The Corporate Image Perception of
Airline Employees

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Abstract

The corporate image is one of the important factors that the institutions have to exist in the world in which there is a great competition. The corporate image indicates the total perception that shareholders have of the institution. The most significant factor providing that the institutions operating in the aviation industry have an image perceived positively is that employees reflect their attitudes and behaviors on the external shareholders positively as a result of the positive image of their own institutions they perceive. In this regard, the main purpose of the study is to identify the corporate image perception perceived by airline employees. Moreover, whether the variables in question vary by some demographic characteristics was investigated. As a result of the study conducted, it was identified that the corporate image perception of airline employees is high in all aspects.

1   Introduction

Nowadays, the fact that an institution provides only quality products and services or tries to make its name with million-dollar advertisements may not be enough to create the expected effect both on customers and social media. In addition to

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following new approaches and changes in the industry, the fact that the institution creates awareness and gains a creative, dynamic and different place in the eye of its shareholders is of great importance. The corporate image management is one of the significant means to provide that. The importance of the corporate image management considered as a requirement of the corporate management increases with each passing day in today's business world in which there is a strong competition and this importance carries a strategical value in terms of institutions considering the conditions of the competition. Therefore, institutions must be aware of the image management to sustain their existence.

With the increase in the competition in global economy, unlimited product range, changes in customer demands and expectations, easy access to services and products, stunning developments in information and communication technologies, etc. cause the image of the institution to be handled more comprehensively as a result of the requirement of institutions to maintain their place and gain advantage by creating differences. In this respect, image management is considered as inevitable both at the individual and corporate level. While institutions try to reach their goals, they should create strategies by determining human resources which are full of values that can reflect the institution, educated and qualified in the field. Thus, the corporate image perceptions of employees and positive values they provide to the institution have a great importance. The institution should have a strong corporate image to provide the efficient use of its assets and resources and increase the value and reliability. Image management has inevitably become one of the most important values of the corporatized management in the airline industry established with big capitals as in all commercial industries.

The need for institutions to make the image a management factor to exhibit a positive image, to get a sustainable competitive advantage and to protect success in the long term is approved according to the results of scientific studies (Bruggen, 2014; Yang et al., 2012; Park, Robertson and Wu, 2005; Khraim, 2013; Hussian, Nasser and Hussian, 2014, Weiwei, 2007). Thus, the fact that institutions have their products and services accepted in both domestic market and foreign market and convert this acceptance into a financial value is possible with a good corporate image.

In this regard, the concept of corporate image constitutes the subject of the study. How the corporate image is perceived by employees was attempted to be determined. For this purpose, it was focused on the perception of the image management of an international airline company by the employees regarding the determination and management of the image with which airline companies known as the fastest mean of transportation and providing employment to millions of individuals in the transportation sector can have an advantage under the conditions of competition. In recent years, the development in the Turkish Aviation Industry occurred much faster when compared to other aviation industries in the world. Many international airlines are in close relationships with the Turkish aviation industry and increase their support (Gures, Arslan and Tun, 2014). Within this context, increasing competition in the aviation industry in our country and efforts

to attract qualified personnel may require the institutions in this industry to focus on the image they have.

2 Literature Review

The word of image is considered as a concept assigned with meaning in different aspects. While some approach the subject positively, some defend the opinion that the image is fake and far from reality and is created with artificial characteristics or behavioral patterns. However, the concept of image is an inevitable part of life, whether approached positively or negatively (Özüpek, 2013). The image can be considered as a form of subjective perception which is not based on the content of actual events and personal behaviors are not completely based on information or news, instead, they are based on perceptions and their consequences (Hsu, Liu and Lee, 2010). According to Chui and Hsu (2010), the image is a result of personal perception and it can be defined as being limited by information obtained by an individual and a function of the individual's perspective.

Corporate image expresses the individuals' perceptions of the organization. This conceptualization includes the perceptions formed not only by the non-organizational members but also by the members of the institution (Rho, Yun and Lee, 2015). The corporate image consists of two components being functional and emotional. The functional component is related to the material qualifications and can be measured easily, the emotional component is related to the psychological dimensions standing out with emotions and attitudes and these emotions are derived from the processing of personal experiences and information. Therefore, corporate image is a result of the comparison of various characteristics of institutions (Weiwei, 2007).

Table 1: Some corporate image definitions

Year	Author/s	Definition
2009	Worcester	"Corporate image, the net result of all experiences, impressions, beliefs, feelings and knowledge people have about a company"
2006	Lee, Kim and Lim	"Corporate image has informational content and emotional attachment or detachment that is important to the customers"
2004	Santesmases	"A mental representation. The result of the perceptions generated in the public with regard to corporate identity"
2002	Nyugen and LeBlanc	"The result of an aggregated process by which the public compares and contrasts the diverse attributes of organizations"
2000	Minguez	"Assembly of meanings that a person associates to an organization, that is to say, the ideas utilized to describe or remind the organization"

Source: Adapted from Mai An Tran, Bang Nyugen, T.C. Melewar, Jim Bodoh; "Exploring the Corporate Image Formation Process", *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal,* **18**(1), (2015), pp.111-114.

Corporate image is the most difficult resource to imitate as a result of an attractive concept based on the intuition related to attitude and a comprehensive period

required for the development (Rattanaphan and Mat, 2014). It was established on the corporate identity (physical and cultural characteristics) and studies reflecting the personality perceived by external shareholders in relation to the institution. The image is a reflection of identity and finally, a successful positive attitude towards the institution (Olmedo-Cifuentes and Martínez-León, 2014). Some different definitions related to the corporate image are presented in Table 1 above. When different definitions made in relation to the corporate image are examined, the corporate image can be expressed as positive or negative evaluations related to the institution, based on the perceptions, observations, attitudes, knowledge, experiences and beliefs of the shareholders.

Tran et al. (2015) states that corporate image is the first impression related to the institution and a good impression can represent the institution without making any detection. Corporate image is an internal picture reflected outside the institution. Therefore, institutions try to reflect an image actively and the image will not be reflected negatively unless the institution wants it because it originates from within the institution. For example, an institution can describe itself as an institution responsible for external shareholders and the environment, even if it is not responsible for the environment (Walker, 2010). In this regard, the process of formation of the corporate image is presented in Figure 1.
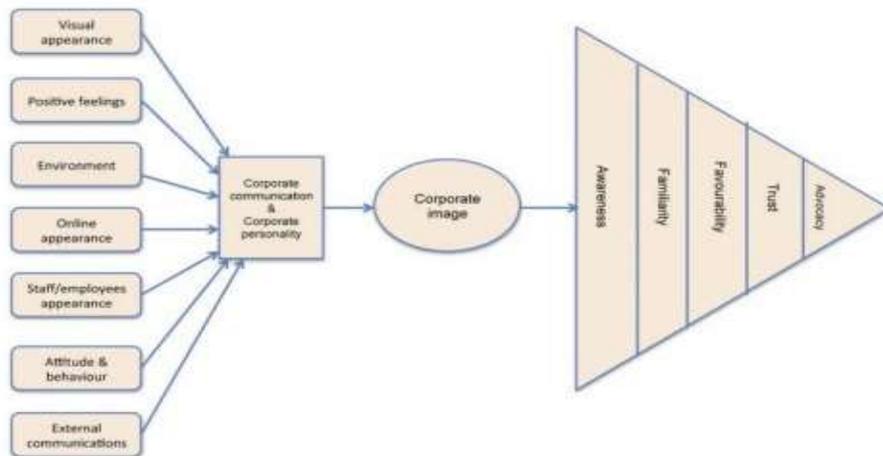

Figure 1: A corporate image formation process

Source: Mai An Tran, Bang Nyugen, T.C. Melewar, Jim Bodoh; "Exploring the Corporate Image Formation Process", *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal,* **18**(1), (2015), p.102.

According to Figure 1 above, seven dimensions that interact with corporate communication and identity form the corporate image. Corporate communication and identity turn seven dimensions into the understandable material and moral corporate image variables and make it possible to put them into practice. Over time, corporate image gains a deeper meaning in the minds of the shareholders and trust, awareness, familiarity, confidence and favorableness occurring at five different levels with time and experiences create a more consistent reputation.

When seven dimensions are considered together, it is revealed how individuals define the corporate image in their minds.

The employees satisfied with the institution and their managers work as in charge of public relations of their own accord and contribute to the creation of corporate image due to continuously increasing indirect effects, by affecting their immediate environment (Geçikli, 2013). According to Upamannyu, Bhakar and Gupta (2015), since corporate image affects the behaviors of shareholders, organizations have to improve and manage their images.

Corporate image is generally effective on potential applicants, applicants who have applied for a job, decisions of investors and product preference of customers by affecting the attractiveness of the institution and affects the current employees. While the negative image perception results in negative experiences such as depression and stress, image perception interpreted positively provides positive results such as satisfaction and commitment. While a positive image provides the integration of the employees' identities with the institution, the positive image perception of people outside the institution will be effective on product preferences by enabling their integration with the institution (Kim and Trail, 2010). While a positive image increase sales of the company with customer satisfaction and commitment, it also makes the institution attractive both for investors and future employees (Kim et al., 2012). The image of an institution indicates much more than it appears at first. For example, the image of an airline company indicates much more than planes flying in the sky. Many factors come together within the context of corporate behaviors and visual indicators such as equipment, flight attendants, lounges, and offerings, interior decoration of the plane, luggage service, flight points, service, logo, and color and contribute to the creation of an opinion about the airline in the mind of individuals (Peltekoğlu, 2014).

When the statements related to the benefits provided by the corporate image management to an institution in the literature are examined, it is not a possible process to create a positive corporate image in one direction and it is possible to say that it is a positive bi-directional effect formed with the fact that both external and internal shareholders have positive emotions, opinions and beliefs about the institution. Focusing on the corporate image in all units of the institution, especially in management boards, may provide an important strategic tool to the institution.

Within the scope of the study, it will be useful to focus on the objectives and results obtained from the studies mentioned by examining the theoretical and application substructure of the studies conducted previously. For example, Hussian, Nasser and Hussian (2014) concluded in the study they conducted on the airline corporate image relationship that corporate image has a positive effect on the customer expectations, the value perceived, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Bruggen (2014) identified the corporate image perception of both groups as quite high as a result of his study conducted on the corporate image perception of KLM airlines at the level of employees and management. Liou and Chuang (2008) measured the image perception in the airline industry with a model they

developed within the scope of management, service, economy, moral and usefulness dimensions. Geraldine and Chikwendu (2013) determined in their study conducted in Nigeria and in which they investigated the effect of service quality on the corporate image that a high service quality perception affects the image perception of an institution in a strong and meaningful way. Similarly, Khraim (2013) revealed as a result of the study he conducted in the airline industry that corporate image and the quality of service have a significant effect on the customer behaviors. Park, Robertson and Wu (2005) studied the effect of service quality perception in aviation on corporate image and identified as a result of the studies they conducted in Australia that practicality, accessibility and service quality in airplane affect corporate image perceptions positively. Hu and Huang (2011) determined by studying courier companies in the aviation industry that the image that the institution has according to the customer have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. Weiwei (2007) emphasized the importance of corporate image in important industries of the service sector such as aviation in his theoretical study. Apart from that, corporate image perception is a subject discussed in different sectors such as banking (Bravo, Montaner and Pina, 2009), transportation (Kuo and Tang, 2011), retailing (Derin, Türk and Cömert, 2014), medication (Caner, 2013), municipalism (Büyükgöze, 2012), safety (Çetin and Tekiner, 2015), health (Bal, 2011), public (Topaloğlu, 2010), hotel management (Bolat, 2006), law (Carmeli and Freund, 2002), business management (Riordan, Gatewood and Bill, 1997) and education (Gatewood and Gowan, 1993) differently from the aviation industry. In all these studies, in general, it was observed that corporate image perception was high and it had positive and important effects on some variables such as organizational citizenship, satisfaction, organizational commitment, etc. When the studies conducted are examined, it is possible to say that corporate image increases the commitment of employees to their institutions and as long as they perceive their institutions positively, they reflect the image they perceive in a positive way.

3   Methodology

3.1. The purpose of the study

Corporate image perceptions of the employees working in airlines were examined in this study. In this regard, the questions tried to be answered in this study are as follows:

- How do airline employees perceive the image of the institutions they work for?
- Do perceptions related to the corporate image differ statistically in terms of demographic characteristics of the airline employees?

3.2. Population and sample

Employees working at the general directorate of one of the prominent airlines in our country constitute the main population of the study. Since airline companies

do not give an approval for the use of their names in the studies due to the concern of receiving negative results in general, the questionnaire was applied to the employees working in different units of the general directorate by getting permission to apply the questionnaire to the employees without using the name of the institution. 500 individuals related to the subject of the study among the current employees in the general directorate building consisting of 3000 individuals were determined to be included in the study. Within the context of the study purpose, a questionnaire was applied to 26 employees in the sales office within the scope of the pilot study to primarily identify whether the questions are understandable and errorless.

3.3. Data collection method

The questionnaire method among the data collection methods in social sciences WAS used as a data collection method in the study. The data required for the study were collected by the face-to-face questionnaire method since the institution blocks e-mails sent in the Internet environment. In the questionnaire form, 31 questions in total were asked to the employees, including 5 questions in the personal information section and 26 questions in the Corporate Image Perception section. The questions in the Corporate Image Perception section were created from the questions in the questionnaire form which Kaya (2010) and Erdoğan et al. (2006) used in their studies.

The study was applied to 500 employees working in various units of the general directorate. 421 of the questionnaires distributed were answered. 29 of these questionnaires obtained were not included in the study since they were not filled in completely and 392 questionnaires in total were evaluated. The participants were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaire on a 5-point Likert-type scale (from 1: Strongly Disagree to 5: Strongly Agree).

3.4. Statistical analysis conducted

The data obtained in the study were analyzed with SPSS for Windows 22.0 program. Descriptive statistics were evaluated in terms of frequency, percentage, means and standard deviation in the evaluation of the data. The factor analysis was used to identify the dimensions of the scale used in the study. Moreover, the t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used for independent samples to determine whether there was a difference between the variables in terms of demographic characteristics.

4 Findings

In this section, the results obtained were evaluated by conducting analyses of the research data. Explanations and interpretations were made based on the findings obtained.

4.1. Findings related to demographic characteristics

The results of the analysis in terms of the employees' gender, age, education level, marital status and working time are included in this section (see Table 2).

In terms of the gender variable, 219 of the employees (55,9%) are female, 173 (44,1%) are male. According to the variable of gender, the number of female participants is higher than male participants. According to the age variable, 234 of the employees (59,7%) are at the age of 24-35 years, 158 (40,30%) are at the age of 36-50 years. As a result of the study conducted, since the number of the participants at the age of '18-23' and at the age of '51 and above' was less than thirty, these groups were combined. When the age distribution of the participants is examined as a result of the combination, 59,7% (234 individuals) are between the ages of "24-35", 40,3% (158 individuals) are between the ages of "36-50". It is observed that this distribution is normal by considering that the aviation industry should have young, dynamic and at the same time, experienced employees in terms of the types of the activities required to be conducted. According to the variable of education level, 36 (9,2%) of the employees are high school graduates, 36 (9,2%) are associate degree graduates, 215 (54,8%) are university graduates and 105 (26,8%) are post graduates.

Table 2: Descriptive characteristics of the employees

		Frequency	**Percent**
Gender	Female	219	55,9
	Male	173	44,1
	Total	392	100,0
Age	24-35 Years	234	59,7
	36-50 Years	158	40,3
	Total	392	100,0
Education Level	High school	36	9,2
	Graduate	36	9,2
	University graduate	215	54,8
	Post graduate	105	26,8
	Total	392	100,0
Marital Status	Single	175	44,6
	Married	217	55,4
	Total	392	100,0
Working Time	Less than 1 year	63	16,1
	1-5 Years	112	28,6
	6-10 Years	85	21,7
	11 Years and more	132	33,7
	Total	392	100,0

When the education level of the employees who participated in the study was examined, since the number in the doctorate group was less than thirty, the groups

of master degree and doctorate were combined and included in the Postgraduate group. In terms of the marital status variable, 175 (44,6%) of the employees are single, 217 (55,4%) of the employees are married. According to the marital status variable, the number of married participants is more when compared to the single ones. According to the working time variable, 63 (16,1%) of the employees have worked in the institution less than 1 year, 112 (28,6%) have worked for 1-5 years, 85 (21,7%) have worked for 6-10 years, and 132 (33,7%) of the employees have worked for 11 years and more.   The reason for the fact that employees working for 11 years and more have the highest rate with 33,7% is that qualified employees are required in the aviation industry.

4.2. Factor analysis

"Cronbach's Alpha", which is the internal consistency coefficient, was calculated to calculate the reliability of 26 items in the Corporate Image Perception scale. The general reliability of the scale was found to be very high as alpha=0.969. The descriptive factor analysis method was applied to reveal the construct validity of the scale. As a result of the Barlett's test (p=0.000<0.05) conducted, it was identified that there were relations between the variables included in the factor analysis. As a result of the test (KMO=0.971>0,60) conducted, it was determined that the sample size was enough to apply the factor analysis. It was provided that the structure of the relationship between the factors remained the same by choosing the varimax method in the implementation of the factor analysis. As a result of the factor analysis, the variables were collected under 4 factors of which the explained total variance was 71,853%. The corporate image perception dimensions were redimensioned as a result of the factor analysis. The factor structure of the scale is indicated below in Table 3.

In the evaluation of the factor analysis of the corporate image perception scale, it was considered that the factors with the eigenvalue more than one were taken into account and the factor loads indicating the weight of the variables in the factor were high. The fact that the reliability coefficients and the explained variance rates of the factors forming the scale were high indicated that the scale had a strong factor structure. The items in the first factor were considered as *Dynamic.* The reliability of 10 items forming the dynamic factor was identified as alpha= 0.948, the explained variance value was determined as 24.988%.

Table 3: Factor structure of the corporate image perception scale

Factors	Factor Loading	Variance Explained	Cronbach's Alpha
The Institution I work for ... / In my institution ...			
Dynamic (eigenvalue=15.031)			
... is an innovative company.	*0,781*		
... is a company that renews its products and services.	*0,780*		
... is a self-renewing company.	*0,766*		
... develops technology in the sector.	*0,729*		
... has good quality products and services.	*0,656*		
... has good price/quality balance of products and services.	*0,634*	*24,988*	*0,948*
... fulfills the promises given to its customers.	*0,610*		
... is a modern company.	*0,609*		
... decides to spread to the other business lines, I would prefer to use its products and services again.	*0,564*		
... serves as hospitality is always a priority.	*0,561*		
Corporate (eigenvalue =1.613)			
... has successful and powerful management.	*0,736*		
... has expert employees in their field.	*0,723*		
... is an institutionalized company.	*0,713*		
... customer and employee satisfaction is a priority.	*0,615*	*18,680*	*0,918*
... has better image than its competitors.	*0,570*		
... is a company that provides social benefits to its employees.	*0,559*		
... have accomplished to have good impressions about itself.	*0,540*		
Social Responsibility (eigenvalue =1.124)			
... is a company that supports social benefits such as TV programs, symposiums.	*0,862*		
... is a company that supports art and sport activities.	*0,832*		
... informs society about company facilities.	*0,746*	*16,357*	*0,914*
... is a company that does works of charity.	*0,695*		
... is an environmentally responsible company.	*0,644*		
Performance (eigenvalue =0.913)			
... is a financially powerful company.	*0,833*		
... is an investing company.	*0,742*		
... is a successful company. .	*0,579*	*11,828*	*0,870*
... is a company with reliable products and services.	*0,505*		
Total Variance %71.853			

The items in the second factor were considered as ***Corporate.*** The reliability of 7 items forming the corporate factor was identified as alpha= 0.918, the explained variance value was determined as 18.680%.   The items in the third factor were considered as ***Social Responsibility.*** The reliability of 5 items forming the Social Responsibility factor was identified as alpha=0.914, the explained variance value was determined as 16.357%.   The items in the fourth factor were considered as

Performance. The reliability of 4 items forming the Performance factor was identified as alpha=0.870, the explained variance value was determined as 11.828%.

4.3. Findings related to corporate image perception of the participants
The results according to the corporate image perception dimensions of the employees are presented in the Table 4 below.

Table 4: Corporate image perception

	N	Mean	SD
Overall Corporate Image Perception	392	4,18	0,72
Dynamic	392	4,18	0,77
Corporate	392	4,11	0,82
Social Responsibility	392	4,02	0,91
Performance	392	4,49	0,63

It was identified that the level of the "general corporate image perception" of the employees who participated in the study was high (4,18), the "dynamic" perception level was high (4,18), the "corporate" perception level was high (4,11), the "social responsibility" perception level was high (4.02), and the "performance" perception level was very high (4.49).
Considering the findings mentioned above, the corporate perception of the employees of the institution examined was found to be high in all dimensions. This finding may indicate that the organization is successful in the corporate perception process. The performance dimension has the highest mean score among the dimensions. The fact that the performance dimension has higher mean score when compared to other dimensions originates from the fact that the employees have a positive perception of the overall performance of the organization. In this respect, the employees consider the institution especially financially successful and strong, and moreover, they perceive that the products provided by the institution are at a reliable level.

4.4. Evaluation of the corporate image perceptions by the demographic characteristics of the participants
Whether the corporate image perceptions of the employees who participated in the study vary by demographic characteristics is interpreted below.

4.4.1. Evaluation of the corporate image perception by gender
The differences in the corporate image perceptions of the employees by the gender variable are indicated in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Corporate image perception averages of the employees by gender

	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Overall Corporate Image Perception	Female	219	4,24	0,68	2,011	**0,045***
	Male	173	4,10	0,75		
Dynamic	Female	219	4,26	0,73	2,297	**0,022***
	Male	173	4,08	0,81		
Corporate	Female	219	4,19	0,79	2,239	**0,026***
	Male	173	4,00	0,86		
Social Responsibility	Female	219	4,06	0,88	1,043	0,298
	Male	173	3,96	0,94		
Performance	Female	219	4,52	0,59	0,847	0,398
	Male	173	4,46	0,69		

* p<0,05

As a result of the t-test conducted to identify whether the corporate image perception mean scores of the employees who participated in the study indicated a significant difference by the gender variable in terms of each dimension, the overall corporate image perception (t=2.011; p=0.045<0,05), the image perception related to the dynamic dimension (t=2.297; p=0.022<0,05) and the image perception related to the corporate dimension (t=2.239; p=0.026<0,05) were found to be statistically significantly different by gender. According to the findings, it was identified that the overall corporate image perception mean scores of females (4,24) were higher than the overall corporate image perception mean scores of males (x = 4,10); the dynamic dimension mean scores of females (4.26) were higher than the dynamic dimension mean scores of males (4.08); and the corporate dimension mean scores of females (x=4.19) were higher than the corporate dimension mean scores of males (x=4.00). Since the number of females is more than males, it is possible to say that the fact that their mean scores in the overall corporate image perception and its sub-dimensions of the dynamic-corporate dimensions are higher is normal. The fact that females are more concerned about details than males and they attach more importance to information sharing may reveal differences in the perception.

As a result of the t-test conducted to identify whether the social responsibility, performance point averages of the employees who participated in the study indicated a significant difference by the gender variable, the difference between the group means was not found to be statistically significant (p>0,05).

4.4.2. Evaluation of the corporate image perception by age
The differences in the corporate image perception of the employees by the age variable are indicated in the Table 6 below.

Table 6: Corporate image perception averages of the employees by age

	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Overall Corporate Image Perception	24-35Years	234	4,15	0,73	-1,029	0,304
	36-50Years	158	4,22	0,70		
Dynamic	24-35Years	234	4,14	0,79	-1,370	0,171
	36-50Years	158	4,25	0,73		
Corporate	24-35Years	234	4,07	0,84	-1,008	0,314
	36-50Years	158	4,16	0,80		
Social Responsibility	24-35Years	234	3,99	0,90	-0,650	0,516
	36-50Years	158	4,06	0,92		
Performance	24-35Years	234	4,49	0,64	0,056	0,955
	36-50Years	158	4,49	0,63		

As a result of the t-test conducted to identify whether the mean scores that the employees who participated in the study obtained from the overall corporate image perception, dynamic, corporate, social responsibility and performance dimensions indicated a significant difference in terms of the age variable, the difference between the group means was not found to be statistically significant in terms of any dimensions (p>0,05).

4.4.3. Evaluation of the corporate image perception by educational status
The differences in the corporate image perception of the employees by the variable of educational status are indicated in the Table 7 below.

Table 7: Corporate image perception averages of the employees by educational level

	Group	N	Mean	SD	F	p
Overall Corporate Image Perception	High school	36	4,31	0,65	0,753	0,521
	Graduate	36	4,28	0,70		
	Uni. Grad.	215	4,16	0,70		
	Postgraduate	105	4,15	0,77		
Dynamic	High school	36	4,32	0,70	0,550	0,648
	Graduate	36	4,24	0,71		
	Uni. Grad.	215	4,15	0,78		
	Postgraduate	105	4,17	0,79		
Corporate	High school	36	4,27	0,75	1,290	0,277
	Graduate	36	4,28	0,81		
	Uni. Grad.	215	4,09	0,79		
	Postgraduate	105	4,03	0,92		
Social Responsibility	High school	36	4,10	0,97	0,319	0,812
	Graduate	36	4,13	0,85		
	Uni. Grad.	215	3,99	0,93		

		N				
	Postgraduate	105	4,01	0,87		
Performance	High school	36	4,61	0,55	0,656	0,580
	Graduate	36	4,55	0,62		
	Uni. Grad.	215	4,48	0,61		
	Postgraduate	105	4,464	0,71		

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance conducted to identify whether the mean scores that the employees who participated in the study obtained from the overall corporate image perception, dynamic, corporate, social responsibility and performance dimensions indicated a significant difference in terms of the variable of educational level, the difference between the group means was not found to be statistically significant in terms of any dimension (p>0.05).

4.4.4. Evaluation of the corporate image perception by marital status

The differences in the corporate image perception of the employees by marital status are indicated in the Table 8 below.

Table 8: Corporate image perception averages of the employees by marital status

	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Overall Corporate Image Perception	Single	175	4,10	0,74	-2,045	**0,042***
	Married	217	4,25	0,69		
Dynamic	Single	175	4,11	0,78	-1,743	0,082
	Married	217	4,24	0,75		
Corporate	Single	175	4,00	0,89	-2,354	**0,019***
	Married	217	4,20	0,76		
Social Responsibility	Single	175	3,92	0,88	-1,965	**0,050***
	Married	217	4,10	0,92		
Performance	Single	175	4,46	0,69	-0,845	0,399
	Married	217	4,52	0,59		

* p<0,05

As a result of the t-test conducted to identify whether the corporate image perception mean scores of the employees who participated in the study indicated a significant difference for each dimension in terms of the variable of marital status, the difference between the group means of the Overall corporate image perception (t=-2.045; p=0.042<0,05); corporate dimension (t=-2.354; p=0.019<0,05) and social responsibility dimension (t=-1.965; p=0.050<0,05) was found to be statistically significant. According to the findings, considering three dimensions in question, it was identified that the overall corporate image perception mean scores of married employees (x=4,25) were higher than the overall corporate image perception means of single ones (x=4,10); the corporate dimension mean scores of the married (x=4,20) were higher than the corporate dimension means of singles

(x=4,00); and finally, the social responsibility dimension means of married employees (x=4,10) were higher than the social responsibility dimension means of single ones (x=3,92).

Since the number of married employees who participated in the study is higher, the differences in perception can be considered as normal. Moreover, due to the fact that married people do not want to make job changes in terms of the risk of carrier mobility especially in the today's business world and due to the requirement for job security, high evaluations of the institution in terms of the image perception is an expected result. In this respect, single employees may think different in terms of taking risks in the business life when compared to the married ones. The expectation of working in an institution with a higher corporate image perception is a more expected situation for the singles.

Apart from that, as a result of the t-test conducted to identify whether the mean scores that the employees who participated in the study obtained from the dynamic and performance dimensions indicated a significant difference in terms of the variable of marital status, the difference between the group means was not found to be statistically significant (p>0,05).

4.4.5. Evaluation of the corporate image perception by working time

The differences in the corporate image perception of the employees by working time are indicated in the Table 9 below.

As a result of the one-way analysis of variance conducted to identify whether the corporate image perception mean scores of the employees who participated in the study indicated a significant difference by the variable of working time in the institution in terms of each dimension, the difference between the group means of the overall corporate image perception (F=2,778; p=0,041<0.05) and corporate dimension (F=5,689; p=0,001<0.05) was found to be statistically significant. The posthoc analysis was conducted to determine the reasons for the differences. The overall corporate image perception means of the employees working in the institution for less than a year (4,31) were found to be higher than the overall corporate image perception means of the employees working for 1-5 years (4,03). The overall corporate image perception mean scores of the employees working in the institution for 11 years and more (4,25) were found to be higher than the overall corporate image perception mean scores of the employees working for 1-5 years (4,03).

Table 9: Corporate image perception averages of the employees by working time in the institution

	Group	N	Mean	SD	F	p	Difference
Overall Corporate Image Perception	1- Less than 1 year	63	4,31	0,51	2,778	**0,041***	**1>2** **4>2**
	2- 1-5 Years	112	4,03	0,73			
	3- 6-10 Years	85	4,16	0,77			
	4- 11 Years and more	132	4,25	0,74			
Dynamic	1- Less than 1 year	63	4,28	0,61	2,344	0,073	**-**
	2- 1-5 Years	112	4,04	0,76			
	3- 6-10 Years	85	4,15	0,83			
	4- 11 Years and more	132	4,28	0,78			
Corporate	1- Less than 1 year	63	4,35	0,56	5,689	**0,001****	**1>2** **3>2** **4>2**
	2- 1-5 Years	112	3,86	0,91			
	3- 6-10 Years	85	4,13	0,81			
	4- 11 Years and more	132	4,19	0,82			
Social Responsibility	1- Less than 1 year	63	4,08	0,65	0,794	0,498	**-**
	2- 1-5 Years	112	3,91	0,93			
	3- 6-10 Years	85	4,01	1,00			
	4- 11 Years and more	132	4,08	0,94			
Performance	1- Less than 1 year	63	4,64	0,53	1,544	0,203	**-**
	2- 1-5 Years	112	4,46	0,60			
	3- 6-10 Years	85	4,43	0,67			
	4- 11 Years and more	132	4,49	0,67			

**** $p<0,01$; * $p<0,05$

The posthoc analysis was conducted again to determine the reasons for the differences observed in the corporate dimension. The corporate means of the employees working in the institution for less than a year (4,35) were found to be higher than the corporate means of the employees working for 1-5 years (3,86). The corporate mean scores of the employees working for 6-10 years (4,13) were found to be higher than the corporate mean scores of the employees working for 1-5 years (3,86). The corporate means of the employees working for 11 years or more (4,19) were found to be higher than the corporate means of the employees working for 1-5 years (3,86).

The differences in the corporate image perception dimensions in terms of working time in the institution may be based on the experiences of the employees in the institution. Since the employees working for a long time in the institution know the operation, philosophy and culture of the institution better, it is possible to say that they are more advantageous in perceiving the image of the institution when compared to the employees who can be considered as new in the institution. The employees in the relation with the institution for a longer time can form their perceptions of the institution more quickly since they have completed the period of discovering the institution. Due to the fact that the employees newly acquainted with the institution are in the process of its recognition, it is possible to say that

they do not have much information and experience about the institution.

On the other hand, as a result of the one-way analysis of variance conducted to identify whether the mean scores that the employees who participated in the study obtained from the dynamic, social responsibility and performance dimensions indicated a significant difference in terms of the variable of working time, the difference between the group means was not found to be statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

5   Conclusion and Suggestions

Corporate image is an effective factor in the communication which exists between the individuals and institutions or has the potential to exist. The positive reflection of this factor is the impression that institutions have reliable, high quality and accessible products and services and conduct policies within the scope of customer satisfaction. Institutions should focus these impressions on positive formative corporate activities. During the process beginning with corporate identity and reaching corporate reputation, corporate image is at the point before corporate reputation. Corporate identity is the characteristics of the institution distinguishing it from others as in the identity of an individual. While corporate personality forms the basis of corporate identity, the philosophy, values and principles of the institution are the determinants of the corporate identity and institutions try to express themselves with internal and external communication activities. It is important for institutions to be primarily in effective communication with its employees while expressing themselves with various communication techniques. The lack of communication can be a factor hindering the job satisfaction of employees in the institution and causing them to exhibit undesired behaviors. As it is indicated in the study, the fact that employees perceive their institutions positively enables them to develop an effective communication with other shareholders by trying to form an identity suitable for the institution. Corporate image is addressed concretely and discretely in every aspect in academic studies on the corporate image. Financial performance, communication techniques used, internal-external customer satisfaction and commitment of the institution are related to all activities related to the image. It is observed that positive and negative results are obtained in the studies conducted on the corporate image together with the fact that shareholders of the institution make evaluations upon various dimensions. In the study we conducted, the creation of the corporate image addressed with a holistic approach and the elements constituting the image were determined and in the light of these determinations, the image perceptions of the employees related to their institutions were attempted to be explained in various dimensions and the results were supported by the findings.

In the study conducted, how a corporate image is perceived by the employees was examined.   In the study, the corporate image was redimensioned and examined

with the dynamic, corporate, social responsibility and performance sub-dimensions. When the results of the analysis suggested for the corporate image are examined, it can be stated that these sub-dimensions follow a convenient way in satisfying the corporate image perception in overall, and the determination of high and low areas obtained from the sub-dimensions is important to guide the institution. As a result of the study conducted, corporate image perceptions were identified to be the highest at the performance level in terms of the employees. The average corporate image perception levels acquired from all dimensions are considerably high. The performance sub-dimension is followed by the dynamic, corporate and social responsibility sub-dimensions. The overall corporate image perception of the institution was found to be high. The fact that the institution is strong in terms of performance is an indicator of the fact that employees consider their institution to be strong financially and morally. The findings of this study conducted regarding the corporate image perception are similar with the results of similar studies in the related literature (Hussian, Nasser and Hussian, 2014; Bruggen, 2014; Liou and Chuang, 2008; Geraldine and Chikwendu, 2013). In this regard, it is observed that corporate image is one of the most important elements for today's organizations.

Apart from that, in the light of the findings obtained as a result of the analyses conducted based on the demographic data, the differences in the corporate image perception resulting from the working time of employees may vary by experiences in the institution as stated. While employees working for a longer time in the institution have more information about the image of the institution since they know the institution better, employees who have just started working may go into the effort of being more compliant as the institution has accepted them. The fact that employees working for a longer time in the institution and those who have just started working give higher points may result from these reasons. As it is indicated with statistical results as a result of the study, the fact that the points that females obtain from the overall corporate image perception and corporate, dynamic sub-dimensions are higher when compared to males can be explained by the fact that the number of females in the gender distribution is higher than males. Since the number of married employees participating in the study is higher, the differences in the overall corporate image perception and its sub-dimensions of the corporate-social responsibility perception with single employees can be considered as normal.

Since the corporate image is closely related to corporate identity, corporate culture, corporate communication and corporate reputation, its distinguishing criteria should be meticulously selected. As a result of the corporate identity studies in the literature, there is an overall provision that the reputation revealed by the corporate image together with the corporate communication activities is a concept including all these elements. In addition to the opinions accepting organizational identity and corporate identity as synonyms, there are approaches considering them different and accepting corporate reputation and corporate image as synonyms. In addition to the approaches addressing only the perception of

external shareholders related to the corporate image, there are approaches including internal shareholders in this process. Within the scope of this study, it was focused on how the image is perceived by employees which are the most important capital of the institution. Since institutions, mostly external shareholders, attach importance to customer satisfaction measurements especially in relation to customers, they do not focus on the employee satisfaction that much. While the importance of the unit of customer relations in institutions increases with each passing day, there are no units related to the employee satisfaction. At this point, it is important to try to determine not only how the institution is put into a picture from the outside, but also how it is seen in the institution. Since each individual has different perceptions, the fact that employees who know the institution better and have more information about the institution transmit this information and experiences to outside in different ways may cause positive and negative effects. Some employees may prefer to share negativities; the others may prefer to reflect positive perceptions. Thus, corporate image perception is not determined only by external shareholders. The employees of the institution are an important element forming this perception. The quality of the products and services of the institution, advertising and promotional activities, participation in social responsibility and sponsorship processes are the elements creating and forming the financial performance image. Nowadays, the perceptions of individuals are open to all information originating from the environment with the effect of the technological era. At this point, it is required for all activities to represent a whole. If an organization does not act responsibly for its employees while participating in social responsibility activities for the environment, integrity will be disrupted. Therefore, it is not enough for the institution only to focus on external shareholders, it should also focus on its employees for the maximum benefit of the institution.

The human resources are of great importance for the existing institutions in the aviation industry to create a positive corporate image perception. The fact that the productivity of employees increases and they provide a positive value to the institution as a result of their commitments to the institution can be formed with the value that the institution gives to them. Since it is employees who increase the quality of products and services, the awareness of the importance of appreciating employees economically and socially should be increased in the institutions.

The fact that the corporate image perception of employees is expressed positively may lead the institution for the image that institutions want to reflect, moreover, developing behaviors that give value to employees with the awareness of that the employees of the institution are the brand ambassador at the stage of corporate image formation is important with regard to the fact that employees exhibit positive corporate citizenship while representing their institution. While employees in compliance with the corporate image describe their institution, they use the concepts to be appreciated in the public opinion. Transportation with an airplane, which is an indicator of wealth from which the upper socio-economic class could benefit in the past, is a transportation that any kind of socio-economic

class can use nowadays. When considered in this respect, it is important that employees are qualified to address a wide audience. The institution should form its image improving activities according to the employees to attract qualified employees to the institution and keep the existing employees in the institution. In addition to the dissemination of academic studies on the corporate image in our country and the utilization of studies conducted in other countries, it can be beneficial to take the most successful image applications as an example by modeling successful institutions in terms of the image management.

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