

# THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT

## The Intermediary Role of Corporate Communication in the Effect of Customer Relations Management on Brand Image

**Salih GÜNEY**

Professor, Department of Management,  
İstanbul Aydın University, İstanbul, Turkey

**Elifcan ATASOY**

Student, Department of Management, Institute of Social Sciences,  
İstanbul Aydın University, İstanbul, Turkey

### **Abstract:**

*In this study, customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication concepts were examined. Concepts were discussed and detailed information was obtained through a literature review. In the research part, the mediating role of corporate communication in the effect of customer relationship management on brand image was studied. The study sample consisted of 253 participants within the research population and was reached by convenience sampling. In the study, data was collected by survey method, and customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication scales and sub-dimensions were analyzed. In the study, data analysis was done using the SPSS 22.0 program. According to the results of the analysis, corporate communication has a mediating role in the effect of customer relationship management on brand image.*

**Keywords:** Customer relationship management, brand, brand image, communication, corporate communication

## **1. Introduction**

Nowadays, businesses offer customers many alternatives regarding the goods or services they want to purchase. The strategies developed by businesses for customers who evaluate these alternatives and determine their purchasing preferences are important. Businesses that observe, track and analyze customer preferences can establish closer ties with customers and play an important role in ensuring customer continuity. The relationship to be established with customers must be organized by businesses in a planned and goal-oriented manner. The presence of many similar goods and services in the market, the restriction of businesses' differentiation from others, the decrease in their profitability, and the impact of competition lead businesses to enter into new formations. These formations have become more comprehensive with the day-by-day development of technology.

The brand perception created by businesses can be the reason why consumers choose or not choose the brand. For their brands to be more prominent by differentiating them from other brands, businesses should determine strategies to create a positive brand image and proceed in line with these strategies. This requires planned and well-organized communication.

The increase in the diversity of goods and services and the resulting intensification of competition have required corporate communication to be more comprehensive and versatile. It is possible for businesses to strengthen their brand image by giving importance to customer relationship management and ensuring effective corporate communication.

As the demand in the fast food industry increases day by day, businesses that want to ensure their continuity act in line with social and demographic factors in order to stand out from their competitors, which enabled the fast food sector to be discussed in the study. The purpose of this study, conducted on employees in the fast food industry, is to determine the mediating role of corporate communication in the effect of customer relationship management on brand image.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Customer Relations Management*

Businesses use some methods to create repeat customers. One of these is "customer relationship management", which keeps the customer at the center and aims at customer satisfaction at the highest level (Deniz, 2016: 10). Businesses that realize how important customer relationship management is as a strategy and want to gain a solid place in the market will be ahead of their competitors with the different goods and services they offer to their customers and will take firm steps forward in achieving their goals. Businesses that differentiate their customer relationship management and

emphasize to their customers how valuable and important they are to them will be able to continue to exist and continue their activities in a highly competitive market (Koçer, 2017: 715). Various methods are followed in customer relationship management according to customers' purchasing habits for goods and services. These methods center on the customer and take on roles such as getting to know them better, gaining their perspective, and guiding them in their actions.

Customer relationship management covers all sales and post-sales processes. It has adopted the idea of establishing a special communication with each customer. Businesses getting to know their customers, offering them special goods or services, and providing after-sales support are related to structuring customer relationship management in accordance with its purpose. Businesses that create and maintain the customer relationship management process correctly are successful in providing benefits for both themselves and their customers.

Many different definitions of customer relationship management have been made in the literature. We can list some of the definitions on this subject as follows:

- Customer relationship management is a strategy that seeks to understand the demands of existing customers, meet them and include new customers who are highly interested in the goods and services of the enterprise (Çalışkan, 2019: 5).
- Customer relationship management is the restructuring of the business in order to provide the business with a competitive advantage over its competitors, taking customer needs as the basis (Soysal, Doğan and Baynal 2017: 41).
- Customer relationship management is the process of knowing customers, determining their wishes and needs, and developing goods and services within their orbit (Ja'bari, 2022: 25).

Based on the definitions made about customer relationship management, we can say that customer relationship management is the process of recognizing existing customers, determining and classifying their wishes and needs, keeping existing customers by taking into account competitors, and incorporating new customers into the business.

Customers provide important data to businesses in the transactions they make from the business. This data includes information such as customers' purchasing behavior, lifestyles and consumption habits. Businesses keep this information in their databases. (Çiçek, 2005: 65). With data mining, criteria that allow future predictions to be made in line with customer data are determined using computer programs (Tassmbedo, 2016: 23). The fact that businesses are more sensitive to customer information has enabled the evaluation of information and the development of a customer-centered marketing approach (Demir & Kırdar, 2007: 35). In customer relationship management, having customer information means that businesses can get to know them better. Businesses are more conscious of working towards customers they know better. Collecting customer information in the database, analyzing it and creating strategies will positively affect the company's position in the market. The fact that businesses attach importance to customer relationship management reveals that they will be more successful in understanding customer demands and responding to these demands.

The basis of customer relationship management is the aim of establishing trust-oriented long-term relationships with customers. Factors such as the quality of the product or service meeting the demand and the consistency and honesty of the business are effective in ensuring customer trust. Relationships established with the customer based on trust will strengthen the customer's loyalty to the business (Hadiş, 2016: 10-11). With customer relationship management, it is necessary to understand customer behavior, obtain information about customers and use this information to establish strong relationships. Customers who want to feel cared for want their problems to be heard, resolved, and compensated if necessary. However, before this point is reached, that is, before the problem arises, it is important that the goods or services he needs are delivered to him correctly. Taking precautions before problems occur is very valuable for businesses and customers (Deniz, 2016: 32). The issue of indispensability in customer relationship management is a measurable and manageable element. Factors affecting the indispensability element include sales and marketing. In businesses, customers' abandonment costs progress in parallel with the number of times they use different channels for the goods or services offered (Gümüşbuğa, 2015: 131). Rewarding in customer relationship management positively affects customer loyalty. Loyal customers progress steadily in choosing their business. Customer loyalty, which is among the advantages offered by customer relations, is among the main issues that businesses attach importance to and keep on their agenda.

Call centers provide benefits to businesses in matters such as ensuring customer loyalty, receiving expectations and complaints, improving the service with the feedback received, contributing to sales and marketing activities, and performing transactions from a single center (Erginer, 2019: 15). Call centers are communication centers that enable communication between businesses and customers. Call centers aim to deliver calls from customers to the appropriate people in an active and efficient manner and to increase customer satisfaction by responding within the framework of their expectations.

## 2.2. Brand Image

While brand is a concept generally used to distinguish the goods and services of a business from the goods and services of other businesses, brand image is a concept related to how consumers perceive a brand as a result of their impressions. Consumers have an impression of the brand based on their experiences, the notifications they receive from their surroundings, and the advertising efforts made. This impression is decisive in the consumer's choice of the brand. When consumers have a positive impression of a brand, they tend to prefer the brand, while when they have a negative impression, they do not want to prefer the brand. Businesses make intense efforts to create a positive brand image and make it sustainable. Since the brand image is directly related to consumer preferences, it determines consumers' purchasing decisions. The image that the business wants to create for the brand may be perceived differently by

consumers. While creating a positive image requires careful work and process for businesses, a negative image can form quickly and is difficult for a business to change.

Many different definitions of brand image have been made in the literature. We can list some of the definitions on this subject as follows:

- Brand image is all the associations that occur in the minds of consumers about the brand (Tosun & Dereli, 2016: 326).
- Brand image is the entire impression and thoughts that a product creates on the targeted audience (İmrak, 2015: 27).
- Brand image is the thoughts, feelings and behaviors formed by the functional, social and psychological features of the brand (Bengül, 2019: 258).

Based on the definitions made about brand image, we can say that brand image is the impression formed by consumers about the brand and the interaction that occurs when this impression activates emotions and thoughts.

In the process of creating a brand image, an identity is first created that differentiates the brand from its competitors. Brand identity provides consumers with information about the product represented by the brand and establishes a bond by strengthening interaction with consumers. Brand identity consists of the brand's physics, relationship, reflection, culture, personality and self-image (Dilek, 2022: 36). Brand identity consists of elements such as brand name, symbol and logo, slogan, color and packaging (İnce & Uygurtürk, 2019: 226). Businesses need a strong brand identity to strengthen the bond with consumers and to actively offer their goods or services.

One of the stages in the process of creating a brand image is the positioning of the goods or services. Correct execution of the positioning process supports businesses in creating a new image or taking their existing image to a higher level. Another stage in the process of creating a brand image is advertising practices. Advertising practices benefit brands within the scope of communication strategies and emphasize both symbolic and functional values related to the product. Businesses inform, persuade and enable consumers to take action regarding their goods or services through marketing communication (Dağ, 2020: 90). Proper communication will contribute to the brand image. Through the communication made by the business, information about the brand is conveyed to the targeted audience, and consumers have an impression of the brand and form an opinion about the brand.

A brand image ensures that the business is noticed by consumers and increases the loyalty of consumers who prefer the business to the brand. Brand image, which plays a decisive role in pricing the company's goods or services, enables businesses to spend less on promotions and also provides opportunities for businesses to enter new markets (Aydın, 2020: 49). Brand image makes it easier for consumers to make purchasing decisions and allows them to make them in a shorter time. It enables consumers to easily access the information of those who provide goods or services and to provide consistent quality to consumers (Dilek, 2022: 39). While businesses with high awareness have the opportunity to increase consumers' loyalty to the brand, they are also in an advantageous position in increasing their market shares.

### 2.3. Corporate Communications

Since communication is a tool that enables interaction between people, it is a network that connects society. Communication is effective wherever there is a social relationship. The communication process enables people to convey their feelings and thoughts to each other verbally or in writing, and this situation is mutually realized. It refers to creating an impact on people over time, persuading, solving problems, directing people and encouraging people in line with determined goals. Communication makes the existence of social life possible.

Societies have their own characteristics and rules. Corporate communication is necessary for institutions to continue their existence by taking these into consideration. The advancement of technology day by day has brought to the agenda that communication processes should be more open and institutions should not isolate themselves from the areas within their scope of activity. Institutions need to better understand and manage corporate communication to inform and guide their employees, stakeholders and target audiences. Corporate communication is necessary to prevent pressure on employees, ensure cooperation in the institution, increase employee motivation, and carry out corporate activities more consistently.

Many different definitions have been made in the literature on corporate communication. We can list some of the definitions on this subject as follows:

- Corporate communication is a management function that covers the coordination of all elements to create and maintain prestige on both internal and external shareholders of the institution (Yazbaşı, 2022: 6).
- Corporate communication is the entire communication structure designed by businesses to achieve their goals (Kırmızıtaş, 2022: 32).
- Corporate communication is the collective application of all communication measures in a systematic manner, with the aim of influencing public opinion and the business against the institution, organization, and organization (Savaş, 2015: 151).

Based on the definitions made about corporate communication, we can say that corporate communication is a process that ensures and manages the coordination of people who come together in an institution or an organization to achieve the same goal by prioritizing the communication element.

Corporate communications: It is closely related to concepts such as corporate culture, corporate identity, corporate image and corporate reputation.

Corporate culture enables employees to bond and integrate with the organization. The institution provides a guiding effect on this behavior by creating behavioral guidelines for its employees to continue their work in an orderly manner. It motivates employees and contributes positively to their understanding of the institution (Kocaçınar, 2021: 16). Corporate identity covers all the connotations that include the personality of the institution. It includes elements such as the institution's logo, color, logo font, behavior, culture, values, communication style, and relationships with other people or institutions (Aydın, 2022: 11-12). Corporate image is the perception formed as a result of the sum of how the organization conducts and manages its activities, how it communicates with its environment, and the attitudes of its employees. Corporate image, which affects customer satisfaction and, therefore, customer loyalty, is the whole of consumer perceptions that are affected by many elements such as the institution's product, service, design, customer communication, and the attitude of the institution's employees (Kaya, 2022: 39). Corporate reputation is a factor that strengthens the institution's hand against its competitors and enables the institution to differentiate itself from others. It constitutes all perceptions about an institution. Stakeholders perceive and evaluate the institution according to its characteristics and behaviors. As a result of this evaluation, corporate reputation occurs (Gümüş & Öksüz, 2010: 112-114). For the institution to gain a solid place in competitive markets, it must establish its corporate structure well and move forward in line with the strategies it has determined.

Corporate communication provides the opportunity to establish a relationship between the target audience and the stakeholders of the institution and to maintain this relationship in the strongest possible way. Businesses need to pay attention to corporate communication in case of changes or developments in their organizational structures. Good structuring and management of corporate communication by businesses is effective in achieving their goals. Corporate communication is determined according to the state of communication between employees. In formal communication, information transfer between subordinates and superiors is carried out within the framework of an order. In this form of communication carried out within a hierarchical structure, information is expected to be conveyed to other people at a clear and understandable level. The fact that the communication built by the official structure does not meet some requirements within the institution causes the informal communication style to become widespread among employees. In this form of communication, where hierarchy is disabled, communication between employees will be strengthened, and gossip and rumours will inevitably spread.

Internal applications address the organization's activities with its employees. These are human resources, corporate identity and corporate culture concepts. Human resources works to increase the satisfaction of the employees of the institution and their loyalty to the institution. Corporate identity creates the visible structure of the company (logo, color, character) by affecting the communication between the institution and its employees. Corporate culture is a form of culture that includes the perspectives, behaviors, clothing styles, speeches and behaviours of employees within the institution (Aydın, 2022: 34-37). Employees who embrace the corporate culture have a complementary value in ensuring information exchange, consensus management and problem-solving.

Applications directed outside the institution address the activities of the institution with its stakeholders. These are public relations, social responsibility and sponsorship, customer relations, reputation management, brand management and crisis management concepts. Public relations covers the activities in which the communication responsibility of the institution is undertaken for the purpose of promoting the institution. Social responsibility is the actions carried out for the benefit of society and aimed at goodness, with the contributions of institutions. Sponsorship is the support of arts, culture, sports and social events that institutions support for their own purposes. Customer relations include the communication between the organization's employees and the organization's communication with the customer. Reputation management is the sum of judgments formed about the reliability, competence and ability to do business of the institution that creates all the values of the institution and is supported by these values. Brand management is the conscious and strategic structuring of all brand elements in accordance with its purpose. Crisis management will enable institutions to be prepared for any negativities that may occur and to turn the crisis into a positive situation (Güçlüoğulları, 2022: 25). Businesses' planned and strategic implementation of their external applications will ensure the successful formation of both brand image and corporate image.

### **3. Research on the Mediating Role of Corporate Communication in the Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Brand Image**

#### *3.1. The Purpose of the Research*

The fact that there are many businesses in the fast-food industry today has required businesses to be in a big race for consumers to choose them. Businesses that are successful in meeting consumer needs in the best and most permanent way can ensure their continuity and take a place among the leading companies. In this race, businesses must successfully carry out their work for consumers to differentiate themselves from their competitors and gain a competitive advantage. The purpose of this study is to determine the mediating role of corporate communication in the effect of customer relations methods on brand image in establishing and maintaining the bond between consumers and businesses.

#### *3.2. Data Collection Instrument of the Research*

The thesis consists of four parts. In the first, second and third sections, a literature review was conducted on customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication. While conducting the literature review, books, journals, and master's and doctoral theses were used. In the fourth chapter, the survey method was used as a data collection tool. The survey was conducted in Istanbul between April 1, 2023 and May 16, 2023. It was conducted face-to-

face with those working in the office environment and via e-mail with those working outside the office. The first part of the survey, the demographic data section (person's age, gender, marital status, educational status, working time in the institution and total working time), was prepared with multiple choice questions. Other sections of the survey address customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication questions.

### 3.3. Scale of the Research

The first part of the survey, the demographic data section (person's age, gender, marital status, educational status, working time in the institution and total working time), was prepared with multiple choice questions. Other sections of the survey address customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication questions.

- Customer Relationship Management Scale: For the questions regarding the customer relationship management scale, Yunus Emre Gürsoy's (2022: 172-173) doctoral thesis titled "The Effects of Customer Relationship Management on Marketing Performance in the Field of Social Media and a Research" was used. Customer relationship management consists of four dimensions: customer focus, organization, information management and technology focus. A total of 22 questions were asked to the participants.
- Brand Image Scale: For the questions regarding the brand image scale, Hamit Koptekin's (2019: 68) master's thesis titled "The Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchasing Behaviors and an Application on Shampoo Consumption" was used. It consists of three dimensions: brand image, purchasing decision, brand preference and others (including general questions about brand image). Dimensioning was done with expert opinions, and a total of 29 questions were asked to the participants.
- Corporate Communication Scale: For the questions regarding the corporate communication scale, Pınar Dünya's (2019: 184) doctoral thesis titled "Corporate Communication in Quality Management Systems: An Applied Example" was used. Corporate communication consists of two dimensions: communication and corporate communication. Dimensioning was done with expert opinions, and a total of 23 questions were asked to the participants.

In the study, a 5-point Likert scale (5: Strongly Agree, 4: Agree, 3: Undecided, 2: Disagree, 1: Strongly Disagree) was used in all scales.

### 3.4. Research Method

The survey encompassing the variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational culture was administered to employees, business partners, and individuals in the organizations they work with. The participants were individuals from different units within the organization, and their participation was based on a voluntary basis. A total of 302 participants were randomly selected from employees and managers, and 302 usable data were obtained.

### 3.5. Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of 311 people working in a private fast food business in the Istanbul-Güneşli region. The data of 17 people within the study population were removed because they were outliers. The research sample consisted of 253 participants within the research population and was reached by the convenience sampling method.

- Population of the study (N): 311 people
- Probability of the event occurring (p): 0.5
- Probability of the event not occurring (q): 0.5
- t test level (t): 1.96
- Margin of error (d): 5%
- Sample size (n): 173 people

$$n = \frac{N \cdot t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{d^2 (N-1) + t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

As a result of the calculations made in the study, it was determined that the sample size should be 173 people. A statistically valid number of 253 people was reached in the study.

### 3.6. Model and Hypotheses of the Study

The research was designed according to the relational model to reveal the relationship between the participants' concepts of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication. The theoretical model prepared within this scope is as follows:

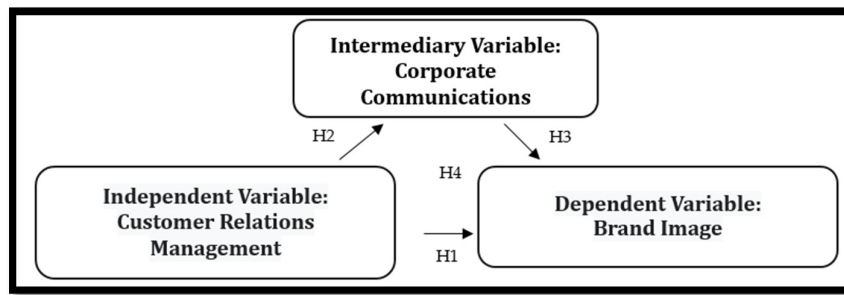


Figure 1: Research Model

- H1: Customer relationship management positively and significantly affects brand image.
- H2: Customer relationship management positively and significantly affects corporate communication.
- H3: Corporate communication affects brand image positively and significantly.
- H4: Corporate communication has a mediating role in the effect of customer relationship management on brand image.

3.7. Analysis of Research Data

In the study, data analysis was done using the SPSS 22.0 program. The representation of continuous data is given with mean and standard deviation. The compliance of the data to normal distribution was tested with the skewness and kurtosis coefficient. Comparisons between two categories in the mean scores of the variables were made using the t-test, and comparisons between more than two categories were made using one-way ANOVA. The relationship between variables was examined with the Pearson Correlation test. The mediation effect was measured with a three-stage regression analysis.

3.8. Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha test was used to test the reliability of the survey. It is accepted that internal consistency is achieved when the Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) reliability analysis results of the scales in the data collection tool are calculated above 0.70 (Yıldırım, 2023: 3).

Tables 1, 2 and 3 show that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of all scales and their sub-dimensions is higher than 0.70, ensuring reliability. In this case, it was concluded that the analysis of the survey was acceptable in terms of reliability and the analysis outputs were reliable.

3.8.1. Reliability Analysis Results for Customer Relationship Management Scale

Customer relationship management scale:  $0.964 > 0.70$ . Reliability value has been provided.

Customer Relationship Management Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Customer Focus	0,930	5
Organization	0,959	6
Information Management	0,945	5
Technology Focus	0,954	6
Total	0,964	22

Table 1: Reliability Analysis of the Customer Relationship Management Scale

3.8.2. Reliability Analysis Results for the Brand Image Scale

Brand Image Scale:  $0.966 > 0.70$ . Reliability value has been provided.

Brand Image Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Purchasing Decision	0,963	17
Brand Preference	0,927	8
Other	0,772	4
Total	0,966	29

Table 2: Reliability Analysis of the Brand Image Scale

3.8.3. Reliability Analysis Results for the Corporate Communication Scale

Corporate Communication Scale:  $0.970 > 0.70$ . Reliability value has been provided.

Corporate Communication Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Communication	0,953	10
Corporate Communication	0,963	13
Total	0,970	23

Table 3: Reliability Analysis of the Corporate Communication Scale

### 3.9. Analysis of Demographic Information

As seen in table 4, most participants (38.3%) are between the ages of 26 and 35. More than half of the participants (52.6%) are male and more than half (53.8%) are single. When we look at the educational status, it is seen that bachelor's degree graduates are in the first place with a high rate (40.3%). It was observed that employees with 1-5 years of employment in the institution had the highest rate (34.8%), and when the total working time was evaluated, employees with 16 years and above had the highest rate (28.5%).

	N	%
<b>Age</b>		
18-25 years old	42	16,6
26-35 years old	97	38,3
36-45 years old	72	28,5
46 years and above	42	16,6
Total	253	100
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	120	47,4
Male	133	52,6
Total	253	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	117	46,2
Single	136	53,8
Total	253	100
<b>Education</b>		
Middle School and High School	65	25,7
Associate's Degree	53	21
Bachelor's Degree	102	40,3
Master's Degree	33	13
Total	253	100
<b>Institution Duration</b>		
Less than 1 year	42	16,6
1-5 years	88	34,8
6-10 years	73	28,9
11-15 years	33	13
16 years and above	17	6,7
Total	253	100
<b>The Total Time</b>		
Less than 1 year	16	6,3
1-5 years	44	17,4
6-10 years	67	26,5
11-15 years	54	21,3
16 years and above	72	28,5
Total	253	100

Table 4: Analysis of Demographic Information

### 3.10. Descriptive Values

The compliance of the data to normal distribution was tested with the skewness and kurtosis coefficient. Skewness and kurtosis coefficients within the range of  $\pm 2$  indicate that the mean scores obtained from the measurement tools are in a normal distribution. In line with this information, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were calculated for the average scores obtained from the measurement tools.

In table 5, the distribution of scores obtained from customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication scales was examined, and the results obtained for all scales and sub-dimensions of the scales showed that the data had a normal distribution. In the inter-scale evaluation, the highest score average in the customer relationship management scale belonged to the information management dimension with 3.63; in the brand image scale, it belonged to

the purchasing decision dimension with 3.96, while in the corporate communication scale, it determined that all sub-dimensions have the same score average with 3.79. has been made.

Variables	n	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error of Skewness	Kurtosis	Std. Error of Kurtosis
Customer Focus	253	1	5	3,51	1,07	-0,68	0,15	-0,33	0,31
Organization	253	1	5	3,57	1,12	-0,90	0,15	-0,11	0,31
Information Management	253	1	5	3,63	1,09	-0,93	0,15	0,01	0,31
Technology Focus	253	1	5	3,62	1,11	-0,92	0,15	0,00	0,31
Customer Relationship Management Scale	253	1	5	3,58	1,05	-0,94	0,15	0,10	0,31
Purchasing Decision	253	1	5	3,96	0,85	-1,06	0,15	0,77	0,31
Brand Preference	253	1	5	3,63	0,98	-0,88	0,15	0,15	0,31
Other	253	1	5	3,52	0,90	-0,48	0,15	-0,01	0,31
Brand Image Scale	253	1	5	3,81	0,80	-1,03	0,15	0,87	0,31
Communication	253	1	5	3,79	0,91	-1,01	0,15	0,90	0,31
Corporate Communication	253	1	5	3,79	0,91	-1,01	0,15	0,86	0,31
Corporate Communication Scale	253	1	5	3,79	0,88	-1,05	0,15	1,12	0,31

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics Calculated for Scores Obtained from Measurement Tools

### 3.11. Analyses Concerning the Comparison of Score Averages According to Demographic Characteristics

The effect between dependent and independent variables was examined with Regression analysis in the survey data. The significance level was determined as 0.05 statistically. Score averages, standard deviations, ANOVA and t-test analyses of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication scales are given below.

#### 3.11.1. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and t-Test Results by Gender

Table 6 shows that the average scores of customer relationship management, brand image, and corporate communication do not differ in any way according to gender ( $p > 0.05$ ). According to the data in table 6:

- The average score of the customer relationship management scale is 3.59 for women and 3.58 for men.
- The average score of the brand image scale is 3.76 for women and 3.85 for men.
- The average score of the corporate communication scale is 3.79 for women and 3.80 for men.

Variables	Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	sig
Customer Focus	Female	120	3,50	1,12	-0,13	0,9
	Male	133	3,52	1,03		
Organization	Female	120	3,59	1,14	0,352	0,73
	Male	133	3,54	1,10		
Information Management	Female	120	3,63	1,13	-0,11	0,91
	Male	133	3,64	1,07		
Technology Focus	Female	120	3,62	1,16	0,019	0,99
	Male	133	3,61	1,06		
Customer Relationship Management Scale	Female	120	3,59	1,11	0,05	0,96
	Male	133	3,58	1,01		
Purchasing Decision	Female	120	3,88	1,02	-1,37	0,18
	Male	133	4,03	0,66		
Brand Preference	Female	120	3,63	1,02	-0,03	0,98
	Male	133	3,63	0,94		
Other	Female	120	3,54	0,99	0,334	0,74
	Male	133	3,51	0,80		



Variables	Gender	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	sig
Brand Image Scale	Female	120	3,76	0,93	-0,79	0,43
	Male	133	3,85	0,67		
Communication	Female	120	3,82	1,00	0,413	0,68
	Male	133	3,77	0,82		
Corporate Communication	Female	120	3,77	1,02	-0,4	0,69
	Male	133	3,81	0,8		
Corporate Communication Scale	Female	120	3,79	0,99	-0,06	0,95
	Male	133	3,80	0,78		

Table 6: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and T-test Results of the Scales by Gender

### 3.11.2. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results by Age

Table 7 shows the sub-dimensions of organization, information management, and technology, focusing on the customer relationship management scale according to age groups. In the brand image scale, it was observed that the mean scores of the other sub-dimensions differed ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was observed that the mean scores in the corporate communication scale and its sub-dimensions did not differ in any way according to age ( $p > 0.05$ ).

In the customer relationship management scale, the average score of participants aged 46 and over (3.89) was found to be statistically significantly higher than the average score of participants between the ages of 26-35 (3.35) ( $0.016 < 0.05$ ).

On the customer relationship management scale:

- In the organization sub-dimension, the mean score of participants aged 46 and over (3.92) was found to be statistically significantly higher than the mean score of participants between the ages of 26-35 (3.32) ( $0.015 < 0.05$ ).
- In the information management sub-dimension, the mean score of participants aged 46 and over (3.91) was found to be statistically significantly higher than the mean score of participants between the ages of 26-35 (3.39) ( $0.024 < 0.05$ ).
- In the technology orientation sub-dimension, the mean score of participants aged 46 and over (3.96) was found to be statistically significantly higher than the mean score of participants between the ages of 26-35 (3.38) ( $0.018 < 0.05$ ).
- As employees get older, their experience in business and customer relationship management also increases. Accordingly, they manage customer relations in a more conscious and professional manner.

On the brand image scale:

- In the other sub-dimension, the mean score of participants aged 46 and over (3.93) was found to be statistically significantly higher than the mean score of participants between the ages of 26-35 and 36-45 (3.35 and 3.53) ( $0.005 < 0.05$ ).

Participants aged 46 and over have more brand experience. People with more brand experience can make comparisons between brands and be selective in line with the information they have gained due to their experiences.

Variables	Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	sig	Difference Status
Customer Focus	18-25 years old	42	3,47	1,08	2,652	0,051	
	26-35 years old	97	3,29	1,20			
	36-45 years old	72	3,67	0,97			
	46 years and above	42	3,76	0,82			
Organization	18-25 years old	42	3,51	1,19	3,572	0,015	4>2
	26-35 years old	97	3,32	1,30			
	36-45 years old	72	3,72	0,91			
	46 years and above	42	3,92	0,75			
Information Management	18-25 years old	42	3,61	1,14	3,403	0,024	4>2
	26-35 years old	97	3,39	1,27			
	36-45 years old	72	3,81	0,87			
	46 years and above	42	3,91	0,84			
Technology Focus	18-25 years old	42	3,54	1,15	3,496	0,018	4>2
	26-35 years old	97	3,38	1,26			
	36-45 years old	72	3,77	0,90			
	46 years and above	42	3,96	0,90			
Customer Relationship Management Scale	18-25 years old	42	3,53	1,09	1,451	0,016	4>2
	26-35 years old	97	3,35	1,21			
	36-45 years old	72	3,74	0,87			
	46 years and above	42	3,89	0,77			
Purchasing Decision	18-25 years old	42	3,88	0,91	1,16	0,229	
	26-35 years old	97	3,86	1,02			

Brand Preference	36-45 years old	72	4,01	0,71	4,407	0,326	
	46 years and above	42	4,17	0,48			
	18-25 years old	42	3,62	0,92			
	26-35 years old	97	3,51	1,09			
	36-45 years old	72	3,66	0,93			
Other	46 years and above	42	3,84	0,82	1,991	0,005	4>2,3
	18-25 years old	42	3,51	1,00			
	26-35 years old	97	3,35	0,95			
	36-45 years old	72	3,53	0,76			
	46 years and above	42	3,93	0,75			
Brand Image Scale	18-25 years old	42	3,76	0,87	0,754	0,116	
	26-35 years old	97	3,69	0,92			
	36-45 years old	72	3,85	0,69			
	46 years and above	42	4,05	0,53			
Communication	18-25 years old	42	3,69	1,05	1,775	0,521	
	26-35 years old	97	3,75	1,02			
	36-45 years old	72	3,82	0,76			
	46 years and above	42	3,96	0,70			
Corporate Communication	18-25 years old	42	3,71	0,94	1,315	0,152	
	26-35 years old	97	3,68	1,03			
	36-45 years old	72	3,85	0,79			
	46 years and above	42	4,04	0,74			
Corporate Communication Scale	18-25 years old	42	3,7	0,95	1,109	0,270	
	26-35 years old	97	3,71	1,01			
	36-45 years old	72	3,83	0,74			
	46 years and above	42	4,01	0,71			

Table 7: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results of the Scales According to Age

3.11.3. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and t-Test Results by Marital Status

Table 8 shows that the average scores of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication do not differ in any way according to marital status (p>0.05). According to the data in table 8:

- The average score of the customer relationship management scale is 3.66 for married people and 3.51 for single people.
- The average score of the brand image scale is 3.80 for married people and 3.81 for single people.
- The average score of the corporate communication scale is 3.88 for married people and 3.72 for single people.

Variables	Marital Status	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	sig
Customer Focus	Married	117	3,59	1,04	1,181	0,239
	Single	136	3,43	1,09		
Organization	Married	117	3,61	1,07	0,505	0,614
	Single	136	3,53	1,16		
Information Management	Married	117	3,72	1	1,181	0,239
	Single	136	3,56	1,16		
Technology Focus	Married	117	3,72	1,08	1,408	0,16
	Single	136	3,52	1,13		
Customer Relationship Management Scale	Married	117	3,66	1,00	1,099	0,273
	Single	136	3,51	1,10		
Purchasing Decision	Married	117	3,98	0,74	0,335	0,738
	Single	136	3,94	0,94		
Brand Preference	Married	117	3,56	0,94	-1,008	0,315
	Single	136	3,69	1,01		
Other	Married	117	3,56	0,8	0,524	0,601
	Single	136	3,50	0,97		
Brand Image Scale	Married	117	3,80	0,69	-0,045	0,964
	Single	136	3,81	0,89		
Communication	Married	117	3,86	0,79	1,173	0,242
	Single	136	3,73	1		
Corporate Communication	Married	117	3,89	0,83	1,662	0,098
	Single	136	3,70	0,97		
Corporate Communication Scale	Married	117	3,88	0,79	1,502	0,134
	Single	136	3,72	0,96		

Table 8: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and T-Test Results of the Scales According to Marital Status

### 3.11.4. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results by Education Level

Table 9 shows that the average scores of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication do not differ in any way according to education level ( $p>0.05$ ). According to the data in table 9:

- Customer relationship management scale average score is 3.51 in secondary school and high school, 3.43 in associate degree, 3.71 in undergraduate degree, and 3.60 in master's degree.
- The average score of the brand image scale is 3.63 in secondary school and high school, 3.81 in associate degree, 3.94 in undergraduate degree and 3.75 in master's degree.
- The brand image scale average score is 3.65 in secondary school and high school, 3.84 in associate and undergraduate degrees, and 3.88 in master's degrees.

Variables	Education	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	sig
Customer Focus	Middle School and High School	65	3,44	1,19	1,7	0,168
	Associate's Degree	53	3,27	1,00		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,66	1,04		
	Master's Degree	33	3,55	1,01		
Organization	Middle School and High School	65	3,50	1,23	1,206	0,308
	Associate's Degree	53	3,36	1,15		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,70	1,06		
	Master's Degree	33	3,64	0,99		
Information Management	Middle School and High School	65	3,5	1,21	0,847	0,469
	Associate's Degree	53	3,57	1,01		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,76	1,09		
	Master's Degree	33	3,61	1,01		
Technology Focus	Middle School and High School	65	3,57	1,21	0,4	0,753
	Associate's Degree	53	3,52	1,10		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,70	1,06		
	Master's Degree	33	3,58	1,08		
Customer Relationship Management Scale	Middle School and High School	65	3,51	1,17	0,956	0,414
	Associate's Degree	53	3,43	1,01		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,71	1,01		
	Master's Degree	33	3,60	0,99		
Purchasing Decision	Middle School and High School	65	3,76	1,09	2,633	0,054
	Associate's Degree	53	4,02	0,68		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	4,10	0,67		
	Master's Degree	33	3,80	1,02		
Brand Preference	Middle School and High School	65	3,48	1,17	1,576	0,196
	Associate's Degree	53	3,50	0,9		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,77	0,86		
	Master's Degree	33	3,70	1,00		
Other	Middle School and High School	65	3,43	1,13	0,383	0,766
	Associate's Degree	53	3,51	0,78		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,57	0,81		
	Master's Degree	33	3,59	0,83		
Brand Image Scale	Middle School and High School	65	3,63	1,01	1,975	0,118
	Associate's Degree	53	3,81	0,66		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,94	0,66		
	Master's Degree	33	3,75	0,92		
Communication	Middle School and High School	65	3,68	1,07	0,636	0,592
	Associate's Degree	53	3,77	0,83		

	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,85	0,86		
	Master's Degree	33	3,90	0,82		
Corporate Communication	Middle School and High School	65	3,62	1,09	1,047	0,372
	Associate's Degree	53	3,88	0,70		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,83	0,90		
	Master's Degree	33	3,86	0,87		
Corporate Communication Scale	Middle School and High School	65	3,65	1,06	0,816	0,486
	Associate's Degree	53	3,84	0,73		
	Bachelor's Degree	102	3,84	0,86		
	Master's Degree	33	3,88	0,82		

Table 9: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results of the Scales According to Educational Status

### 3.11.5. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results According to the Time Working in the Institution

Table 10 shows that the average scores of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication do not differ in any way according to the duration of employment in the institution ( $p>0.05$ ). According to the data in table 10:

- Customer relationship management scale score average for less than 1 year is 3.53, 1-5 years is 3.51, 6-10 years is 3.72, 11-15 years is 3.48, 16 years and over is 3.68.
- The average score of the brand image scale is 3.63 for less than 1 year, 3.78 for 1-5 years, 3.98 for 6-10 years, 3.68 for 11-15 years, 3.90 for 16 years and above.
- The average score of the corporate communication scale is 3.56 for less than 1 year, 3.73 for 1-5 years, 3.93 for 6-10 years, 3.88 for 11-15 years, 3.91 for 16 years and above.

Variables	Institution Duration	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	sig
Customer Focus	Less than 1 year	42	3,36	0,86	1,028	0,393
	1-5 years	88	3,46	1,16		
	6-10 years	73	3,72	1,01		
	11-15 years	33	3,40	1,15		
	16 years and above	17	3,44	1,13		
Organization	Less than 1 year	42	3,54	0,98	0,342	0,849
	1-5 years	88	3,51	1,20		
	6-10 years	73	3,66	1,00		
	11-15 years	33	3,46	1,31		
	16 years and above	17	3,73	1,12		
Information Management	Less than 1 year	42	3,69	0,88	0,496	0,739
	1-5 years	88	3,53	1,19		
	6-10 years	73	3,74	1,02		
	11-15 years	33	3,55	1,22		
	16 years and above	17	3,75	1,19		
Technology Focus	Less than 1 year	42	3,54	0,87	0,68	0,606
	1-5 years	88	3,54	1,23		
	6-10 years	73	3,77	0,98		
	11-15 years	33	3,49	1,26		
	16 years and above	17	3,78	1,18		
Customer Relationship Management Scale	Less than 1 year	42	3,53	0,83	0,55	0,696
	1-5 years	88	3,51	1,16		
	6-10 years	73	3,72	0,94		
	11-15 years	33	3,48	1,21		
	16 years and above	17	3,68	1,11		
Purchasing Decision	Less than 1 year	42	3,80	0,94	1,299	0,271
	1-5 years	88	3,92	0,98		
	6-10 years	73	4,11	0,64		
	11-15 years	33	3,84	0,82		
	16 years and above	17	4,13	0,74		
Brand Preference	Less than 1 year	42	3,41	1,02	2,056	0,087
	1-5 years	88	3,65	1,02		
	6-10 years	73	3,85	0,80		

	11-15 years	33	3,37	1,15		
	16 years and above	17	3,59	0,87		
Other	Less than 1 year	42	3,36	0,95	1,148	0,335
	1-5 years	88	3,44	1,01		
	6-10 years	73	3,66	0,74		
	11-15 years	33	3,63	0,83		
	16 years and above	17	3,57	0,86		
Brand Image Scale	Less than 1 year	42	3,63	0,90	1,6	0,175
	1-5 years	88	3,78	0,90		
	6-10 years	73	3,98	0,61		
	11-15 years	33	3,68	0,82		
	16 years and above	17	3,90	0,67		
Communication	Less than 1 year	42	3,52	1,03	1,563	0,185
	1-5 years	88	3,77	1,00		
	6-10 years	73	3,94	0,76		
	11-15 years	33	3,87	0,83		
	16 years and above	17	3,83	0,73		
Corporate Communication	Less than 1 year	42	3,59	0,93	1,346	0,253
	1-5 years	88	3,71	1,03		
	6-10 years	73	3,92	0,80		
	11-15 years	33	3,90	0,80		
	16 years and above	17	3,97	0,79		
Corporate Communication Scale	Less than 1 year	42	3,56	0,94	1,445	0,22
	1-5 years	88	3,73	0,99		
	6-10 years	73	3,93	0,77		
	11-15 years	33	3,88	0,78		
	16 years and above	17	3,91	0,73		

Table 10: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results of the Scales According to the Time Worked in the Institution

### 3.11.6. Customer Relationship Management, Brand Image and Corporate Communication Score Means, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results by Total Working Time

Table 11 shows that the average scores of customer relationship management, brand image and corporate communication do not differ in any way according to the duration of employment in the institution ( $p > 0.05$ ). According to the data in table 11:

- Customer relationship management scale score average for less than 1 year is 3.55, 1-5 years is 3.42, 6-10 years is 3.58, 11-15 years is 3.70, and 16 years and above is 3.59.
- The average score of the brand image scale is 3.42 for less than 1 year, 3.73 for 1-5 years, 3.90 for 6-10 years, 3.82 for 11-15 years, 3.84 for 16 years and above.
- The average score of the corporate communication scale is 3.64 for less than 1 year, 3.59 for 1-5 years, 3.83 for 6-10 years, 3.89 for 11-15 years, 3.85 for 16 years and above.

Variables	The Total Time	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	sig
Customer Focus	Less than 1 year	16	3,38	0,97	0,456	0,768
	1-5 years	44	3,38	1,04		
	6-10 years	67	3,50	1,11		
	11-15 years	54	3,65	1,10		
	16 years and above	72	3,52	1,07		
Organization	Less than 1 year	16	3,51	1,19	0,388	0,817
	1-5 years	44	3,43	1,16		
	6-10 years	67	3,54	1,13		
	11-15 years	54	3,70	1,08		
	16 years and above	72	3,59	1,11		
Information Management	Less than 1 year	16	3,73	1,16	0,515	0,725
	1-5 years	44	3,44	1,11		
	6-10 years	67	3,65	1,08		
	11-15 years	54	3,74	1,11		
	16 years and above	72	3,64	1,09		
Technology Focus	Less than 1 year	16	3,61	1,03	0,346	0,847

	1-5 years	44	3,45	1,11		
	6-10 years	67	3,65	1,11		
	11-15 years	54	3,71	1,08		
	16 years and above	72	3,62	1,16		
Customer Relationship Management Scale	Less than 1 year	16	3,55	1,04	0,417	0,797
	1-5 years	44	3,42	1,05		
	6-10 years	67	3,58	1,06		
	11-15 years	54	3,70	1,05		
	16 years and above	72	3,59	1,07		
Purchasing Decision	Less than 1 year	16	3,52	1,29	1,521	0,197
	1-5 years	44	3,87	0,82		
	6-10 years	67	4,07	0,77		
	11-15 years	54	3,96	0,89		
	16 years and above	72	4,00	0,78		
Brand Preference	Less than 1 year	16	3,29	1,16	0,789	0,533
	1-5 years	44	3,55	1,01		
	6-10 years	67	3,73	0,92		
	11-15 years	54	3,69	1,02		
	16 years and above	72	3,61	0,94		
Other	Less than 1 year	16	3,25	1,14	0,734	0,57
	1-5 years	44	3,47	0,82		
	6-10 years	67	3,53	0,97		
	11-15 years	54	3,49	0,90		
	16 years and above	72	3,64	0,80		
Brand Image Scale	Less than 1 year	16	3,42	1,21	1,315	0,265
	1-5 years	44	3,73	0,73		
	6-10 years	67	3,90	0,76		
	11-15 years	54	3,82	0,85		
	16 years and above	72	3,84	0,73		
Communication	Less than 1 year	16	3,70	1,33	0,811	0,519
	1-5 years	44	3,59	0,87		
	6-10 years	67	3,84	0,89		
	11-15 years	54	3,89	0,98		
	16 years and above	72	3,83	0,78		
Corporate Communication	Less than 1 year	16	3,60	1,22	1,04	0,387
	1-5 years	44	3,59	0,79		
	6-10 years	67	3,82	0,95		
	11-15 years	54	3,89	0,94		
	16 years and above	72	3,86	0,84		
Corporate Communication Scale	Less than 1 year	16	3,64	1,24	0,969	0,425
	1-5 years	44	3,59	0,79		
	6-10 years	67	3,83	0,89		
	11-15 years	54	3,89	0,95		
	16 years and above	72	3,85	0,79		

Table 11: Score Averages, Standard Deviations and ANOVA Results of the Scales According to the Total Working Time

### 3.12. Correlation Analysis Results

The Pearson Correlation test was used to examine the relationship between the scales. As a result of examining the statistically significant relationships in table 12:

- It was observed that there was a moderate positive relationship between customer relationship management scores and brand image and its sub-dimensions ( $r=0.566$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). It has been observed that as customer relationship management increases, brand image and sub-dimension scores also increase.
- It was observed that there was a moderate positive relationship between customer relationship management scores and corporate communication and its sub-dimensions ( $r=0.604$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). It was observed that as customer relationship management increased, corporate communication and sub-dimension scores also increased.
- It was observed that there was a moderate positive relationship between corporate communication scores and brand image and its sub-dimensions ( $r=0.682$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). It has been observed that as corporate communication increases, brand image and sub-dimension scores also increase.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Customer Focus	----											
Organization	,906*	-----										
Information Management	,890*	,896**	-----									
Technology Focus	,870*	,892**	,906**	-----								
Customer Relationship Management Scale	,952*	,965**	,960**	,959**	-----							
Purchasing Decision	,521*	,521**	,522**	,516**	,542**	-----						
Brand Preference	,477*	,467**	,464**	,449**	,483**	,692**	-----					
Other	,442*	,450**	,400**	,393**	,439**	,595**	,722**	-----				
Brand Image Scale	,552*	,550**	,542**	,532**	,566**	,945**	,877**	,766**	-----			
Communication	,578*	,598**	,582**	,569**	,606**	,599**	,585**	,617**	,663**	-----		
Corporate Communication	,537*	,564**	,552**	,551**	,575**	,617**	,566**	,593**	,664**	,894**	-----	
Corporate Communication Scale	,569*	,594**	,580**	,574**	,604**	,625**	,589**	,619**	,682**	,965**	,980**	--- --

Table 12: Pearson Correlation Coefficients of the Scores Obtained from the Scales

### 3.13. Regression Analysis Results

Regression analyses were conducted to reveal the direct relationships between variables, in other words, the explanatory power of independent variables on dependent variables. In the regression analyses, employees' brand image was considered the dependent variable, and customer relations management and corporate communication, which was determined as the mediating variable, were considered independent variables and their effects on the dependent variable were examined.

In order to explain the effect of customer relationship management on brand image and the mediating role of corporate communication in this effect, a three-stage regression analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny was conducted. According to this method, the independent variable must have an effect on the dependent variable and mediator variable. When the mediator variable is included in the regression analysis together with the independent variable, the regression coefficient of the independent variable on the dependent variable decreases, while the mediator variable should continue to have a significant effect on the dependent variable (brand image). In this context, to determine the mediating role of corporate communication level, the relationships between customer relationship management, corporate communication and brand image were examined through hierarchical regression analyses and Sobel tests. The findings regarding the mediation test are given in table 13.

Within the scope of the mediation test, in the first stage, the relationships between the independent variable, customer relationship management and the dependent variable, brand image, were examined. In the first step of this stage, it was observed that customer relationship management significantly affected the brand image ( $\beta = 0.43$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In the second step, the effect of customer relationship management on corporate communication, whose mediation was investigated, was examined. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that customer relationship management significantly affected corporate communication ( $\beta = 0.51$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In this step, the effects of the corporate communication investigated on the brand image are also reported. It was found that corporate communication significantly affected the brand image ( $\beta = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In the last step of this stage, customer relationship management and corporate communication were analyzed together and their effects on brand image were examined. As a result of this analysis, when customer relationship management was analyzed together with corporate communication, its effect on brand image continued and decreased ( $\beta = 0.19$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and the effect of corporate communication on brand image continued ( $\beta = 0.49$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

After these conditions were met, the Sobel test was performed to confirm the mediation effect and Sobel(z) was found to be significant ( $z = 3.9$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This finding shows that corporate communication plays a partial mediating role in the effect of customer relationship management on brand image. As a result of this section analysis, it is seen that H1, H2, H3 and the mediation hypothesis H4 are supported.

		$\beta$	
		Corporate Communication	Brand Image
Customer Relationship Management	Test1	(H1)	
	Customer Relationship Management	0,43***	
	R <sup>2</sup>	0,32	
	F	118,73***	
	Test2 (H2)	Corporate Communication	Brand Image
	Customer Relationship Management	0,62***	
	0,51***	0,46	
	R <sup>2</sup>	218,2***	
	0,37		
	F	144,6***	
	Test3	(H4)	
	Customer Relationship Management	0,19***	
	Corporate Communication	0,49***	
	R <sup>2</sup>	0,5	
	F	126,3***	
Sobel Test (z)	3,9***		

Table 13: Regression Analysis Results  
 (\*P ≤ 0.05 \*\* P ≤ 0.01 \*\*\* P ≤ 0.001)

#### 4. Conclusion

This study, which was conducted with the participation of 253 people working in the fast food industry, aimed to determine whether corporate communication has a mediating role in the effect of customer relations methods on brand image.

With customer relationship management, businesses get to know their customers and learn their lifestyles, habits, preferences and expectations. As a result of this learning, they determine what approach they will take towards the customer. The fact that businesses are customer-focused and organizationally ready and continue their practices with a technology focus using information management shows that they have positioned their customer relations method correctly. In the study, the issues of consumers' decision to purchase, their preference for the brand and whether they will consume from the business in general have progressed in direct proportion to customer relationship management. This shows that customer relationship management is an effective and important element in creating a brand image.

Sakınç (2014: 87), in his research, found that the positive image of businesses is related to the success of businesses in customer relationship management. This shows that as the customer relationship management success of businesses increases, the business image also changes positively.

Interaction between businesses and customers occurs through communication and corporate communication. Customer-oriented management and the use of an effective communication style in businesses, determining and maintaining interaction methods in line with the objectives, contribute to the creation of strong customer relationships. This shows that customer relationship management influences and increases corporate communication.

Corporate communication, which is a determining factor in the creation and continuity of internal and external relations, should be determined and managed in line with the strategies of institutions. Studies carried out in this direction ensure that the brand is positioned in the eyes of the consumer and has a place in their minds. The fact that consumers give a place to the brand in their minds and tend to choose the brand in line with their needs is related to how corporate communication is established. This shows that corporate communication affects and increases brand image.

Baştak (2010: 90), in his research, stated that corporate communication is one of the important functions of the management process in businesses. It has been determined that good shaping and management of corporate communication, which is also the determining factor in image management, is important in the success and correct perception of businesses.

Customer relationship management results in a brand image by selecting appropriate employees, strong interpersonal communication, creating a corporate communication structure, clearly conveying company values to employees, and ensuring correct organization and communication between people. This shows that corporate communication affects the impact of customer relations methods on brand image.

Businesses must be active in understanding consumers and responding to their requests. It can be recommended that businesses take an active role in both pre-sales and post-sales processes by listening to consumers and analyzing their demands correctly. If the consumer has preferred the business before, it may be recommended to make presentations by



looking at their previous consumption habits. Today, with the ever-increasing competition and equivalent products, businesses need to focus on differentiation and differentiation from their competitors. Here, it may be suggested that the company should prioritize investing in its employees who communicate directly with consumers. Consumers who have a positive or negative customer relations experience form an impression of the brand in their minds. It may be recommended that businesses carry out studies for their consumers to ensure that this impression is positive and permanent. Establishing corporate-level communication with consumers not only makes them feel special but also increases their likelihood of choosing that business again. It may be recommended to proceed with a predetermined corporate structure in customer relationship management. In order to create a positive brand image for consumers, it can be recommended that the purchasing process be designed and carried out systematically from the beginning to the end.

## 5. References

- i. Aydın, F. (2020). "Use of Female Image in Advertisements. "Effect on Brand Image and Purchasing Intention" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Selçuk University Institute of Social Sciences, Konya.
- ii. Aydın, Y. (2022). "Corporate Communication and Promotion in Private Schools" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Bahçeşehir University Graduate Education Institute, Istanbul.
- iii. Baştak, M. B. (2010). "The Effect of the Corporate Communication of the Police Department on the Corporate Image: Istanbul Police Example" (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Marmara University Social Sciences Institute, Istanbul.
- iv. Bengül, S. S. (2019). "The Effect of Customer Complaint Management Quality Determinants on Brand Image and Brand Loyalty", Galatasaray University Communication Magazine, Issue: 31.
- v. Çalışkan, G. (2019). "A Research on the Evaluation of Social Customer Relationship Management Practices in Accommodation Businesses from Management and Customer Perspectives" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University Graduate Education Institute, Ankara.
- vi. Çiçek, E. (2005). "Factors Affecting Success in the Customer Relationship Management Implementation Process", Selçuk University Karaman Journal of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Volume: 5, Issue: 2.
- vii. Dağ, K. (2020). "The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Relationship between Brand Authenticity and Brand Image and Brand Preference" (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Hasan Kalyoncu University Institute of Social Sciences, Gaziantep.
- viii. Demir, F. O. and Kırdar, Y. (2007). "Customer Relationship Management: CRM", Review of Social, Economic & Business Studies, Issue: 8.
- ix. Deniz, E. (2016). "Loyalty Programs in Customer Relationship Management and Their Application in Hotel Businesses" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Istanbul.
- x. Dilek, H. (2022). "The Mediating Role of Brand Image in the Effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Loyalty" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), İnönü University Social Sciences Institute, Malatya.
- xi. Dünya, P. (2019). "Corporate Communication in Quality Management Systems: An Applied Example" (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Selçuk University Institute of Social Sciences, Konya.
- xii. Erginer, S. (2019). "Bibliometric Analysis of Customer Relationship Management Publications in International Literature" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Dokuz Eylül University Institute of Social Sciences, İzmir.
- xiii. Güçlüoğulları, S. Ö. (2022). "The Effect of Internal Communication Studies on Corporate Loyalty During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Research on an Energy Company in the Aegean Region" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Yaşar University Graduate Education Institute, İzmir.
- xiv. Gümüşbuğa, F. (2015). "The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty in Banking", Business & Management Studies: An International Journal, Volume: 3, Issue: 1.
- xv. Gümüş, M. and Öksüz, B. (2010). "Corporate Communication as the Cornerstone of Reputation: The Role and Importance of Communication in the Corporate Reputation Process", Marmara Communication Magazine, Issue: 16.
- xvi. Gürsoy, Y. E. (2022). "The Effects of Customer Relationship Management on Marketing Performance in the Field of Social Media and a Research", (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis), Kırıkkale University Social Sciences Institute, Kırıkkale.
- xvii. Hadiş, H. (2016). "Electronic Customer Relationship Management in the Banking Sector" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences, Istanbul.
- xviii. İmrak, S. (2015). "Brand Personality; Brand Image, Its Effect on General Satisfaction and Loyalty: A Research on the Glassware Industry", (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Marmara University Social Sciences Institute, Istanbul.
- xix. İnce, M. and Uygurtürk, H. (2019). "A Review of Postgraduate Theses in the Fields of Brand Identity, Brand Personality, Brand Image and Brand Positioning," Karabük University Social Sciences Institute Journal, Volume: 9, Issue: 1
- xx. Ja'bari, M. M. M. M. (2022). "The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty: The Case of Karabük and Jordan" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Karabük University Graduate Education Institute, Karabük.
- xxi. Kaya, E. (2022). "The Effect of Customer Complaint Management on Brand Image in the Corporate Communication Process: A Research on Turkey's Most Popular Online Shopping Brand in 2020" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Kastamonu University Institute of Social Sciences, Kastamonu.

- xxii. Kırmızıtaş, O. (2022). "Relationship between Perception of Corporate Reputation and Effectiveness of Corporate Communication: Selçuk University Example" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Selçuk University Institute of Social Sciences, Konya.
- xxiii. Kocaçınar, N. (2021). "Use of Social Media in Health Management in the Context of Corporate Communication: Tekirdağ Example", (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Tekirdağ Namık Kemal University Social Sciences Institute, Tekirdağ.
- xxiv. Koçer, K. (2017). "The Effect of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Loyalty: A Field Research on the Banking Sector", Karabük University Social Sciences Institute Journal, Volume: 7, Issue: 2.
- xxv. Koptekin, H. (2019). "The Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchasing Behavior: An Application on Shampoo Consumption", (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Bahçeşehir University Social Sciences Institute, Istanbul.
- xxvi. Sakınç, Ö. (2014). "The Effect of Customer Relationship Management and Sales Force Qualifications on Company Brand Image - An Application in the Pharmaceutical Industry in Ankara" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Atılım University Social Sciences Institute, Ankara.
- xxvii. Savaş, S. (2015). "Framing as an Element of Integrated Corporate Communication", Akdeniz Communication Magazine, Issue: 24.
- xxviii. Soysal, A., Doğan, S. and Baynal, T. (2017). "Customer Relationship Management in Private Health Institutions", Journal of Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Issue: 7(1).
- xxix. Tassebedo A. (2016). "The Effects of Customer Relationship Management Applications on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: An Application in the Telecommunications Sector" (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Ege University Institute of Social Sciences, İzmir.
- xxx. Tosun, N. B. and Dereli, A. B. (2016). "The Effect of Using Parody in Advertising on Brand Image", Marmara University Recommendation Journal, Volume: 12, Issue: 46.
- xxxi. Yazbaşı, E. (2022). "Use of Social Media in Corporate Communication Studies of Private Schools in Turkey During the Pandemic Period: Americanlife Language Schools", (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Kastamonu University Institute of Social Sciences, Kastamonu.
- xxxii. Yıldırım, K. (2023). "A Research on the Determinants of Preventive Health Care Behaviors", Journal of Sakarya University Business Administration Institute, Volume: 5, Issue: 1.