

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ON-LINE BOOKING PLATFORM REVIEWS OVER A RESTAURANT: A CASE OF PIZZA LOCALE IN IZMIR¹

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ABSTRACT

The development of reservation websites such as tripadvisor.com has significantly affected the ways in which companies interact with their business and target groups. Companies from various sectors use such media to communicate with customers, who share their complaints, satisfactions and are asked about their experiences and opinions about products before deciding to buy. One of the widely used sectors of on-line booking platforms is the gastronomy sector.

In this study, Locale Pizza Restaurant was chosen to examine the electronic reviews of consumers by qualitative analysis. The research has investigated over 141 customers and analyzed their gender, rating scale and the objects of their complaints. Empirical results showed that most of the customer satisfaction at the restaurant is positive. The content analysis revealed main positive comments about the restaurant such as the tastiness of food and rich variety of menu, and also described negative sides of restaurant as “having a small area” and “crowded” through the overview of online customer reviews.

Keywords: social media, online review platform, tourism, restaurant, customer relationship

INTRODUCTION

The rapid change in the Internet technologies has accelerated the emergence of new applications that improve easy access for tourists. Social media is also one of these developments on the Internet. Especially the fact that everything new is changing so fast, has made social media to change itself with different applications such as TripAdvisor. TripAdvisor and similar tools allow travelers to share their experiences with others in their everyday trips. People share their positive or negative experiences about the country, region, place or business during their travels with other people by writing comments on these sites.

Among the tourism sphere the restaurant management is also influenced by the contents shared by the consumers. However, the limited research on what kind of effects it has on restaurants issue has not fully clarified. For this reason, content that is shared on social media websites like TripAdvisor needs to be investigated to see what kind of effects it has on restaurants. In this respect, the main purpose of this research is to contribute to the pool of knowledge in the field of business, customer and social media interaction. In this context, a content analysis was performed to consumer comments on a predetermined restaurant and the positive and negative reflections of the comments made to the restaurant image were

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identified. It is predicted that this research will be an important contribution to the literature, academicians and researchers working in this field. In addition, determining the variables that affect the restaurant image positively or negatively and revealing the subjects that shape these variables will also provide important contributions to business managers.

1. LITERATURE

Social media is an Internet-based tool made as a result of the changes in internet technology that is part of information and communication technology (Xiang and Gratzel, 2010). It was initially categorized by Mayfield (2007) (Aymankuy et al., 2013). In particular, Xiang and Gratzel's (2010) customer comment sites and virtual community sites categories are not found in other previous categories, nor are the categories specified by Mayfield (2007) as forums in the next categories.

While researchers considered social media as a marketing tool, they also considered it as a means of communicating with the public. Most marketing scholars and researchers evaluated social media as a digital application of traditional oral communication (Litvin, et al., 2008; Sarıışık and Özbay, 2012; Özbay and Sarıışık, 2013). Xiang and Gretzel (2010: 186) have found such a finding with the research on the role of social media in search of online information for travelling. According to this research, the harmony between content and media types produced by users in social media is as follows: information about restaurants, shopping and very few hotels is produced on consumer comment pages; Information about accommodation, attractions, tourism, hotels and activities are produced on virtual community pages; Night life information is produced on the pages specified as photo / video sharing pages and others; Information about events is produced on social networks and lastly it is stated that Theme parks related information is produced on blogs and photo / video sharing pages. Therefore, as pointed out in the survey, information for restaurants is shared on consumer comment pages (like TripAdvisor). For this reason, it is considered that the use of social media tools such as TripAdvisor, which is included in the consumer comment category, will provide more effective results in a survey to be conducted on social media for restaurants. This site is a website that allows people to plan their trips when traveling, taking advantage of the opinions of other people, and forces them to make satisfactory decision. Users make their opinions, interpretations and scores about a destination, hotel or other tourism item or services here (Miguens, et al., 2008: 2). TripAdvisor users are people who are frequent travelers, who enjoy entertainments, and are open to different kinds of travel information. These users have high levels of education and income, and they also monitor multiple multimedia content online (Yoo and PuriFoy, 2007: 17).

2. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method analyze was used in the research. The restaurant examined in the study was determined according to the decision of the researchers. Therefore, the restaurant image has been applied as a sample. In this method of sampling, the researchers identify individuals who will be included in the sample according to their own judgment, which they consider to be representatives of the main mass. They are based largely on the researcher's personal preference rather than on any possibility (Gegez, 2005). For research, 'Locale Pizza', one of the popular restaurants in Izmir and a member of TripAdvisor, has been selected. The research is limited in terms of time, and the fact that there are many restaurants on TripAdvisor makes it possible to investigate only through a restaurant. In addition, a large number of comments were made for each restaurant, which justified the reason for the research to be done through a restaurant. It was determined that 141 reviews were made by 11.06.2017, the date on which the study was conducted for the restaurant being searched, and

19 of these comments were written in foreign languages. This shows that the restaurant is visited by both local and foreign people.

In the study, an evaluation form was prepared for the recording of data. Variables were obtained from the scale used in the study conducted by restaurants by Ryu, et al., (2008). The researchers used variants such as food quality, menu variety, cleanliness, price, atmosphere, professional appearance of employees, restaurant location and waiting time to measure restaurant image. In this context, the comments of the restaurant in question are analyzed individually as content, and in the prepared form. The users who use “Very good”, “Good” and “Normal” expressions for each variable are under the positive category; the users who are “Very bad” and “Bad” are collected under the negative category. The obtained data were transferred to SPSS with scores of one to five, descriptive statistics were applied and the average of each variable was also found. Since the data obtained in the study were not normally distributed, Chi square tests were also used to determine whether there was a relationship between variables.

The reason of applying qualitative method in the research is the need to analyze main strong and weak points of the restaurant revealed by online customer reviews, and defining all the subjects for complaint or compliment addressed to the restaurant by in-depth examination of comments. The content analysis is the use of replicable and valid method for making specific inferences from text to other states of properties of its source (Krippendorff, K., 1980). Therefore, the data taken as a comments were inferred to the positive and negative subjects of complaints and compliments, and described with all topics of the issues such as “Tastiness”, “Crowded”, “Small area”, “Variety of menu” and etc.

3. FINDINGS

Table 1 contains the demographic findings of the study. Findings related to the demographic characteristics of the subjects participating in the research; Distribution of age, gender, travel type and language of the subjects is shown.

Table 1: Findings Related to Demographic Characteristics

Age	F	%
18-24	4	2,8
25-34	31	21,9
35-49	29	20,5
50-64 and over	13	9,2
Undefined	64	45,3
Gender		
Male	71	50,3
Female	56	39,7
Undefined	14	9,9

Travel Type		
Family	57	40,4
Couple	23	16,3
Single	10	7,0
Business	1	0,7
Friends	42	29,7
Undefined	8	5,6
Language		
Native (Turkish)	122	86,5
Foreign	19	19,4

Referring to Table 1, 2.8% of the subjects were in the 18-24 age group, 21.9% in the 25-34 age group, 20.5% in the 35-44 age group, 9.2% are in the 50 and over age group. When the gender status of the subjects is examined, it is seen that 50.3% of them are male and 39.7% of them are female. When the travel type of the surveyed customers are examined; 40.4% of them are family members, 16.3% are couples, 7.0% are single, 0.7% is business customers and 29.7% are friends. When the distribution of the language of the subjects is considered, 86.5% is native (Turkish) customers and 19.4% are foreigners.

Table 2: Distribution of Data According to Restaurant Variables

Variables	Positive	Negative	Total	%
Menu variety	27	6	33	23,4
Price	12	6	18	12,7
Product quality	51	10	61	43,2
Service	23	6	29	20,5

The data obtained by examining the variables that affect the image positively and negatively are presented in Table 2. When the data are analyzed, it is understood that the users are generally in favorable share. However, it is noteworthy that the share of the product quality is much higher than the other variables.

According to the variable of Menu variety of the place (23.4%) it is obvious that most comments are left positive, which means a large selection in the menu satisfies the visitors. The price policy of the restaurant also satisfies the buyers, but compared to other comments, prices are not so common topic for leaving the review, since it shows the smallest number (12.7%).

The most common number of reviews is the quality of the product of the restaurant (43.2%) and thus is the main theme for the opinion of visitors and the reason for visiting the restaurant. Many reviews point to the uniqueness of the restaurant's products and leaves recommendations for visiting the place as one of the best in the city, although there are some unconcerned visitors.

The quality of service takes almost the same number of reviews (20.5%) as the menu variety and takes place to be marked by visitors as one of the best criteria for visiting this place.

Table 3: A Content Analysis Over the Subjects of Positive and Negative reviews

Positive Reviews	Number	Frequency	Negative Reviews	Number	Frequency
Tasty	56	49,6%	Crowded	23	82,1%
Menu is rich	38	33,6%	Side product is missing	11	39,3%
Good service	30	26,5%	Expensive	10	35,7%
Fair prices	28	24,8%	Small area	6	21,4%
Dough is thin	17	15,0%	Not the best	5	17,9%
Big serving	16	14,2%	Bad location	4	14,3%
Fast service	14	12,4%	Eat and go	3	10,7%
Smoked rib pizza is tasty	14	12,4%	Side product is not proper	2	7,1%
Great atmosphere	10	8,8%	Contains pork meat	2	7,1%
Good quality	9	8,0%	Unisex toilet	2	7,1%
Artichoke pizza is tasty	9	8,0%	Unhealthy	2	7,1%
Famous	8	7,1%	Not tasty	1	3,6%
Decent	8	7,1%	Dough is thick	1	3,6%
Side products are pleasant	8	7,1%	Quality is improper	1	3,6%
Unique	8	7,1%	Loud	1	3,6%
Plenty of ingredients		6,2%	Architectural ly poor	1	3,6%
Nutella pizza is tasty	7	6,2%	Cold dishes	1	3,6%
Baked cheddar pizza is tasty	6	5,3%	Service is slow	1	3,6%
Good quality of ingredients	5	4,4%	Margarita is unsuccessful	1	3,6%
Over competitors	5	4,4%	No reservation	1	3,6%
Fast delivery	4	3,5%	No waiting	1	3,6%

			area		
European style	4	3,5%	The worst	1	3,6%
Innovative	3	2,7%	Not resembles pizza	1	3,6%
Located in center	3	2,7%	The lack of delivery	1	3,6%
Regards for the owner	3	2,7%	Wrong location in the Internet	1	3,6%
Sausage pizza is tasty	3	2,7%	Variety of desserts is poor	1	3,6%
Fresh	2	1,8%	Variety of starters is poor	1	3,6%
Recommendation for Alsancak branch	2	1,8%	The meat is thick	1	3,6%
Same taste of different branches	2	1,8%			
Mixed pizza is tasty	2	1,8%			
Shrimp pizza is tasty	2	1,8%			
Unique ingredients	2	1,8%			
Spacious	1	0,9%			
Newcomer	1	0,9%			
Pepperoni pizza is tasty	1	0,9%			
Chicken pizza is tasty	1	0,9%			
Good for family	1	0,9%			
Good for parking	1	0,9%			
Menu is available in the Internet	1	0,9%			

The Table indicates a detailed overview of specific subjects revealed according to the comments of visitors. It is obvious that the number of Positive subjects (342) dominate over Negative topics (87). To be more accurate, for Negative subjects the most common is the statement describing the restaurant as Crowded (82.1%), then the number is led by almost equal frequency of comments stating that Side product is missing (39.63%) and Expensiveness (35.7%) of the products. The comments describing place as “small area”, “not the best” and “with bad location” are shown with figures of 21.4%, 17.9% and 14.3% respectively. The rest of the subjects are shared merely by 1 or 2 customers.

As far as the Positive subjects are concerned, the most common statement inclines on the Tasty dishes (49.6%) followed by Richness of the menu (33.6%). Also the quarter of the customers noted on Good service (26.5%) and Fair prices (24.8%) of the restaurant. Other than general description of the restaurant like Great atmosphere (8.8%), Famous (7.1%) and Fast delivery (3.5%), we can also point out on the reviews stating on Good quality of pizza, Thinness of dough, Big serving with figures of 8%, 15%, 14.2% respectively and recommendations on different kinds of pizza. The least frequencies are shown about the restaurant to be Spacious, Newcomer, Good for family and parking and etc. with a single mention in the reviews.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study revealed the relationship between customer complaints behavior and demographic characteristics of customers. The customer reviews are mostly done by middle-aged males, and shows family companies to visit the restaurant the most. The vast majority of reviews show positive aspect. As far as the detailed overview of subjects is concerned, the food and its' quality appears as the top factor for customer satisfaction, followed by service and atmosphere. While for negative reviews, customers have the most common image of the restaurant to be crowded, which usually is the affection of a great demand among customers and limited sitting area.

In the similar article conducted by Kivela, et.al (2000), the quality of food was more important than other variables. In the same study, the atmosphere of the restaurant, the prestige of the restaurant and the region, and the price of the food are seen as other important factors. Each person's service attitude may be different. While some customers want fast service, some customers may not want everything to come in a hurry. The enterprise should set a standard in service and make itself available to the customer within these standards. In addition, the staff should be careful about the customer relationship, and if necessary the staff should be trained by an expert. Cleaning and hygiene are always important for the customer. As in my work, the subjects that present performance for determining satisfaction as a consequence of dining experience are applied, although different inclination on strength of the restaurant image are indicated. Furthermore, it shows general description of main subjects of reviews, whereas in the current work positive and negative reviews are elaborated separately.

Some of the other studies have been conducted on customer expectations. However, efforts to prioritize expectations or set them in a hierarchy have been inconclusive. Andaleeb and Conway (2006) reveals that to satisfy customer expectations, managers have to focus their efforts on service quality, price, and food quality, in that order. Although, some may argue that this order is part induced by the design of their methodology. Gupta McLaughlin, and Gomez (2007) with a set of data argue that the order of significance to the consumer is food quality, price, greeting, and service. Young and Jang (2008) also put food first, followed by the physical environment and service.

One of the most effective promotional tools in marketing is oral communication of the mouth. If dissatisfaction arises as a result of the service, the customer tells this dissatisfaction to 10-20 persons. Especially in small cities, this will adversely affect the operation and the image of the restaurant will suffer. In order to prevent this situation, the customer's complaints must be listened and definite solutions should be done for the customer as soon as possible. The most important issue is the customers' complains about the service offered at the restaurant.

In these terms, the current study held on Pizza Locale restaurant mainly indicates higher rate of positive impression after dining. This could be having two reasons. First, the customer is pleased with the restaurant. The second reason is that the customer is not satisfied, but hesitates to complain about cultural and personal reasons. That's why it's dangerous for business. The business should try to find out if the customer has any complaints. First of all, the business owner should know what customers who are not satisfied with the service or what they think. To do so, the business must establish a very good feedback system. In other words, they should try to find out what the satisfied or non-satisfied customers think. Business managers should learn how to communicate with their customers and create opportunities to talk to them. At this point, the business is closer to the customer and will have the ability to know what he wants.

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