

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TRIPADVISOR REVIEWS ON SAFE TOURISM CERTIFIED RESTAURANTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic, which emerged in December 2019, has deeply affected the economies. During the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a significant drop in restaurant revenues, foreign currency inflows and employment. Moreover, the pandemic has caused drastic changes in lifestyles and consumer behaviors. Therefore, this study aimed to evaluate the user reviews on the Tripadvisor website regarding Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic. The universe considered in this study consist of users who dined at Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey and commented on the Tripadvisor website. The content analysis method, used in qualitative research methodologies, was applied. In this context, a total of 922 comments for 98 Safe Tourism Certified restaurants on the Tripadvisor website over the period of 11 March 2020-20 April 2022 were analyzed with the help of Nvivo 12 program. It was revealed that 80.6% of the customer comments were positive. The most emphasized factors in the comments were taste, price, attitude and behavior of the employee, view, food and beverage quality, cleanliness, punctuality, employee care and Covid-19 safety measures. These findings may help in understanding the nature of consumer perceptions during pandemic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the rapid spread of Covid-19 outbreak worldwide, it was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020). In addition to concerns about the transmission of Covid-19 infection, government policies to protect public health, such as full or partial closures and social distancing requirements, reduced the number of customers in restaurants. Thus, many restaurants decided to close during this period.

With these policies, in order to protect public health and improve restaurant quality, a quality certificate called 'Safe Tourism Certificate' has begun to be given to restaurants as a result of inspections in various areas such as cleanliness, hygiene, food safety and standards in Turkey (TSE, 2022). The Turkish Institute of Standards (TSE) and the Association of Restaurant and Tourism Professionals (TURES) collaborated to constitute this certificate under the leadership of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

On the other hand, the increased use of the Internet as a result of developments in recent years (Lagrosen, 2005; Prabhu et al. 2017) has facilitated access to information, increased business competition (Tarigan & Widjaja, 2012; Gao et al. 2018) and transformed competition into different dimensions. This transformation is supported by social media. Specifically, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of social media has increased (Drouin et al. 2020).

In this regard, it is seen that the rate of social media usage increased by 5.8% between 2019-2020 and by 7.8% in 2021 compared to the previous year (Statista, 2022a). With increased online activity, online reviews have become important among customers as they convey the intimate experiences and emotions of consumers (Park et al. 2021). Therefore, consumers who review online comments, form an overall perception about the restaurant based on the information shared online, which in turn influences their purchasing decisions (Li et al. 2021).

In the light of the above explanations, it is important to reveal the factors affecting consumer perceptions during the Covid-19 pandemic in restaurant sector. In this context, the aim of the study is to evaluate the user comments on Tripadvisor website regarding Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey during the Covid-19 pandemic by using the content analysis method.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Impact of Covid-19 on Restaurants

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly affected

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people's lives. Many people have experienced anxiety and fear due to the uncertainty about the disease. Since people do not have enough information about the disease, they tend to minimize the risk of transmission in order to protect their health. In this context, they paid attention to the rules such as the use of masks, social distance and hygiene. The uncertainty applies not only to health, but also to economic, social and psychological aspects. It has caused significant changes in lifestyles. In this environment of uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, people have either reduced or completely stopped eating in restaurants. Given that perceived uncertainties can cause a contraction in economic activity (Işık et al. 2019), the profound impact of Covid-19 on the restaurant industry is inevitable (Chuah et al. 2022; Srivastava et al. 2022). In 2022, due to Covid-19 pandemic, the proportion of customers who dining out decreased by 30% worldwide compared to 2019 (Statista, 2022b). Many consumers have reduced dining in restaurants (Jia, 2021). As a consequence of financial losses, many restaurants have decided to close (Brewer & Sebby, 2021). In Turkey, 1181 food and beverage businesses were closed in 2017, 1172 in 2018, 1215 in 2019, 1733 in 2020 and 1418 in 2021 (TOBB, 2022).

When the studies on the impact of Covid-19 on restaurants are examined, the following issues stand out most prominently financial impacts (Andersen et al. 2020; Kim et al. 2021; Song et al. 2021; Yang et al. 2021; Hirokawa et al. 2022), the impact on managers and entrepreneurs (Brizek et al. 2021; Madeira et al. 2021; Sardar et al. 2022) and the impact on consumers (Cao et al. 2021; Hakim et al. 2021; Jia, 2021; Qi et al. 2021; Kostrominita et al. 2021; Luo & Xu, 2021; Silva et al. 2021; Srivastava et al. 2022; Xu et al. 2022; Zibarzani et al. 2022). Yet, little is known about the impact of Covid-19 on customer reviews.

The current study aims to examine the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic on the Safe Tourism Certified restaurant customers, based on the fact that Covid-19 pandemic has caused changes in consumers' preferences, attitudes and behaviors (Kim & Lee, 2020; Dağ et al. 2021; Harba et al. 2021) as well as restaurant reviews (Jia, 2021; Luo & Xu, 2021).

2.2. Food Safety and Certification

Food safety has existed since the beginning of civilization and has been shaped by regulations over time (Almanza et al., 2002). In this context, increasing consumer expectations and concerns in the field of quality and food safety are forcing quality and food safety standards to improve (Panghal et al. 2018). Today, countries conduct inspections to ensure food safety. To ensure food safety in Turkey, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry conducts inspections according to the regulation published in the Official Gazette dated 2008 and numbered 27009 (Official Gazette, 2008). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry determines various food safety strategies based on the recommendations of the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Health. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry inspects the enterprises in cooperation with the authorized special provincial administrations, municipalities and local civil authorities. During the inspections, cleanliness, hygiene, food, toxic effects, food contact materials, acceptable temperature conditions, deterioration status and the use of procedures based

on HACCP principles are the key considerations.

In Turkey, there are two categories of restaurants: Municipality Certificated restaurants and Tourism Ministry Certificated restaurants. Both types of restaurants are inspected by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. On the other hand, municipality certified restaurants are also inspected by municipal inspectors, and Ministry of Culture and Tourism certified restaurants are inspected by ministry inspectors. In addition to government inspections, there are voluntary food safety and quality improvement certificates. While these certificates contribute to the improvement of restaurant quality, they also guarantee quality. The public body responsible for standards in Turkey is TSE (Turkish Standards Institute). Founded in 1960, TSE is the sole representative of the International Standards Organization (ISO) in Turkey.

Given the growing importance of quality worldwide, government authorities have issued numerous quality certifications for the restaurant sector in this context. For instance, Quality Tourism Services (QTS) is a certification program implemented by the Hong Kong Tourism Board for restaurants (Horng & Tsai, 2010). On the other hand, USA uses numerical and alphabetical ratings or narrative reports in restaurants. Similarly, UK local authorities employ a 5-star rating and The Republic of Korea applies a

3-star hygiene certification system (Kim & Choi, 2021). Norwegian Food Safety Authority uses

the smiley face system and accordingly inspects restaurants, cafes and similar catering establishments in four main areas such as routines and management, facilities and equipment, food processing and preparation, traceability and marking (MATTILSYNET, 2022). Also, the National Environment Agency (NEA), a public agency in Singapore, has launched a campaign to reward companies by issuing SG Cleaning Quality Mark certification for preventing the spread of Covid-19 in the community (SG CLEAN, 2022).

In Turkey, to mitigate the economic and social consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of policies have been developed. In this context, a 'Safe Tourism Certificate' was prepared under the leadership of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. In cooperation with the Turkish Standards Institute (TSE) and the Association of Restaurant and Tourism Professionals (TURES), restaurants have started to receive certificates (TSE, 2022).

Previous studies addressed food safety certificates in restaurants in terms of perceptions of managers (Cotterchio et al. 1998, Kassa et al. 2010, Brown et al. 2014, Manes et al. 2013), perceptions of consumers (Alonso et al. 2005, Henson et al. 2006, Knight et al. 2009, Bai et al. 2019, Heo et al. 2020, Kim & Choi, 2021) and regulatory feature (Kim et al. 2016).

2.3. Electronic Word of Mouth Communication (eWOM)

Due to the increased use of internet, platforms based on online consumer reviews have become more common (Senecal & Nantel, 2004; Pantelidis, 2010; Sparks & Browning, 2011; Filieri, 2015; Hlee et al. 2018). In particular, the importance of restaurant review sites is evident (Luo & Xu, 2021), given the impact of online reviews on consumers' decision-making processes during the pre-Covid-19

pandemic (Choi & Ok, 2011; Filieri, 2015) and the Covid-19 pandemic (Kim et al. 2020; Siering, 2021). On the other hand, online customer reviews take the form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Phillips et al. 2016; Pelsmacker et al. 2018). Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is defined as ‘any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions the via internet’ (Henning-Thurau et al. 2004) and its significance has been gradually increasing (Cenni & Goethals, 2017).

One of the most popular online websites where people can share their restaurant experiences is Trip Advisor (Gebbels et al. 2021). By analyzing such websites where customer experiences are shared, various clues about the changes in customers’ perceptions can be obtained. For instance, especially in times of crisis, there may be changes in the content and frequency of comments. In this regard, it was determined that the number of TripAdvisor comments increased by 21.6 % in 2018 compared to the previous year, 17.6 % in 2019, 2.9 % in 2020, and 13.12 % in 2021 (Statista, 2022c). According to these data, it was seen that Covid-19 caused a drop-in comment growth rate in 2020 and 2021.

In the literature, there is a growing number of studies investigating the disruptive effects of Covid-19 on restaurant customer’s online reviews (Jia, 2021; Brewer & Sebby, 2021; Qi et al. 2021; Cao et al. 2021). Studies on online reviews for customers during the Covid-19 period focuses on customers’ evaluation factors (Cao et al. 2021; Doğan & Demirtaş, 2021; Qi et al.2021; Luo & Xu, 2021; Zibarzani et al. 2022; Srivastava et al.2022), the impact of online reviews on other customers (Silva et al. 2021), the impact of safety-related factors on ratings (Kostrominita et al. 2021); the impact of risk perception and menu on purchase intention for online orders (Brewer & Sebby, 2021) and the variation in customer visits, ratings and spending (Jia, 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses content analysis method to explore consumer reviews on the Tripadvisor website for Safe Tourism Certified restaurants during Covid-19. Covid-19 was declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020 and the first case was reported in Turkey on the same day. For this reason, in the current study, reviews were analyzed since March 11, 2020. To better understand the structure of reviews, in Turkish and in English a total of 922 positive and negative reviews on the Tripadvisor website between March 11, 2020-April 20, 2022 were examined. The main objective of this study is to analyze the comments on the Tripadvisor website regarding Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey in terms of quality elements during Covid-19 era. The sub-objectives of the study are to (1) evaluate the most emphasized factors in restaurant customers’ positive and negative comments, (2) determine the customers’ awareness of Safe Tourism Certification, (3) investigate the predominant language in comments, (4) create

some awareness in businesses and scientific authorities. For this purpose, the universe of this study consists of users who dine at Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey and comment on the Tripadvisor website. The sample in this study consists of users who dine at Safe Tourism Certified

restaurants and commented in Turkish and English on the Tripadvisor website.

According to the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA), under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, there were a total of 161 Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey. The study included 123 restaurants with website information on the Türkiye Tourism Promotion and Development Agency’s website. The 25 restaurants, not listed on Tripadvisor, were not included in the study. Therefore, the content analysis method was performed to the data of 98 restaurants.

There were 22739 reviews on Tripadvisor for a total of 98 restaurants and 960 reviews during the Covid 19 period. However, 38 reviews in languages other than English or Turkish were excluded from the current study. Consequently, in Turkish and in English, a total of 922 positive and negative reviews, were analyzed in accordance with the objectives.

In the analysis stage firstly, the Tripadvisor reviews were collected in a word file. Secondly, the authors translated the English reviews into Turkish and next, word file imported to the Nvivo-12 program for analysis. The Nvivo-12 program avoids counting errors when dealing with large amounts of data and provides visual results and facilitates coding of written visual and audio data. Finally, after the comments were coded, main and sub-themes were determined (Eroğlu & Bektaş, 2016). In addition, the words mentioned in the reviews were identified by using the Nvivo program. Word frequencies were interpreted by the researchers.

4. FINDINGS

The data were obtained from 922 positive and negative, reviews in Turkish and English on Tripadvisor website during the period of 11 March 2020- 20 April 2022. TripAdvisor’s users can rate restaurants from 1 (terrible) to 5 (excellent); additionally, reviews rated as ‘excellent and good’ are considered ‘positive,’ reviews rated as ‘average, bad and terrible’ are considered ‘negative.’ (Yetgin et al. 2020). In this study, 79 (80.6%) customers rated restaurants positively while 19 (19.38 %) customers rated negatively. It was also observed that the customer’s evaluation of food, service and value had more positive comments. On the other hand, surprisingly, the vast majority of customers (65.30%) did not evaluate the atmosphere.

Table 1: Rating Details of Safe Tourism Certified Restaurants on TripAdvisor during Covid-19 Era

Rating	General		Food		Service		Value		Atmosphere	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
5	7	7.14	3	3.06	3	3.06	1	1.02	1	1.02
4,5	27	27.55	37	37.75	19	19.38	14	14.28	17	17.34
4	45	45.91	27	27.55	38	38.77	32	32.65	11	11.22
3,5	10	10.20	8	8.16	12	12.24	19	19.38	3	3.06
3	4	4.08	3	3.06	3	3.06	6	6.12	1	1.02
2,5	1	1.02	1	1.02	1	1.02	1	1.02	1	1.02
2	1	1.02	0	0	0	0	1	1.02	0	0
1,5	2	2.04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	1	1.02	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unrated	0	0	19	19.38	22	22.44	24	24.18	64	65.30

According to Table 1, for general rating, the ratio of restaurants with 4 points is 45.91%, while, the ratio of restaurants with 2.5 points, 2 points and 1 points is equal and 1.02%. As specified by the food

evaluation points, the rate of restaurants with a 4.5 points is 37.75%; unscored restaurant rate is 19.38%; and the rate of restaurants with a 2.5 points is 1.02%. In compliance with the service evaluation points, the rate of restaurants with a 4 points is 38.77%; unscored restaurant rate is 22.44% and the rate of restaurants with a 2.5 points is 1.02%. For the value evaluation points, the rate of restaurants with a 4 points is 32.65%; unscored restaurant rate is 24.48%; on the other hand, the rate of restaurants with a 5 points, 2.5 points and 2 points is 1.02%. Considering the atmosphere evaluation scores, unscored restaurants rate is 65.30%; the rate of restaurants with a 5 points, 2.5 points and 3 points is 1.02%.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the language of the Tripadvisor reviews about Safe Tourism Certified restaurants during Covid-19 pandemic.

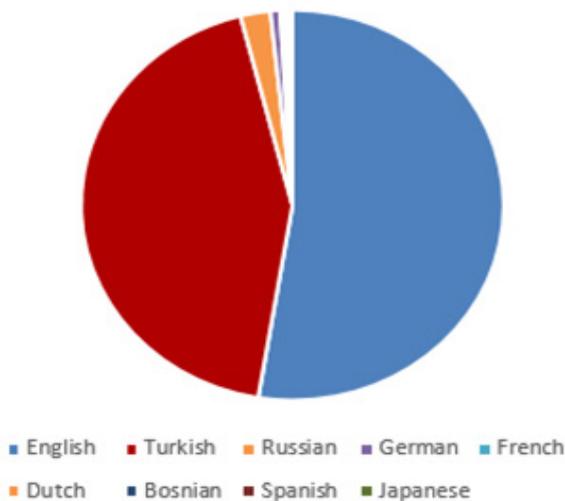


Figure 1: Distribution of the Language of the Reviews

Table 2 represents the number and rate of reviews on the Tripadvisor site of Safe Tourism Certified

Restaurants by language during Covid-19 period. The percentage of Turkish comments during the Covid-19 period is 43.43

%; the rate of English reviews is 52.60 % and the rate of reviews in languages other than English is 3.95 %.

Table 2: Number and Ratio of Reviews by Language

Language	Number of Comments	Ratio
English	505	52.60%
Turkish	417	43.43%
Russian	22	2.29%
German	7	0.72%
French	3	0.31%
Dutch	3	0.31%
Bosnian	1	0.10%
Spanish	1	0.10%
Japanese	1	0.10%

Since a comment may have several coding, there is a discrepancy between the total number of comments evaluated and the number of coding (Yetgin et al. 2020). 13 main themes emerged because of coding within the scope of the study. In this regard, food and beverages, employee, atmosphere, price, quality, additional services provided, cleanliness, punctuality, Covid-19, restaurant features and facilities, cuisine, hygiene and menu are the main themes coded from highest to lowest in terms of frequency of use. In addition, taste, price status, employee attitude and behavior, point of view, quality of food and beverage, cleanliness situation, service punctuality, employee care and covid-19 safety measure are the most frequently mentioned factors in the comments. Positive comments are associated with 1196 (78.89%) coding and negative comments accounted for 320 (21.10 %) of the coding.

Most of the negative comments were about price. Price was followed by the attitude and behavior of

Table 3: Main and Sub-Themes Created within the Research

	Total	Positive	Negative
Atmosphere	221	205	16
Ambiance	35	27	8
Exterior Design	5	5	0
Occupancy	20	19	1
Interior Decor	15	14	1
View	100	100	0
Width	12	6	6
Location	34	34	0
Restaurant Features and Facilities	47	41	6
Transportation	9	6	3
Suitable for Families	17	16	1
Reputation	16	16	0
Pet friendly	5	3	2
Additional Services Provided	72	61	11
Free Wifi	2	1	1
Valet	1	0	1
Delivery	7	6	1
Takeout	4	3	1
Online Order	1	0	1
Parking Available	10	10	0
Play Ground	6	5	1
Payment Option	5	3	2
Catering	19	16	3
Service Disabled	2	2	0
Dining Area Option	15	15	0
Food and Beverage	402	352	50
Food and Beverage Temperature	3	1	2
Proper Cooking Level	9	4	5
Food and Beverage Option	39	32	7
Freshness	35	33	2
Presentation	4	2	2
Portion Size	21	15	6
Originality	5	4	1
Attentive food preparation	4	0	4
Taste	271	258	13
Ingredient Ratio	9	1	8
Natural Based Food and Beverages	2	2	0
Covid-19	51	42	9
Safety Measures for Covid-19	51	42	9
Punctuality	62	35	27
Service Punctuality	62	35	27
Hygiene	23	16	7
Hygiene Situation	23	16	7
Quality	131	126	5
Atmosphere	2	2	0
Service	11	10	1
Equipment	4	4	0
Employee	2	2	0
Restaurant	47	45	2
Food and Beverage	65	63	2
Cleanliness	65	59	6
Cleanliness Situation	65	59	6
Menu	9	8	1
Special Menu Option	7	7	0
Menu Update Status	1	1	0
English Menu Option	1	0	1
Cuisine	31	30	1
Cuisine Option	31	30	1
Employee	283	201	82
Chefs	8	8	0
Employee Advising	3	3	0
Employee Professionalism	22	20	2
Employee Attitude and Behavior	151	109	42
Employee Reception	14	12	2
Employee Care	59	40	19
Number of Employees	7	7	0
Employee's Proficiency with English	14	0	14
Employee Attentiveness	5	2	3
Price	184	79	105
Price Status	184	79	105

the employee, service punctuality, employee care, employee's proficiency with English, taste and Covid-19 security measures respectively. Some of the negative comments are in the following:

'The prices are quite expensive.', 'The server spoke to me in a rude manner. Me and my wife were both uncomfortable', 'A bottle of water arrived in half an hour', 'There was zero concern', 'The employee did not speak a word of English. We were disappointed.', 'The food had no taste', 'There was no necessary social distance between the tables and also the waiter's mask was not securely fitted.'

It was stated that most of the positive comments was related to the taste. The taste was followed by the attitude and behavior of the employee, the view, the price status, the quality of food and beverage, cleanliness situation, the quality of the restaurant and the Covid-19 safety measures respectively. Some of the positive comments are in the following:

'The food was beyond being delicious', 'The employee was very professional and kind.', 'It has a wonderful terrace with a magnificent view', 'Prices are normal for such a place', 'A nice restaurant with high quality Mediterranean cuisine.', 'The quality was unquestionable.', 'The restaurant is super clean, all Covid security measures are in place'.



Figure 2: Word Cloud

Figure 2 illustrates word cloud of the most frequently used words in the reviews.

The word cloud created by Nvivo program, consists of 3728 words based on the analysis of a total of 922 comments. The size of the word in the figure is proportional to the frequency of use. Words such as 'one, many, for, but...' were not included in the word cloud as they were not relevant to the research. According to the data obtained, the most frequently used words in the comments were service (326), taste (291), price (241), recommendation (227), view (158), quality (141), employee (141), cuisine (120) and the atmosphere (110) respectively.

In the reviews; English, beverage, food, parking, relevant, reservation, cleaning, expensive, family, diversity, freshness, credit card, Wi-Fi, attentive, punctual, fast, vegetarian, covid-19, package, pandemic, environment, catering, ambience, menu, vegan, rude, polite, appetizer, warm, location, professionalism, valet, full, careful, empty, gluten free, crowd, spacious, chef, hospitable, playful, hygiene, welcoming, slow, cheap, international, cold, portion, presentation, transportation, decor and

healthy words were stated.

When analyzing the rates of Safe Tourism Certified Restaurants by city; Istanbul (75.15%) came first, followed by Ankara (7.45%), Antalya (5.59%), Afyonkarahisar (1.86%), İzmir (1.86%), Tekirdağ (1%). 86),

Muğla (1.24%), Nevşehir (1.24%), Bilecik (0.62%), Bursa (0.62%), Düzce (0.62%), Eskişehir (0.62%), Konya

(0.62%) and Manisa (0.62%) respectively.

When examining the rates of Safe Tourism Certified Restaurants by city; it was seen that, Istanbul (76.53%) comes first, followed by Ankara (11.22%), Antalya (3.06%), Afyonkarahisar (2.04%), Bilecik

(1.02%), Bursa (1.02%), Eskişehir (1.02%), İzmir (1.02%), Konya (1.02%), Manisa (1.02%) and Muğla (1.02%). However, since there were no comments on Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Düzce, Nevşehir and Tekirdağ on Tripadvisor, these restaurants were excluded from the research.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Turkey is a country where many different civilizations have interacted throughout the ages, due to its geographical location. Therefore, over the years as a result of the interaction of different cultures, many new tastes have emerged. In this context, the restaurant sector in Turkey has evolved over time and become one of the cornerstones of tourism. Specifically, given that food accounts for 20-25% of a tourist's expenditures (Koçak, 2004), it has become inevitable for businesses to increase their investments in the restaurant sector over time.

The Covid-19 health crisis has deeply and negatively impacted the restaurant sector. As a result, many restaurants were closed in an uncertain environment and those who managed to survive had to quickly adapt to the change. In this regard, it is critical to investigate the changing consumer perceptions.

Based on the findings, the following strategies are recommended:

Firstly, the most emphasized factors in the positive comments were taste, employee attitude and behavior, view, price status, quality of food and beverage, cleanliness situation, quality of the restaurant and Covid-19 safety measures respectively. Most of the negative comments were related to the price. The price factor was followed by attitude and behavior of the employee, service punctuality, employee care, employee's proficiency in English language, taste and Covid-19 safety measures.

Consistent with current results, price (Baek et. all, 2006; Aydın, 2016; Özkale Aslan, 2021) and taste of food (Doğan & Demirtaş, 2021; Yetgin et al. 2020; Tokassynova & Akababa, 2017) have been stated as the most emphasized factors in previous studies. According to the reviews, it was understood that Covid-19 safety measures (social distance, mask use, temperature control...etc.) were decisive.

On Tripadvisor, users can evaluate restaurants with reviews or ratings. In ratings, a low star means dissatisfaction and a high star means satisfaction (Meek et al, 2021). As a result of the research, it was revealed that the evaluation scores for Quality Certificated Restaurants were 4 and above. In addition to the scores, it was also identified that most comments were positive. In this way, it has

been confirmed by both ratings and comments that customers are satisfied with the Quality Certificated restaurants.

Results indicated that the most emphasized factors in the reviews were taste and price. In this regard, restaurants need to develop strategies according to the factors determined in the study immediately because only quickly adapted restaurants can survive. It was also seen that the concept of quality came to the fore in the comments. It is suggested that quality certificates be disseminated, with the thought that it will increase the quality in restaurants. On the other hand, in addition to quality factors, Covid-19 measures were also included in the reviews. This finding has demonstrated the sensitivity of customers about Covid-19 measures. Since restaurants have a customer profile that is easily affected by the pandemic, they need to develop strategies to strengthen themselves against pandemics. Indeed, during the pandemic, more resilient restaurants have recovered from the effects of the pandemic and survived. Thus, it is crucial to establish long-term strategies to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 against new waves of the pandemic.

Secondly, most reviews during Covid-19 period were in foreign languages. Based on this fact, Safe Tourism Certified restaurants could be considered as touristic. However, there were complaints about non-English speaking staff in negative comments. Therefore, it is important to provide English training to employees, considering the customer profile of the restaurants.

Thirdly, the information about Safe Tourism Certificate was found in only one user's review. This situation leads to the conclusion that the customers do not have enough awareness about the Safe Tourism Certificate. Since Safe Tourism Certification will increase the quality of restaurants, restaurants and consumers should be made aware of this issue. Increasing awareness of quality certificates will inevitably increase the number of restaurants with quality certificates and spread them outside of Turkey's big cities.

Finally, the results indicated that only 6 restaurants responded to customer reviews. When compared to the total number of restaurants included in the study, this rate is quite low. This situation has showed the necessity of awareness raising activities in restaurants. Restaurants need to consider online reviews to develop strategies to avoid losing customers.

On the other hand, to improve service in restaurants, it's critical to understand how customers' perceptions are evolving. The current findings should be strengthened by researches determining the perception of consumers in the Covid-19 period. Additionally, this study was applied to Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey. It is suggested for future studies to consider restaurants with similar quality certifications in different countries, different time periods and consumer reviews on different websites other than Tripadvisor. Furthermore, in the present study, the factors that have been identified are from a specific period. New data from a different period may allow the development of new factors.

As the previous studies were examined, it was seen that no similar study was observed to analyze the contents of TripAdvisor reviews of Safe Tourism Certified restaurants in Turkey during the Covid-19

pandemic. Thus, this research was conducted to fill this gap.

This research is crucial for managers and researchers to understand how customer reviews have evolved during the Covid-19 period and to assist them in solving problems. The findings of this study also contribute to the literature in terms of understanding consumers' perceptions in times of uncertainty.

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