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998) proposed that individualism and collectivism can be categorized as either vertical or horizontal. Drawing on Markus and Kitayama's (1991) distinction of independent-interdependent versus same-different self-construal, Triandis (1995) proposes a vertical-horizontal versus individualism–collectivism typology, defining four types of I–C. First, horizontal individualism (HI) reflects an independent/same self-construal (people view themselves as equal but independent of one another). Second, vertical individualism (VI) is purported to reflect an independent/different self-construal (people view themselves as unequal but independent). Similarly, horizontal collectivism (HC) reflects an interdependent/same self-construal whereas vertical collectivism (VC) reflects an interdependent/ different self-construal. Based on these new dimensions, Triandis and his colleagues developed a 32-item scale to measure individualism and collectivism (Singelis et al., 1995) using horizontal and vertical distinctions. The scale has been well accepted by cultural researchers as well as business scholars. In a subsequent study validating the proposed scale in a different culture than the US, Triandis and Gelfand (1998) reveal that 16 of the original scale items (See Table 1) achieve a relatively high factor loading (equal to or greater than 0.40) on the four factors identified. The results show evidence to the applicability of the measurement scale across cultures.

Therefore within this study vertical-horizontal dimensional definition of I/C is going to be used.

Masculinity vs. femininity - refers to the value placed on traditionally male or female values. So called 'masculine' cultures value competitiveness, assertiveness, ambition, and the accumulation of wealth and material possessions, whereas feminine cultures place more value on relationships and quality of life. For example if individualistic culture assumptions prevail in one specific environment, maybe financial performance component of reputation is going to be the most important factor, whereas in feminen cultures, emotional appeal and social responsibility may be more influential in determining the reputation of the company.

Within the concept of this discussions theoratical model of the study is exhibited in Figure 1.

Theoratical Framework and Hyphotesis:

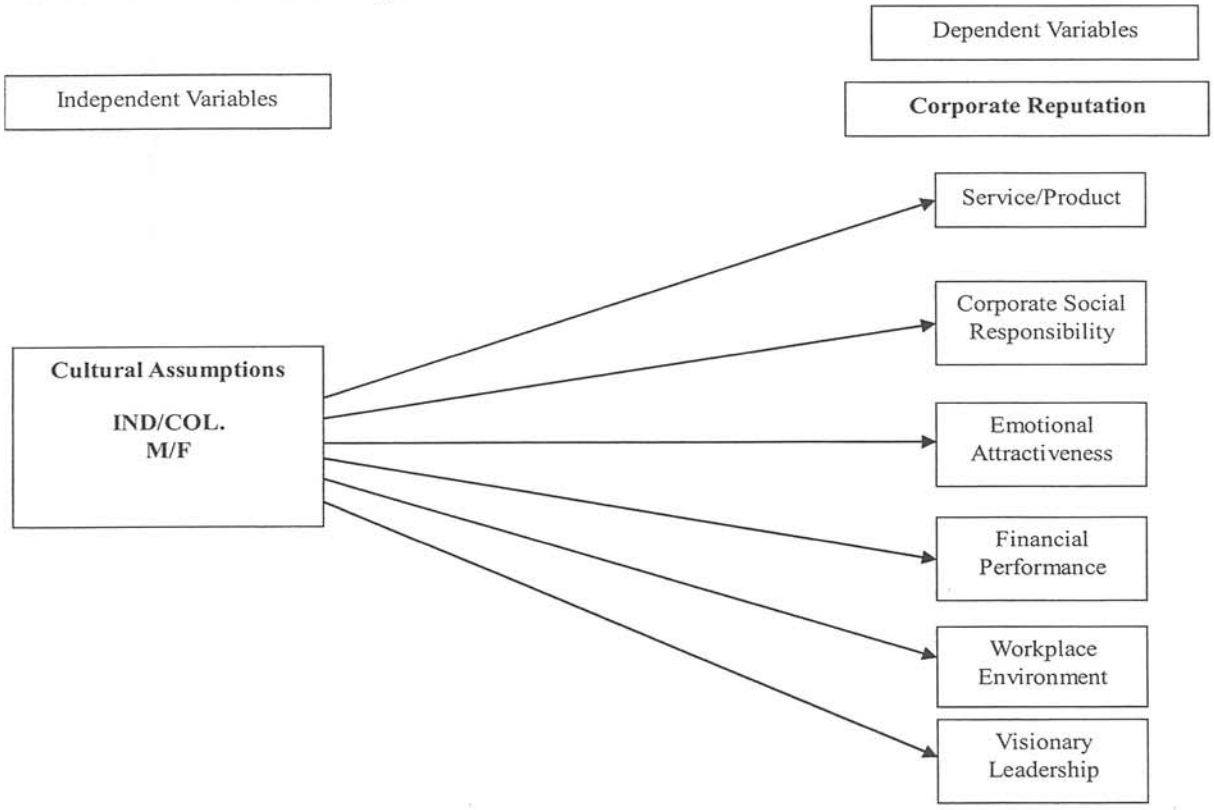

Figure 1 : Theoratical Model of the study

H1: Individualism/Collevtivism (I/C) have a significant impact on corporate reputation dimension.
H2: Masculinity/Feminity (M/F) have a significant impact on corporate reputation dimension.

2. Method

Sampling & Procedure: Turkish telecommunication sector is one of the most developed sectors in the country and there is hars competition between the compsanies in which the corporate reputation of the companies gains a special importance. Therefore, to test the research model, daha were collected from the customers of the companies in telecommunicaton sector in Istanbul, Turkey. With convenience sampling method, 506 customer's answers were collected in the research by using *a web-based structured questionnaire*. All the participants for this will be asked to complete the study's instruments on a voluntary basis. The surveys were also accompanied by a letter explaining the focus of the study. It was reminded the participants that their responses were completely confidential.

Demographic characteristics of the participants: According to frequency analyses conducted with demographic questions, 45,3% of the sample are female and 54.7% are male. 29,6 % have high school, 62,3 % have bachelor's degree (university graduate) and 8,1 % have MA and PhD degrees which means most majority of the sampling were graduated from the university. In the sampling data, 26,3 % of the customers are students, 66 % are workers (both in private and public sector), and 7,7% are others (including house-wives and retired people) which means that vast majority of the sampling are in the position of manager or specialist and currently working in a company. (As a more detailed distribution: 4,5 % are top level manager i.e. CEO or general manager, 28,7 % middle level managers, 17,7 % specialist, 22, 7 % bureaucrats, 10,5 % company owner (entrepreneur) and 26% blue collar worker).

Measurement Instruments: To measure corporate reputation dimension, "The Reputation Quotient Questionnaire" were used (composing of 6 components as it is explained in detail in theoratical part) developed by Fombrun, Gardberg & Sever in 2000. Totally there are 20 items in the scale; 4 questions to measure product&services; 3 questions to measure Visionary leadership; 3 questions to measure workplace environment; 4 questions to measure financial performance; 3 questions to measure corporate social responsibility and 3 questions to measure emotional attractiveness. In the first part a "*general reputation perception*" of the participants were asked whereas in the second level *"the reputation perception of the firms in telecommunication sector"* were questioned (i.e. Turkcell, Vodafone, Avea & TurkishTelecomTT) with the same 20 items. To measure masculinity/feminity dimension of culture, Turkish version of Hofstede's questionnaire were used which is developed by İslamoğlu, Birsel, Börü (2005) composed of 11 items. To measure individualism/ collectivism dimension of culture, Kim et.al's (1996) IndCol scale were used composed of 16 items and 4 factors (i.e. vertical individualism, horizontal individualism, vertical collectivism and horizontal collectivism, number of items in each dimension is equal to four) Turkish adaptation of the scale were done by the researchers. The questionnaire is composed of 4 parts. In the first part, there are questions about to measure "general corporate reputation perception" (developed by Fombrun, Gardberg & Sever, 2000) of the Turkish telecommunication sector customers with a 10 point scale. In the second part, the same questions were asked on a company basis which are leaders in the sector (Those 4 companies are the largest GSM operators within the country: Turkcell, Vodafone, Avea and TurkTelecom-TT). In the third part there are questions to measure individualism/ collectivism and masculinity/feminity values (assumptions) of the participants. A 6 point scale were used. Lastly in the fourth part demographic questions (including gender, age, income level, educational level, position etc..)

3. Findings

SPSS 17.0 version were used to make statistical analysis to the collected data. Principal component analysis(explatory factor analysis), reliability analysis, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis methods were used.

Factor and Reliability Analyses

3.1 Factor & Reliability Analysis of General Reputation Quotient Scale

To be able to test the impacts of model variables, factors are computed and the reliability analyses were done to all of the factors by SPSS 17.0 version. SPSS computed 4 factors for **"The General Reputation Quotient Scale".** Since in the original scale there are 6 factors (corporate social responsibility, financial performance, products & service, visionary leadership, workplace environment, emotional appeal & attractiveness) with the study sample, Reputation Quotient Scale are composed of 4 factors which have 60,87 % cumulative variance level. Items within the factor of visionary leadership and financial performance were computed as one factor which is labeled as ***"leadership and financial performance"***. This means that a well managed company is perceived as a profitable company and a profitable company is perceived as a well managed company within the study sampling. Leadership & Financial Performance Factor is the most influential

factor in explaining the general reputation perception of the firms in a Turkish sampling (Explained variance: 19, 644). As a result of the reliability analysis Cronbach Alpha value is equal to .856, which means that the inter item reliability is quite high and significant reliability score. According the factor analysis results, "corporate social responsibility& emotional attractiveness" is the second powerful factor which has an impact on the total (general) reputation perceptions of the in Turkey (Explained variance: 19, 343). As a result of the reliability analysis Cronbach Alpha value is equal to .884, which means that the inter item reliability is quite high and the factor is quite reliable. "Product & services" and "workplace environment" factors were computed as separate factors and protected its factor structure such as in the original scale. *"Workplace environment"* is the third important factor in determining the corporate reputation perceptions of the firms in Turkish sampling (Explained variance: 11,600 %). As a result of the reliability analysis Cronbach Alpha value is equal to ,730 which is an acceptable inter-item reliability score. And lastly, *"product & services"* is the fourth influential factor in creating corporate reputation perception of the companies in this Turkish sampling (Explained variance: 10,283 %). As a result of the reliability analysis Cronbach Alpha value is equal to .663, which means that the inter item reliability is acceptable. Detailed results of the factor structure of the scale and their reliability scores of the general reputation quotient are exhibited in Table 1.

Table 1. Factor Analysis and Reliability Scores of Perception of "General Reputation Quotient" Scale in Turkish Society

Item No	Items	Leadership and Financial Performance	Corporate Social Res. & Emotional Attractiveness	Workplace Environment	Product & Services
12	Looks like a company with strong prospects for future growth	,827			
13	Tends to outperform its competitors	,760			
7	Recognizes and takes advantage of market opportunities	,713			
11	Has a strong record of profitability	,655			
6	Has a clear vision for its future	,652			
5	Has excellent leadership	,598			
14	Looks like a low risk investment	,597			
4	Develops innovative products and services	,453			
18	I have a good feeling about the company		,849		
19	I admire and respect the company		,841		
20	I trust this company		,829		
17	Supports good causes		,719		
16	Is an environmentally responsible company		,698		
15	Maintains high standars in the way it treats people		,532		
8	Is well managed			,693	
10	Looks like a company that would have good employees			,686	

9		Looks like a company to work for			,652	
1		Offers high quality products and services				,733
2		Offers products and services that are a good value for the money				,724
3		Stands behind its products and services				,721
		Explained Variance %	19,644	19,343	11,600	10,283
		Cronbach Alpha	,856	,884	,730	,663
		Cumulative Variance %	60,87			
		Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		,875		
		Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4861,761		
			df	190		
			Sig.	,000		

Whereas in Table 1, the general reputation perception's of the participants were measured, factor and reliability analyses were also conducted for "Reputation Quotient Scale" for telecommunication sector. The same questions were asked to evaluate the reputation perceptions of the Turkish citizens for the 4 major telecommunication companies operating in the sector. SPSS computed a different factor structure which is specific to the telecommunication sector and that is important to build corporate reputation. Factor analyses were done for the 4 companies in the sector seperately. But the same factor structure is computed which can be generalized to the Turkish telecommunication sector. 6 factors and 20 items in the original scale were computed as 2 factors. As a difference from the general reputation perception, 3 factors are combined as one factor composed of "visionary leadership", " financial performance" and " workplace environment". Whereas "workplace environment" is a seperate factor in general reputation perception, this factor is combined and included in the scope of one factor together with the financial performance and visionary leadership. So the first factor is labeled for the telecommunication sector is: "leadership, financial performance and workplace environment". Again as a difference from the general reputation perception, 3 factors are combined as one factor composed of "corporate social responsibility", "emotional attractiveness" and " product and services". Whereas "products & services" is a seperate factor in general reputation perception, this factor is combined and included in the scope of one factor together with the corporate social responsibility and emotional attractiveness. So the second factor is labeled for the telecommunication sector is: "corporate social responsibility, emotional attractiveness and products & services". When we evaluate this result it is seen that, *factors that is related to the "inner dynamics of the firms"* like good working environment, profitability related to the financial performance and good management are evaluated as one factor by the study sampling. The factors which influence the outside stakeholders and are *more tangible* like product, service, supporting good pusposes and helping community, respect and trust are evaluated under one factor (these are very much related concepts in themselves). This is about *"the interaction of the firm with stakeholders"* outside the company.

3.2. Factor & Reliability Analysis of Masculinity/ Femininity (M/F) Scale

In the first step SPSS computed 2 factors for M/ F scale. 4 items related to feminine values were collected in Factor 1 (Feminity) and 7 items related to masculine values were collected in Factor 2 (Masculinity). During the reliability analysis Q3 and Q4 which decreases internal reliability were excluded from the analysis one by one and the factor analysis were repeated. In the third step one question (Q2) about masculine dimensions was computed in Feminity factor whereas during the reliability analysis this item was also excluded from the analysis since it decreases inter item reliability. At the end two factors namely Masculinity (5 items) and Feminity (2 items) were reached with good reliability scores. KMO and Bartlett test of sphericity, factor loadings, number of items, item sentences, reliability scores, cumulative variance of the model were illustrated in Table 2 in detail.

Table 2. Factor Analysis and Reliability Scores of Masculinity / Feminity Scales in Turkish Culture

Item No	Items	Masculinity Factor	Feminity Factor
M5	I give importance to money and material possessions	,785	
M3	People has to be ambitious, assertive and repressive	,730	
M6	Performance and sucess in the job is more important than interpersonal relationships	,720	
M1	I seriously give importance to material success	,690	
M4	Power and success is important for me	,661	
F2	Being modest is important for me		,891
F1	I become really happy when I conduct warm personal relationships		,884
	Explained Variance %	37,229	26,672
	Cumulative Variance %	63,901	
	Cronbach Alpha	,786	,787

3.3. Factor & Reliability Analysis of Individualism / Collectivism Scale

In the first step SPSS computed 4 factors for Individualism / Collectivism (IND / COL) scale.
No item was necessary to be excluded from the analysis and factor structure is the same with original scale developed by Kim et.al's (1996). Factor 1 -composed of 4 items- is called *"horizontal collectivism"*, Factor 2 -composed of 4 items- is called *"vertical collectivism"*, Factor 3 –composed of 4 items- is called *"vertical individualism"* and lastly Factor 4- composed of 4 items- is called *"horizontal individualism"*. The results indicate that, horizontal collectivism is the most influential factor in determining Turkish citizen's cultural assumptions about IND/COL whereas vertical individualism still prevails as a strict collectivist value as being have the second important influential factor. KMO and Bartlett test of sphericity, factor loadings, number of items, item sentences, reliability scores, cumulative variance of the model were illustrated in Table 3 in detail.

Table 3. Factor Analysis and Reliability Scores of Individualim/ Collectivism Scales in Turkish Culture

Item No	Items	Horizontal Collectivism	Vertical Collectivism	Vertical Individualism	Horizontal Individualism
20	If a worker gets a prize, I woud feel proud.	,801			
21	The well being of coworkers is important to me	,801			
22	To me plesure is spending time with others	,751			
23	I feel good when I cooporate with the others	,705			
25	Parents and children must stay together as mush as possible		,834		
26	It is important to me that I respect the desicions made by my groups		,819		
24	It is my duty to take care of my family, even when I have to sacrifices are required		,659		
27	Family members should stick together, no matter what sacrifices are required		,645		

17		Winning is everything			,742	
18		Competition is law of nature			,738	
19		When another person does beter than I do, I get tense and aroused			,734	
16		It is important that I do my job beter than others			,558	
15		I'd rather depend on myself than others				,751
14		I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others				,718
12		I often do "my own thing"				,669
13		My personal identity independent of others is very imortant to me				,516
		Explained Variance %	17,726	15,305	13,054	12,628
		Cronbach Alpha	.812	.794	.681	.642
		Cumulative Variance %	58,713			

3. 4. Hypotesis Testing / Regression Analyses

3.4.1. The Impact of Masculinity/Feminity Dimensions on General Corporate Reputation Perception

To test the impact of cultural assumptions (independent variables) on corporate reputation (dependent Variables) dimensions multiple regression analysis technique were used. First Masculity and Feminity dimensions were regressed on each factor of the "general reputation quotient" factors namely "financial performance and leadership", "corporate social responsibility and emotional atractiveness", "workplace environment" and "product and services" and 4 seperate regression models were tested. According to the regression analysis results, Masculinity and Feminity dimension has no significant explanatory power on "financial performance and leadership" and "corporate social responsibility and emotional atractiveness". Masculinity and feminity dimension has a low level of explanatory power on "workplace environment" dimension of the general corporate reputation perception (GCRQ). Eventough the explanatory power of the regression model is low (R square=.039), we can talk about a minimum level of impact of masculinity and feminity on workplace environment.Beta coefficient between feminity and workplace environment is .217 with a confidence level of .000. Masculinity dimension has a low level of negative impact on workplace environment dimension (Beta: -,094; significance: .041).

Table 4: The impact of Masculinity/Feminity dimensions on "workplace environment" dimension of general corporate reputation perception

VARIABLES	*Adjusted R square*	*F*	*P*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
	.039	18,049	.000			
FEMINITY				,217	4,697	,000
MASCULINITY				-,094	-2,045	,041
Independent Variables: Masculinity, Feminity						
Dependent Variable: Workplace environment dimension of the perception of GCRQ						

According to the regression analysis results, masculinity dimension has a very low level of explanatory power on "products and services" dimension of the general perception of the corporate reputation (Beta =,118).Detailed results of the analysis were exhibited in Table 5.

Table 5: The impact of Masculinity/Feminity dimensions on "Product & Services" dimension of general corporate reputation perception

VARIABLES	*Adjusted R square*	*F*	*P*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
MASCULINITY	,014	7,099	,008	,118	2,664	,008
Independent Variables: Masculinity, Feminity Dependent Variable: "Product & Services" dimension of the perception of GCRQ						

As the regression analysis indicated Masculity / Feminity dimensions of the culture have an impact on 2 sub factors of corporate reputation perception of the firms in this Turkish sampling which means that ***H2 is partially accepted.***

3.4.2 The Impact of Individualim/Collectivism Dimensions on General Corporate Reputation Perception

To test the impact of Individualism/Collectivism and its vertical and horizontal sub dimensions of the culture on general corporate reputation perception, four different multiple regression models were tested. First, vertical individualism, vertical collectivism, horizontal individualism and horizontal collectivism dimensions were regressed on " financial performance and leadership" dimension of corporate reputation. Only "horizontal collectivism" entered to the model with low explanatory power (Adjusted R Square= ,12) and significant Beta coefficient equal to . 108. Detailed results of the regression analysis were exhibited in Table 6. Detailed results were exhibited in Table 6. As the study results indicates, horizontal collectivism and vertical collectivism has an impact on corporate reputation perception which means that **H1 is partially accepted.**

Table 6: The impact of Individualism/Collectivism dimensions on "Financial Performance and Leadership" dimension of general corporate reputation perception

VARIABLES	*Adjusted R square*	*F*	*P*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
HORIZONTAL COLLECTIVISM	,12	6,002	,015	,108	2,450	,015
Independent Variables: Vertical Individualism, Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Individualism, Horizontal Collectivism Dependent Variable: "***Financial Performance& Leadership***" dimension of the perception of GCRQ						
VARIABLES	*Adjusted R square*	*F*	*P*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
HORIZONTAL COLLECTIVISM	,22	11,253	,001	,148	3,355	,001
Independent Variables: Vertical Individualism, Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Individualism, Horizontal Collectivism Dependent Variable: "***Corporate Social Responsibility&Emotional Attractiveness***" dimension of the perception of GCRQ						
VARIABLES	*Adjusted R square*	*F*	*P*	*Beta*	*T*	*P*
HORIZONTAL COLLECTIVISM	,17	38,698	,000	,267	6,221	,000
Independent Variables: Vertical Individualism, Vertical Collectivism, Horizontal Individualism, Horizontal Collectivism Dependent Variable: ***"Workplace Environment"*** dimension of the perception of GCRQ						

4. Results & Discussion

Within the scope of this study, the impact of cultural assumptions on the perception of reputation is tested. So, *this study's main theoretical contribution is the examination of effects of cultural dimensions on corporate reputation perception of the companies in a comprehensive model.* If the impact of cultural assumptions on reputation perception is tested, companies may develop different strategies to build and manage their reputation. The impact of cultural assumptions on the perception of reputation is tested and the impact of national cultural values on general corporate reputation perception of the stakeholders are proven.

According to factor analysis results, there are *four important factors* determining the Turkish sampling's (506 customers) general corporate reputation perception. These 4 factors are financial performance & visionary leadership, corporate social responsibility & emotional attractiveness, workplace environment and lastly product & services. Whereas in telecommunication sector, there are two main factors determining Turkish sampling's reputation perception. According to their impact level, these 2 factors are financial performance, visionary leadership and workplace environment which is called "inner dynamics of the firm affecting reputation perception" and "corporate reputation and responsibility, emotional attractiveness and products & services" which is called "the interaction of the firm with stakeholders". *As a remarkable result of those analyses, unionization of "corporate social responsibility and emotional attractiveness" indicates a cultural emphasis in itself. Within the scope of Turkish culture togetherness of these two factors isn't a surprise. Even tough "corporate social responsibility" can be considered as a new concept for Turkish community, benevolent behaviors and altruism are the common values rooted in collectivism assumption so that a company which is responsible and helpful to the community is also perceived as a respectful, trustful company and good feelings and emotions may appeal towards it.*

As the study results indicate, masculinity/ femininity and individualism/ collectivism dimensions of culture may have a low-to moderate explanatory power as an independent variable on both general corporate reputation perception of the Turkish citizens and reputation perception of the companies in telecommunication sector. Especially in determining general reputation perception, horizontal collectivism and feminine cultural values prevail whereas in sectoral reputation perception, horizontal individualism and feminine cultural values prevail.

More specifically individuals who have *feminine cultural assumptions* give importance to "workplace environment" as an influential factor in determining reputation which is also an inner dynamic of the company. In other words, when an individual has Feminity cultural assumptions, positive workplace relationships and quality of the organizational dynamics has a meaningful contribution in the evaluation of company's corporate reputation since individuals who have feminine cultural assumptions give importance to warm interpersonal relationships, they avoide from conflict, quality of the interpersonal relationship prevails. Whereas according to regression analysis results, individuals who have *masculinity values* give importance to the product and service dimension (price and service quality) in determining the corporate reputation perception of a company. This results match with the masculinity values of competition, material gaining and dominance. Individuals who have masculine values don't give very much importance to the quality of interpersonal relationships and informal dynamics in the organization in their general perception of the corporate reputation of the companies. So the firms have to take into consideration masculinity and Feminity values of the target society in building and managing their corporate reputation.

When we consider *the impact of individualism and collectivism* on corporate reputation perception, study results indicates that horizontal collectivism is the dominant cultural assumption prevailing in Turkish business context. Besides products and services dimension, all of the subdimensions of general corporate reputation perception (i.e. financial performance & leadership, corporate social responsibility & emotional attractiveness and workplace environment) are significantly affected by "horizontal collectivism" dimension. As it is stated in introduction part, horizontal collectivism (HC) reflects an interdependent/same self-construal (i.e. being proud of the success of the other group member's success; enjoying to work with cooperative environments, being happy to be interested in other people within the group etc). So positive group dynamics and group spirit are the prevailing values for horizontal collectivists. Leadership entails group and team work, creating a strong vision to achieve goals together as an organization, uniting group members towards the achievement of common organizational goals so leadership also entails cooperation with all group members. Since the idea behind leadership matches with the cultural assumptions of the horizontal collectivists, they are going to give importance to the visionary leadership in the organization as the most influential factor in determining corporate reputation.

Likewise, horizontal collectivism has meaningful impacts over the other dimensions of the corporate reputation including "corporate social responsibility and emotional attractiveness", "workplace environment" and "product & services". However, for "product and services" dimension, even tough horizontal collectivism have an impact, vertical collectivism also entered in the model with a stronger Beta coefficient in a negative way which means that vertical

collectivists don't give importance to the product & service quality in their evaluation and perception of corporate reputation in general. Actually vertical collectivism is a more strict form of collectivism which entails a high level of personal attachment to the family and the group and the superiority of group privileges over individual interest and a high level of sacrifice of individual interests to be part of the family and social group. So for the vertical collectivists the technical specifications, quality and price can't be considered so much important in evaluating general corporate reputation. Besides unconditioned attachment to the organization may prevail in their definition of corporate reputation. All of these significant co-efficients entails that horizontal collectivists give much more importance to visionary leadership, corporate social responsibility, emotional attractiveness" of the companies in their perception of the corporate reputation. Besides the results about general corporate reputation perception, in the sector based analysis (regarding telecommunication sector in Turkey) results show that even tough feminine values stay constant in these interactions, individualistic and collectivist values may differ even in the same society but in different sectors. Result indicates that in Turkish telecommunication sector besides from general reputation perception of the sampling, horizontal individualism prevails. Horizontal individualistic assumptions together with Feminity have a meaningful impact on both inner dynamics and interaction with the outside stakeholders dimensions of reputation perception. Horizontal individualists, like taking risks, don't like being dependent to the others while taking decisions and they have high level of self-esteem instead of trusting other people around themselves. Likewise when people have feminine cultural values (giving importance to the quality of the interpersonal relationships) they also take into consideration the inner and organizational dynamics of the firm in Turkish telecommunication sector.

Consequently, the important finding of this study is that together with national cultural values, companies have to evaluate their sector base and corporate base analysis and take into consideration sectoral and organizational differences while creating their reputation strategies. This result also indicates that individualism and collectivism are multidimensional concepts rather than unidimensional as it is discussed in the introduction part. Individualism and collectivism are both multidimensional constructs; they differ from each other but may coexist (Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi, & Yoon, 1994, p. 6). Accordingly, one can be an individualist on one occasion and a collectivist on another. Similarly, individualism may exist in a predominantly collectivist culture and collectivism in an individualist culture (Gelfand & Dyer, 2000).

Low-to-moderate regression results shows us that cultural dynamics instead of as being taken as pure independent variables in the research models, they can be taken into consideration as "contingent" or "moderating" variables in determining the impact of cultural reputation on various outputs in the next models. *Actually this study is the pioneer one in the related literature searching the impact of cultural values on corporate reputation and the most important empirical contribution of the study is to offer new research models integrating culture, corporate reputation and both individual and organizational outcomes.* For example in upcoming research models, the impact of corporate reputation perception on customer satisfaction or customer loyalty may be investigated and the cultural dynamics (i.e. individualism/ collectivism or masculinity/Feminity) can be taken as moderating variables which is increasing or decreasing the interaction between reputation and those customer outcomes. At the same time, company performance, brand loyalty and other strategic management variables may also be included in the model as the outcomes of reputation quotient. Besides, the affect of corporate reputation on employee attitudes and behaviors like organizational commitment, intention to turnover, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior etc. within the scope of organizational behavior discipline can also be empirically tested and the impact of organizational culture or person-organization value fit can also be investigated as moderating variables within these interactions.

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