

Problems faced by hotel businesses within the scope of environmental analysis factors: The case of Akçakoca**

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of the research is to identify the problems faced by hotel businesses within the scope of internal and external environmental factors. In this context, qualitative research method was applied in the research. Data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with people who are the owners and senior managers of hotel businesses operating in Akçakoca. A total of 10 hotel businesses were interviewed. Data were analyzed with descriptive analysis technique. As a result of the research, it has been revealed that the enterprises face economic, political, legal and natural environmental problems arising from the remote environmental factors. It was also found out that they do not generally encounter problems arising from immediate environmental factors. Lastly, it was found out that generally they face marketing, human resources, finance and accounting problems in general in the context of internal environmental factors.

1. Introduction

After the second world war, tourism started to take place in the sectors that make a great economic contribution to countries. Tourism has become economically valuable due to the foreign currency inflows it provides to the country, employment creation, its effect on the balance of payments and its positive effect on other sectors. 51.8 million tourists came to Turkey in 2019. In this context, Turkey received a total income of 34.5 billion dollars from tourism. The average expenditure of tourists per person is 666 dollars (TÜİK, 2019). In 2020, 15.8 million tourists came to Turkey and Turkey received a total of 12.0 billion dollars from tourism. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic experienced all over the world in 2020, the number of tourists and tourism revenues decreased. Thus, 15.8 million tourists came to Turkey in 2020 and Turkey received a total income of 12.0 billion dollars from tourism. The average expenditure of tourists per person is 762 dollars (TÜİK, 2020). In 2021, the number of visitors to Turkey increased by 85% compared to the previous year and reached 29.3 million visitors. Tourism revenue increased by 103% in 2021 compared to the previous year and reached 24.4 billion dollars. The average expenditure of tourists per person increased to 834 dollars (TÜİK, 2021). Therefore, the

tourism figures, which fell after 2019 due to the pandemic, started to rise rapidly after the pandemic. Thus, tourism is of great importance in terms of economy in Turkey, within the framework of the figures stated before and after the pandemic.

On the other hand, as the accommodation sector is one of the most important sectors of the tourism industry, Hotel enterprises constitute the most important business type in this sector (Batman, 2018). As of 31.12.2020, there are a total of 13476 accommodation establishments in Turkey, of which 4218 accommodation establishments certified by the Ministry and 8609 accommodation establishments certified by the Municipality (Culture and Tourism Ministry, 2020a). In this context, hotel businesses are among the most important establishments among accommodation establishments. According to the 2021 data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, there are a total of 14,831 accommodation establishments, 5386 of which are licensed by the Ministry, and 9445 with municipality certificates (Ministry of Culture & Tourism, 2021). Thus, thousands of accommodation businesses in Turkey create an important employment opportunity for the people of the country and region. In this context, hotel businesses are at the forefront of businesses that have the

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Research paper

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most important place in terms of employment and income among accommodation businesses.

Today, hotel businesses serving in tourism are both affected by the environment they are in and affect their environment. For this reason, they can not be considered separately from the environment in which they operate. In this context, hotel businesses face many problems while maintaining their existence. The problems experienced by hotel businesses are caused by both internal and external environmental factors.

Hotel enterprises experience problems arising from internal environmental factors such as management, marketing, finance and accounting, human resources, production and operation. While experiencing problems arising from immediate environmental factors such as suppliers, customers, competitors and substitute goods / services, they also experience problems arising from remote environmental factors such as political, legal, economic, socio-cultural, demographic, technological and natural factors (Dinçer, 2007; Eren, 2010; Ülgen & Mirze, 2014). Therefore, the problems experienced by the hotel businesses while serving in daily life arise from the internal and external environmental factors that the businesses are in.

In the national and international literature, no one-to-one studies have been found on the problems of hotel businesses within the scope of internal and external environmental factors in the field of tourism. However, some of the studies on environmental analysis in the field of tourism are as follows: Misir (2018) investigated how the chain hotel businesses operating in Istanbul carry out their environmental analysis and how they are affected by the external environment. As a result of the research, it was determined that three chain hotel businesses received support from research and analysis companies in making and evaluating environmental analysis, while in other chain hotel businesses, such environmental analyzes and evaluations were made by sales, marketing directors and general managers. In addition, it has been determined that chain hotel businesses are greatly affected by political and economic changes. Bezirgan and Kömür (2019) conducted a research on the external environment analysis of Ayvalık destination in terms of accommodation businesses. As a result of the research, it was found that there are main barriers to entry to the market, perfect competition market conditions prevail among many accommodation facilities, there is not enough competition among a small number of suppliers, the power of the suppliers is high, and the customer power is high because they have the chance to choose a large number of accommodation facilities. Taş and Zengin (2019) conducted a research in order to identify the problems that travel businesses face in the international arena and to offer appropriate solutions to these problems. In the research, it has been tried to bring appropriate solution suggestions with the help of the results obtained by making internal and external environmental analysis to

these problems that international travel businesses can experience intensely. Ontoraël et al. (2017) conducted a study on the effect of external and internal environmental factors on business performance in very small and medium-sized food and beverage businesses. This research has shown that external environmental factors have a positive and significant effect on internal environmental factors. Similarly, it has been revealed that external and internal environmental factors have a positive and significant effect on businesses performance. Andriotis (2003) conducted a research to examine the problems faced by the Cretan tourism industry as perceived by business people. In the research, it has been revealed that Cretan tourism enterprises face various problems that require urgent measures to be taken by the public and private sectors for their solution.

On the other hand, in the literature, there are also studies on the problems of enterprises and the development of solutions within the scope of internal and external environmental factors in enterprises outside the tourism field. Yiğit & Yiğit (2011) aimed to investigate the effect of external environmental factors on food companies of different sizes in their research. In the research, it has been determined that the effect of political, economic, sociocultural, demographic, technological and international environmental factors varies according to the size of the enterprise, while the effect of legal and natural environmental factors does not change. It has been observed that the threat of possible competitors, the threat of substitute goods, the bargaining power of suppliers and the bargaining power of customers in the elements of the competitive environment differ according to the size of the business, while the intensity of competition between competitors does not differ. Ayık and Keskin (2008) determined that the problems are generally caused by finance and management in their studies to determine the problems of SMEs operating in the field of manufacturing and marketing in Erzurum organized industrial zone and to create solutions. Güzel et al., (2018) conducted a research in order to determine the internal and external problems faced by SMEs, and to reveal the current situation and views of family businesses on transfer planning in transition to the next generation. In the research, it has been seen that the most common problems faced by SMEs are price competition and the need for qualified personnel.

With this research, it is aimed to identify the problems faced by hotel businesses operating in Akçakoca within the scope of internal and external environmental factors, and propose solutions for these problems. In line with this purpose, in the research, "Do the problems experienced by hotel businesses arise from internal environmental factors? Or is it due to external environmental factors?" seeks to answer the fundamental question. Thus, this research is important in terms of maintaining the existence of the hotels in Akçakoca, gaining an advantage over their competitors in the environment in which they operate, and identifying the problems arising from the internal and

external environmental factors. In addition, it is important to fill the gap in the tourism literature that such a study has not been found in the field of tourism to determine the problems experienced by hotel businesses within the scope of both internal and external environmental factors. The originality of the research is to evaluate the problems experienced by hotel businesses as a whole within the scope of internal and external environmental factors. Because previous studies have been designed to analyze the internal or external environment of hotel businesses or other businesses. However, this study also deals with the problems experienced by hotel businesses within the scope of environmental analysis factors.

2. Literature Review

Business Environment

Today every business lives in the conditions surrounding it and is affected by them. The environment has a decisive impact on businesses and determines how businesses are shaped (Güçlü, 2003, p.71). Therefore, the concept of environment is all the elements that are outside the boundaries of the enterprise and have the potential to affect all or a part of the enterprise (Göral, 2014, p.51). On the other hand, it is stated that it is possible for businesses to adapt to changing environmental conditions in order to sustain their assets, as well as to change the environment in which they operate (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014). Because no successful business and manager can operate without understanding and engaging with the internal and external dynamic environment surrounding it (Robbins et al., 2013, p.30). In this context, there are internal and external environments in which businesses operate and by which they are affected (Dinçer, 2007; Indris, 2015; Ontora et al., 2017). The internal and external environment factors of an enterprise are given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Internal and External Environment Factors of an Enterprise

External Environment Factors		Internal Environment Factors
<i>Remote (General) Environment</i>	<i>Immediate (Sectoral) Environment</i>	
Economic Environment Factors	Customers	Management Marketing
Socio-Cultural Environment Factors	Sellers (Suppliers)	Financial and Accounting
Political-Legal Environment Factors	Competitors	Human Resources
Technological Environment Factors	Substitution products	Production and Operation
Natural Environment Factors		

Source: (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014, p.64)

Businesses that try to ignore the environmental factors in the above table or refuse to respond to these factors cause problems and put themselves at a competitive disadvantage (Wang et al., 2012). For this reason, it is necessary to examine the factors in the environment where the business

is located and to determine how these factors can affect the business (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014).

External Environment of the Business

The concept of external environment refers to factors, forces, conditions and events outside the enterprise that affect the performance of the enterprise (Robbins et al., 2013, p.30). Therefore, the external environment consists of factors related to the business itself but external to it. Not all of these factors affect a business in the same way. While some of them have a significant and critical impact on the business, some of them may not be effective at all. Factors that affect the business more or less indirectly or directly and shape its decisions are called external environmental factors (Dinçer, 2007). In this context the external environment factors of the enterprise are examined in two main groups. The first is the factors that affect the remote (general) environment such as the economic, socio-cultural, political-legal, technological, and natural environment that indirectly affect businesses. The second environmental factors are customers, sellers (suppliers), competitors, and immediate (sectoral) environmental factors that directly affect the business and are directly affected by it (Ritson, 2008; Eren, 2010; Ülgen & Mirze, 2014).

- *Remote Environment Factors*

This environment is defined as the remote environment because it is outside the scope of the enterprise's influence and control. The business cannot directly control the components of the remote environment, but successful businesses can gather the necessary information from the remote environment to understand each element and the effects of these elements on business strategies (Demir, 2019; p. 88-89). Therefore, the remote (general) environment sometimes has a tremendous impact on businesses, but the impact of the business on that environment is very marginal (Yiğit & Yiğit, 2011, p. 122). Remote environmental factors can be listed as follows (Grant, 2005; Dinçer, 2007; Ritson, 2008; Akgemci & Güleş, 2009; Enz, 2010; Eren, 2010; Yiğit & Yiğit, 2011; Ülgen & Mirze, 2014; Demir, 2019):

Economic Environment Factors are comprised by factors such as the structure of national income, GNP, economic growth and investments, inflation, development stage of the economy, exchange rates, interest rates, unemployment and balance of payments.

Socio-Cultural Environment Factors are comprised by factors such as culture, lifestyle differences, social habits, population structure, characteristics, population size, age of the population, education levels, religion, value judgments, attitudes, and behavior styles.

Political-Legal Environment Factors are comprised by factors such as defense policies of countries, foreign policy, political negativities, terrorism, anti-monopoly regulations, new laws, environmental protection laws, laws

promoting foreign trade and globalization, changes in tax laws, attempts to promote or ban foreign capital, employee rights (recruitment, promotion, career development, job security etc.).

Technological Environmental Factors are comprised by factors such as information and communication technologies, new products, new technology, technological advantages of the country, internet, progressive and disruptive technologies such as biotechnology.

Natural Environment Factors are comprised by factors such as climate, land structure, weather conditions, environmental pollution, global warming, drought, natural disasters.

Within the framework of the factors mentioned above, an important point to note is that these factors interact with each other. For example, an increase in population (demographic) will cause more resource consumption, environmental pollution and therefore more diseases. This will require more legislation (political and legal) to protect consumers. Legal limitations will encourage new technological solutions (technological) and if these solutions are at an affordable cost (economic), they may actually lead to changes in attitudes and behaviors (socio-cultural) (Uğurluoğlu, 2013).

- **Immediate Environment Factors**

The environment where businesses supply their inputs, sell goods and services that they produce to their customers, and compete with their rivals, is called the immediate (industry / business) environment of the business (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014, p. 90). Factors that are directly related to the business and also directly affect the business constitute the immediate environment of the business (Indris, 2015). The immediate environmental factors are listed below (Dinçer, 2007; Ülgen & Mirze, 2014; Göral, 2014):

Customers; It is the most important pressure group in the sector in which the enterprises operate and the source of income of the enterprise. The customer is the *raison d'être* of the business, because all activities are aimed at ensuring that the goods or services produced are accepted, valued and purchased by the customer (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014).

Sellers (Suppliers); They are individuals, institutions and organizations that provide inputs such as raw materials, intermediate materials, and outsourced services used in the production of products and services (Göral, 2014).

Competitors; may be companies that produce similar goods and services, as well as from the segment of substitute goods and services or from the segment of complementary goods and services. A business must know and identify its competitors very well. In this respect, the company should examine its competitors and the changes in their situations in a continuous and systematic way as well as towards itself (Dinçer, 2007).

Substitute products; they are products and services that are produced in other sectors, that are not the same or

similar to the products of the enterprises, but that can be an alternative. Substitute products or services meet almost the same consumer needs in different ways (Göral, 2014).

The immediate environment factors mentioned above are the groups that are affected by the decisions and activities of the enterprise and are in its environment. These groups have a share in the enterprise. They can affect the business and are significantly affected by it (Robbins et al., 2013).

Internal Environment of the Business

The basic resources (assets), talents and competencies of the business form the internal environment of the business is (Akgemci & Güleş, 2009; Indris, 2015). In other words, the internal environment of the enterprise is the environment formed by the parts that compose it. The corporate culture, general management, financing, human resources, production and service, and marketing activities of the enterprise each affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the business as a whole” (Ülgen & Mirze, 2014, p. 65). The internal environment analysis of the enterprise is the determination and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses by examining the conditions and trends that can be controlled by the enterprise, arising from the internal environment that will affect the current situation and future of the enterprise (Göral, 2014). Internal environmental factors of the business are management, marketing, finance and accounting, human resources, production and operation (Ontorael et al., 2017; Taş & Zengin, 2019). The following information about these factors is given (Dinçer, 2007; Ülgen & Mirze, 2014; Göral, 2014);

Management is as important as objectives, strategies, structures and their functioning processes in businesses. There should be no harmony between the business structure and management processes and policies.

Marketing, includes processes and activities such as price, selection of distribution channels, promotion, promotion and promotion.

Finance and accounting, obtaining equity from business owners or shareholders in order to carry out investment and commercial activities, obtaining resources for activities through short or long-term borrowing, taking and implementing measures to reduce operational risks, providing financial benefits through tax incentives, accounting transactions, cost, budgeting and control activities are activities within this scope.

Human resources include activities such as selecting a talented and suitable working day for the enterprise, training and training of the workforce, performance evaluations, wage and salary systems, legal activities related to the workforce, appropriate workforce motivation techniques, leadership studies for managers and team spirit development.

Production and Operations covers all activities in transforming the supplied inputs into final goods and services.

When evaluating businesses in their environment or making environmental analysis, it is necessary to consider both internal and external environmental factors mentioned above. Because businesses continue to exist in an integrated way with the environment they are in. It is directly or indirectly affected or affected by these environmental factors. Therefore, it is possible to understand the problems experienced by the enterprises within the scope of internal and external environmental factors that are closely related to the enterprise.

Tourism in Akçakoca

Akçakoca is located at the western end of the Black Sea Region, the closest window of Central Anatolia to the sea, and is a charming holiday resort where green and blue blend located between two metropolises: Istanbul and Ankara. The region, which is 37 kilometers away from Düzce province, is also the biggest district of Düzce province (Akçakoca District Governorship, 2020). The district has 8 neighborhoods and 43 villages. According to 2018 data, Akçakoca has a total population of 38,846, with 25,903 people living in neighborhoods and 12,943 people living in villages (Akçakoca Municipality, 2020).

Akçakoca is the place where the first tourism movement started in Turkey with sea and caravan tourism in the 1950s. It is a remarkable destination for local and foreign tourists with its sea, sand, fishermen's shelters, fish varieties every season, sunset, civil and religious architecture, mountain strawberries, chestnut honey, hazelnuts, kilometers-long beaches, green vegetation, picnic and promenade areas, historical monumental trees, historical Genoese Castle, cave, waterfalls and local tastes (Culture and Tourism Ministry, 2020b). In this context, apart from sea-sand-sun, Akçakoca can host many alternative tourism types such as cultural tourism, faith tourism, cave tourism, camping and caravan tourism, underwater diving tourism (Akçakoca District Governorship, 2020). Hotel enterprises with operating license and municipality certificate operating in Akçakoca are listed in Table 2. As can be seen, there are a total of 18 hotel enterprises, 8 of which are enterprises and 10 are municipal certified.

The hotel establishments serving in Akçakoca, indicated in Table 2, host nearly one hundred thousand domestic and foreign tourists every year. Therefore, it meets the accommodation needs of thousands of tourists. It mostly serves domestic tourists coming from cities such as Ankara and Istanbul. It also employs the local people living in Akçakoca and the students of the Akçakoca Tourism and Hotel Management College.

3. Method and Material

For the purpose of determining the problems experienced by the hotel businesses operating in Akçakoca within the scope of internal and external environmental factors, the owner and / or senior managers of the business and municipality certified companies operating in Akçakoca constitute the population of the research. According to the data of Düzce Provincial Culture and Tourism Directorate, there are a total of 18 hotel businesses with enterprise certificates and municipality certificates. Since the population is attainable in size, no sample has been created.

In the research, qualitative research method was applied in order to examine the problems experienced by hotel enterprises within the scope of internal and external environmental factors in their natural environment and in depth. Interview technique was applied and data were obtained by using semi-structured interview form. The reason of the semi-structured interview technique is preferred to obtain in-depth information about the facts to be investigated and to reveal the problems experienced by the hotel managers in line with the opinions of the hotel managers. In addition, semi-structured interview was preferred because it provides flexibility to the researcher to ask new questions, change the order of questions, and skip some questions according to the course of the interview. In the interview form, 14 open-ended questions were directed to the managers and owners of the hotels in Akçakoca. The questions were created by making use of the internal and external environmental factors of the enterprises determined by Ülgen and Mirze (2014). After the opinions of two academicians who are experts in the field of interview questions were received and approved, they were applied to the hotel enterprises. Before the interviews took place, the hotel managers were called one by one and an appointment was made for the interviews. Appointments were made on time. The meetings took place between 14-27 December 2019 in the office of hotel managers and owners. Hotel managers were asked for permission to use

Table 2: Hotel Operations with Municipality Certificates and Business Certificates in Akçakoca

Hotel Businesses with Business Certificate	Municipal Certified Hotel Businesses
Ak Resort Hotel *****	Beyaz Çınar Butik Hotel
Hotel Akçakoca *****	Sezgin Hotel
Diapolis Hotel ***	Yılmaz Hotel
Türkuaz Beach Otel ***	Koçan Hotel
Livadi Hotel ***	Poyraz Hotel
Akçakoca Poyraz Hotel **	Yeni Çınar Hotel
Vadi Hotel **	Öz Korkmaz Hotel
Akçakoca Bayraktar Hotel *	Hotel Tuana
	Huzur Holiday Village
	Parla Beach Hotel

Source (Culture and Tourism Ministry, 2020c)

a voice recorder to digitally record the interviews in order to prevent data loss. However, almost all of the hotel managers did not allow the use of the voice recorder. For this reason, the answers given during the interviews are noted on the interview form by hand. The interviews lasted for 35-40 minutes on average.

All 18 managers were tried to be reached for an appointment. However, as 3 hotels were closed due to the season, and 5 managers did not accept to take part in the research, a total of 10 managers/owners were included in the research. The names of the interviewees were kept confidential in accordance with the research ethics and coded as "Participant 1, Participant 2" by giving a number from 1 to 10. The data obtained at the end of the interviews were analyzed by creating dimensions within the scope of the questions asked with the descriptive analysis technique. The answers of each manager were included under each dimension created within the scope of the questions asked. In order to ensure the credibility of the data, direct quotations were made from the answers of the managers. Thus, the data obtained through descriptive analysis were presented in an organized and interpreted form. The descriptive analysis was formed as follows within the scope of the dimensions consisting of questions asked about internal and external environmental factors.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis Dimensions

External Environment Dimensions		Internal Environment Dimensions	
<p>Immediate Environment Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems Arising from Customer • Problems Arising from Sellers • Problems Arising from Competitors • Problems Arising from Substitute Products 	<p>Remote Environment Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems Arising from Legal and Political Factors • Problems Arising from Economic Factors • Problems Arising from Socio-Cultural Factors • Problems Arising from Technological Developments • Problems Arising from Natural Environment Factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems Arising from Management • Problems Arising from Marketing • Problems Arising from Finance and Accounting • Problems Arising from Human Resources • Problems in Creating Touristic Products 	

Source: Authors

Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks the accuracy of the findings using certain procedures, while qualitative reliability shows that the researcher's approach is consistent between different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, validity deals with the accuracy of research results. On the other hand, reliability is related to the reproducibility of research results (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). In this context, it was carried out to ensure the validity of the research that the collected data were reported in detail, the researcher explained how he reached the results, the findings were consistent and meaningful within themselves, the findings were coherent, the findings were compatible with the previously created conceptual framework, and the findings could be tested in similar environments. On the other hand, in order to ensure the reliability of the research results; The

research method and stages (processes) were defined in detail, detailed information was given on data collection, processing, analysis, interpretation and reaching the results, it was ensured that the data obtained in the research and the results were in harmony, and the participant statements were directly quoted in the analysis of the data. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2006) state that the validity and reliability in qualitative research is not considered as in quantitative research, but can be ensured by the factors mentioned above. In this study, it was tried to ensure validity and reliability within the framework of these factors.

4. Findings

Since 10 managers responded positively to the research, interviews were conducted with 10 hotel managers in total, asking 14 questions. The demographic data of the participants within the scope of the findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Demographic Information of the Managers

	Age	Gender	Level of Education	Field of Education
Participant 1	60	Male	Bachelor	Non-tourism
Participant 2	39	Male	Bachelor	Non-tourism
Participant 3	53	Male	High School	Non-tourism
Participant 4	41	Male	High School	Non-tourism
Participant 5	33	Male	Bachelor	Non-tourism
Participant 6	42	Male	High School	Non-tourism
Participant 7	52	Male	High School	Non-tourism
Participant 8	54	Male	High School	Non-tourism
Participant 9	32	Male	Bachelor	Non-tourism
Participant 10	59	Male	High School	Tourism

Source: Authors

As can be seen in Table 3, all of the managers participating in the study are male, the average age of the majority of them (8 people) is 40 and above, most of them (6 people) are high school graduates and only one of them received tourism education.

Table 4: Problems Arising from Legal and Political Factors

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	Smoking ban, Insufficient legislation for classification, heavy licensing requirements
Participant 2	There is no legal regulation in home boarding, traffic controls are too much
Participant 3	Smoking ban
Participant 4	Smoking ban, Poor drug control at the port
Participant 5	Smoking ban, high taxes
Participant 6	Smoking ban
Participant 7	Lack of supervision related to parking and beach, accommodation tax is high
Participant 8	Smoking ban
Participant 9	High taxes
Participant 10	Insufficient tourism policies

Source: Authors

As seen in Table 4, 6 participants stated that they had problems arising from the "smoking ban". 3 participants stated that they had problems due to high taxes. 2 participants stated that the inspections were insufficient, 1 participant stated that they had problems due to the lack of legal regulations on home boarding. 1 participant stated that they had problems because the traffic inspections are too much. In addition, 1 participant stated that they had problems due to insufficient tourism policies for the region.

Table 5: Problems Arising from Economic Factors

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	Price increases are high, inflation is high, income is low
Participant 2	Increases are high, less income, more expenses
Participant 3	Price increases are high, purchasing power and revenues are low
Participant 4	Price increases are high, the increases cannot be reflected in product prices
Participant 5	Price increases and exchange rates are high, income is low, loan interest rates are high
Participant 6	Price increases are high, the increases cannot be reflected in product prices
Participant 7	Price increases are high, the increases cannot be reflected in product prices
Participant 8	Price increases are high, the increases cannot be reflected in product prices, inflation rate is high
Participant 9	Price increases are high, purchasing power is low, inflation rate is high
Participant 10	Price increases are high

Source: Authors

As seen in Table 5, almost all of the participants stated that they had problems due to the high price increases, and that they could not reflect these increases in product prices. 3 participants stated that the inflation rates were high. 3 participants stated that the income levels were low.

Table 6: Problems Arising from Socio-Cultural Factors

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	Low level of education of local people
Participant 3	Lack of education and culture of the people and customers
Participant 4	No problems, we are accustomed to the diversity of guests
Participant 5	The educational level and lifestyle (requesting alcohol) of the guests are different
Participant 6	Low population
Participant 7	Guests have no understanding of service and have a different culture
Participant 8	Low level of education of the guests, being biased
Participant 9	Low population and low education level
Participant 10	We are in a narrow area as a region and the population is insufficient

Source: Authors

Participants were asked what kinds of problems they experienced as a business due to socio-cultural environmental factors in their region. As can be seen in Table 6, 2 Participants stated that they did not have problems, 3 Participants stated that they experienced problems due to the low population of the region, and 5 Participants stated that they experienced problems due to the low level of education of the guests and the public.

Table 7: Problems Arising from Technological Developments

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	We try to follow the technology, no problem
Participant 2	Technology is followed, for example, 'hotel runner' system is used, no problem
Participant 3	Keeping up with technology, we are open to innovation, no problem
Participant 4	No problem as technical information is available to the staff
Participant 5	Technological products are used, but especially the products in the kitchen are very costly
Participant 6	Technology is followed, customer complaints are spreading rapidly on social media
Participant 7	Technology is followed, but technological failures cannot be intervened on time as their services are outside the city.
Participant 8	Technology is followed, but adapting is difficult in terms of cost
Participant 9	Technological developments are followed but costly investment is required.
Participant 10	We want to use advanced technology but it is costly

Source: Authors

As seen in Table 7, all of the participants stated that they followed the technological developments. 4 participants stated that they did not have any problems due to technological developments. 4 participants stated that they experienced problems due to the high cost of technological developments, 1 participant complained about the problems arising from not being able to respond to technological failures in a timely manner, and 1 participant stated that customer complaints rapidly spread on social media.

Table 8: Problems Arising from Natural Environment Factors

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	Water pollution is very common, summer is short eather conditions, flood disaster, sea is constantly wavy
Participant 2	Water pollution, rivers pollute the sea and beach, flood disaster
Participant 3	Windy and rainy weather conditions, this year's flood disaster
Participant 4	Short summer season, constant worsening of weather conditions
Participant 5	Short summer season, flood disaster
Participant 6	Short summer season, flood disaster, weather conditions, wavy sea
Participant 7	Water pollution, flood disaster, weather conditions
Participant 8	Summer season is short, summer weather is bad, flood disaster, sea is wavy
Participant 9	Short summer season, flood disaster
Participant 10	Short summer season, flood disaster

Source: Authors

As seen in Table 8, 3 participants stated that they experienced problems due to water pollution, 6 participants due to the short summer season, and 6 participants experienced problems due to unstable weather conditions. Most of the participants stated that they were negatively affected by the flood disaster in the summer of 2019.

Table 9: Problems Arising from Customer (Guest)

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	There are not many problems, problems are solved with crisis management
Participant 3	No problem since elite customers come
Participant 4	Problems with impatient and insatiable customer profile
Participant 5	Customers sometimes experience problems because they are not satisfied with the service staff
Participant 6	Problems occur when customers bring alcohol to the business from outside
Participant 7	Problems arising from the profile of customers often being one-day stay
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	No problem
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

As it can be seen in Table 9, 6 participants stated that they did not experience any problems arising from customers. 1 participant stated that they experienced problems from one-day stay guests. 1 participant stated that they had problems arising from impatient and insatiable guests. 1 participant stated that they had problems arising from guests trying to bring alcohol to the business and 1 participant stated that they had problems arising from guests who did not like the staff.

Table 10: Problems Arising from Sellers (Suppliers)

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	When the agencies make a discount without our knowledge
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	When they reduce the quality of food products
Participant 5	No problem
Participant 6	No problem
Participant 7	No problem
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	When they change product quality
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

As it can be seen in Table 10, 7 participants stated that they did not have any problem with the suppliers, while 2 participants stated that the suppliers created problems when they lower the quality of the products they sell to the company, and 1 participant stated that they had problems as a result of the discounts made by the agencies.

Table 11: Problems Arising from Competitors

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	There are problems about unfair competition when competitors do not comply with the prohibitions.
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	Problems arise when the smoking ban is not followed and the common action is not applied
Participant 5	No problem
Participant 6	Common decisions are taken about smoking ban, but problems arise when businesses do not follow this decision
Participant 7	No problem
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	No problem
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

As can be seen in Table 11, 7 participants stated that they did not experience any problems arising from competing enterprises, while 3 participants stated that they experienced problems due to the failure of competitors to comply with the common decisions regarding the prohibitions.

Table 12: Problems Arising from Substitute Products

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	There are substitute products, no problem
Participant 2	There are substitute products but no problem
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	We have to change the product brand
Participant 5	No problem
Participant 6	No problem
Participant 7	No problem, breakfast products are organic and different from those of other businesses
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	No problem
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

As can be seen in Table 12, 9 participants stated that they did not experience problems due to substitution products, while 1 participant stated that they had problems.

Table 13: Problems Arising from Management

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	Problems in guiding untrained staff
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	Problems arising from the constant supervision of the work of the staff
Participant 5	No problem
Participant 6	Problems with task definition and planning
Participant 7	Technical faults (because their services are in other cities) cannot be solved instantly
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	There is a supervision problem
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

In Table 13, 5 participants stated that they did not experience management-related problems in their enterprises. 2 participants stated that there was a supervision problem. 1 participant stated that there was a problem of guiding uneducated personnel, and 1 participant stated that they had the problem of not being able to manage crises such as technical failure.

Table 14: Problems Arising from Marketing

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem, working with agencies
Participant 2	Akçakoca has a publicity and advertising problem. This reflects negatively on the business
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	No problem
Participant 5	There are problems since Akçakoca's promotion and advertising is insufficient.
Participant 6	It becomes costly since promotion and advertising are done by the agencies
Participant 7	Negatively affected because the promotion and advertisement of Akçakoca is insufficient
Participant 8	Problems in setting prices and promoting
Participant 9	We cannot allocate a budget for advertisement. The promotion of the region is also insufficient
Participant 10	Advertising and promotion are insufficient due to costs

Source: Authors

In Table 14, 3 participants stated that they did not have any marketing-related problems, 3 participants stated that they had problems due to the insufficient promotion and advertisement of Akçakoca, 3 participants stated that they had problems due to the cost of advertisement and promotion, and 1 participant had problems in determining and promoting prices.

Table 15: Problems Arising from Finance and Accounting

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	Resource problem is experienced in meeting the costs in winter
Participant 2	Labor costs and input prices are high
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	No problem
Participant 5	It is difficult to get a return as investment costs are high
Participant 6	Investment and personnel costs are high and costs are very difficult to return,
Participant 7	Labor costs are high
Participant 8	Costs are high income is low
Participant 9	Investment costs and personnel expenses are high
Participant 10	Costs are high income is low

Source: Authors

As seen in Table 15, 2 participants stated that they did not have any problems in terms of finance and accounting, while 8 participants stated that they generally had problems due to the high costs (investment and personnel).

Table 16: Problems Arising from Human Resources

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	No problem
Participant 2	Finding qualified personnel is a problem
Participant 3	Qualified personnel problem
Participant 4	No problem
Participant 5	The problem of finding qualified personnel
Participant 6	The problem of finding qualified personnel
Participant 7	No problem
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	Recruitment problem due to personnel costs
Participant 10	No problem

Source: Authors

In Table 16, 5 participants stated that they had no problems with human resources, 4 participants stated that they had problems with finding qualified personnel and 1 participant stated that they had a problem of recruiting staff due to high personnel costs.

Table 17: Problems in Creating Touristic Products

Participants	Opinions of the Participants
Participant 1	Legal regulations prevent service diversity
Participant 2	Lack of natural and cultural resources and insufficient investment incentives
Participant 3	No problem
Participant 4	The problem of accustoming customers to new products and services
Participant 5	Insufficient resources to diversify the touristic product
Participant 6	Lack of sufficient infrastructure to create touristic products
Participant 7	Lack of adequate support and incentives to develop tourist products
Participant 8	No problem
Participant 9	The number of customers is not sufficient and investment costs are high.
Participant 10	Creating touristic products affects businesses negatively

Source: Authors

Finally, as seen in Table 17, 2 participants stated they did not have any problems in creating touristic products. 2 participants stated that they did not have sufficient resources to create touristic products. 1 participant stated that the legal regulations prevented the creation of touristic products. 1 participant stated that they did not have enough infrastructure to create a touristic product. 1 participant stated that the number of customers is insufficient in creating touristic products and the investment costs are high. 1 participant stated that they had problems because of not being able to accustom the customers to the new products. 1 participant stated that creating touristic products affects businesses negatively.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

This research was carried out to determine the problems faced by the hotel businesses operating in Akçakoca within the scope of internal and external environmental factors. Since 10 managers responded positively to the research, interviews were conducted with 10 hotel managers in total, asking 14 questions. It is possible to gather the results of this research in two groups, namely the problems arising from external environment factors and the problems arising from the internal environment factors.

Problems arising from external environmental factors;

- It is observed that the problems experienced by the hotels in terms of economical environment factors are mainly due to price increases and rises in the inflation rate. Despite rising prices, costs and inflation rates,

hotels cannot reflect these increases in their prices. In this case, they have to make low profit from the products they buy at high prices. Therefore, it gets more and more difficult for the hotel enterprises to continue their economic activities as their income and profit ratio decreases.

- Within the scope of natural environmental factors, the problems of hotel enterprises are due to the seasonal characteristic of Akçakoca which is that the summer season is short, because of the Black Sea climate, the weather conditions are constantly changing and it is windy and rainy, and natural disasters (flood, earthquake) are devastating. These situations prevent the guests to visit Akçakoca and cause the number of days they spend in Akçakoca to decrease. This causes the occupancy rate of the hotels to be negatively affected.
- Within the scope of legal and political environment factors, smoking bans applied to businesses in Akçakoca and the fact that businesses do not show a common attitude with a common decision create unfair competition conditions. In addition, taxes applied to hotel businesses are heavy. Because hotel businesses only have dense occupancy rates in summer and serve very few daily customers in winter, taxes do not create economic problem for businesses in peak season. However, since the rate of customers is very low or absent in the winter, heavy taxes create economic problems.
- Within the scope of socio-cultural environmental factors, hotel enterprises have problems arising from situations such as low population of Akçakoca, low number of incoming guests, inadequate education and tourism awareness of local people and guests. Contrary to all these external environment factors, it is also found out that the hotels in Akçakoca do not have problems regarding technological environment factors.
- Problems in the context of immediate environmental factors are generally encountered due to unfair competition with competitors, changes in product quality offered to hotels with suppliers. Also, a small number of problems are encountered because of the general customer profile - customers are generally one-day stay, have low income, unconscious and insatiable.

The problems that hotels face within the scope of internal environment factors

- The biggest problems are the problems experienced in human resources. Within the field of human resources, there is the problem of finding qualified personnel. While hotel businesses with a business certificate and stars have the problem of finding qualified personnel, there is no problem of finding qualified personnel in municipal certified starless hotel businesses since they seek employing at a low cost. One of the most important reasons for this is the

fact that hotel businesses with municipal certificates are generally family businesses and serve customers at low standard level. As a result of the studies titled 'Problems Faced by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and Transfer Planning' by Güzel et al. in 2018, it was seen that price competition and the need for qualified personnel were the most common problems of SMEs. In this context, the human resources problem seen in the hotel operations in Akçakoca is also seen in the SMEs in Ankara. These two studies have reached similar findings in this aspect.

- It was found out that Akçakoca was negatively affected due to the insufficient publicity and advertisement and that hotel enterprises experienced problems due to the cost of the advertisement and promotion. This situation can be resolved through joint actions of all tourism stakeholders operating in Akçakoca.
- In terms of finance and accounting (investment and personnel), problems often arise because of high costs. As the season is short, the income level of the guests is low and the duration of their stay is short, it turns out that Akçakoca is a more suitable destination for boutique hotels and businesses with a maximum of 3 star standards. Thus, with their small and high quality business model, they will not have big problems in terms of costs. Therefore, the existence of all these problems is observed not only for hotels but also as a fundamental problem in the healthy and long-term development of tourism in Akçakoca. As a result of the study conducted by Ayık and Keskin in 2008 in order to identify and to create solutions for the problems of SMEs operating in the field of manufacturing and marketing in the organized industrial zone of Erzurum, it was found out that the problems were generally caused by finance and management. In this context, two separate studies with financial problems in both hotels and SMEs emerged as a common result. However, while there was a management problem in SMEs, it was found out that there was no such problem in hotels. Similarly, Yörük (2001) in his study on SMEs concluded that 70% of SMEs still have a financing problem. Therefore, this research shows a similar result with the study by Yörük (2001) within the scope of financial dimension.
- Due to Akçakoca's the natural and cultural assets, climate, and lack of infrastructure, insufficient investment and incentives in the city, hotel enterprises appear to suffer from diversifying tourist products. Insufficient diversity of touristic products also adversely affects the stay of incoming arrivals in Akçakoca and the hotel businesses there. In his study on the problems perceived by businessmen of the Cretan tourism industry by Andriotis (2003), he demanded immediate action from public and private sector to solve the problems that Crete tourism businesses faced such as finance, seasonality,

dependence on tour operators, expansion plans and lack of infrastructure. This study shows that the hotel businesses in Akçakoca and Crete experience similar financial, natural, political and supplier-related problems.

- As a result of the research carried out by Bezirgan and Kömür (2019), it is stated that the tourism activity in the region has an increasing trend; Since 20% of the visitors to the region are foreign tourists, the market is limited to domestic tourism; The lack of land in the region and the difficulty of finding qualified personnel are the main barriers to entry to the market; where there is full competition market conditions among many accommodation facilities; Since there is not enough competition among a small number of suppliers, it has been revealed that the power of the suppliers is high and the customer power is high because they have a chance to choose a large number of accommodation facilities. In the results of the research conducted by Güzel et al. in 2018, it was seen that the most common problems faced by SMEs are price competition and the need for qualified personnel. In this context, the results of all three studies show similarity with this research in finding qualified personnel. In addition, the results of this research are similar to the study of Bezirgan and Kömür (2019) in terms of problems with suppliers.
- One of the general results of the research is that the problems experienced by the hotel businesses in Akçakoca are mostly caused by the external environment and especially focused on the remote environment. It is understood that there are problems arising from the economic environment, natural environment, legal and political environment and that these problems are beyond the control of the enterprises and they have difficulty in intervening and developing solutions.

The limitations of the research are listed as follows;

- The first is that the hotel businesses that make up the universe of the research are limited in number and the universe only covers Akçakoca. Another limitation is that some of the limited hotel businesses in Akçakoca are seasonal and closed due to economic reasons.
- Secondly, the problems of hotel businesses were determined within the scope of internal and external environmental factors. No analysis was made for a relationship or effect, but due diligence was made.

Recommendations

Within the scope of the findings obtained from the research, some suggestions can be listed as follows in order to overcome the problems experienced by hotel enterprises in Akçakoca:

- Local authorities should bring together all hotel businesses before the season begins, organize

meetings regarding what the problems and shortcomings are, and make joint decisions,

- Studies should be carried out to determine the expectations of the tourists visiting Akçakoca, and tourism product diversification can be made to meet these expectations,
- By promoting and advertising Akçakoca, the length of stay of the guests should be prolonged, and long-term guests should be targeted instead of one-day stay
- In order to benefit from the sea in Akçakoca for a longer period, wave breaker investments can be made.

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Problems faced by hotel businesses within the scope of environmental analysis factors: The case of Akçakoca

Abstract

The aim of the research is to identify the problems faced by hotel businesses within the scope of internal and external environmental factors. In this context, qualitative research method was applied in the research. Data was collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews with people who are the owners and senior managers of hotel businesses operating in Akçakoca. A total of 10 hotel businesses were interviewed. Data were analyzed with descriptive analysis technique. As a result of the research, it has been revealed that the enterprises face economic, political, legal and natural environmental problems arising from the remote environmental factors. It was also found out that they do not generally encounter problems arising from immediate environmental factors. Lastly, it was found out that generally they face marketing, human resources, finance and accounting problems in general in the context of internal environmental factors.

Keywords: Hotel businesses, Business environment factors, Akçakoca, Tourism

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Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
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Emrah Öztürk	Conceptualism, Methodology, Validation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision	30%
Orhan Batman	Conceptualism, Resources, Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision	20%

Author statement: Author(s) declare(s) that All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. **Declaration of**

Conflicting Interests: The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article

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Justification: This research was conducted before January 1, 2020. For this reason, it is exempt from "ULAKBIM TRDizin" criterion.