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ADVANCES IN GLOBAL SERVICES AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT

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## **Analysis of E-Complaints Regarding Hotel Restaurants During COVID-19 Process: The Case of Antalya**

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### **Abstract**

The study aimed to determine the customer complaints about hotel restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted in restaurants of 50 5-Star Hotels in Antalya, Turkey's most visited tourist destination. The authors consider that the findings of this study are important for comparing with the studies in current literature. Among the TripAdvisor reviews written in English between December 2019 and March 2021 on hotel restaurants, 300 complaints were detected. Of the 300 complaints, 825 content of complaint was determined. It was determined that the customer complaints are generally related to "average" services and that among the produced codes, most of the complaints were regarding food standard, menu variety, taste and flavor, serving temperature for food, reasonable price/expensive/unworthy, same meals and expectation/disappointment codes. The findings show that the hotel restaurants are inadequate in terms of food standards and menu variety; and therefore, the hotel restaurant enterprises should find solutions to these problems. This study offers several suggestions for hotel restaurants to deliver excellent quality service during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, hotel restaurants, e-complaints

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### **Introduction**

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak started in Wuhan on the 31st of December 2019 and became a global pandemic. Since there are limited medical practices for the treatment of the disease, many countries have implemented restrictions, such as mandatory quarantine, social distancing, wearing face masks, canceling of events, etc. (Tandon, 2020; Watkins, 2020; Gunnell, 2020; Kreiner and Ram, 2020). The precautionary measures taken for the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on the socio-economic infrastructure of countries (unemployment, income decline, economic stress, etc.). Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Following the restrictions, tourism expenditure is one of the first expense items subjected to reduction (Constantoglou, 2020). In addition to travel restrictions, flight cancellations, reservation cancellations, and cancellation of upcoming events, such as festivals, affected almost all the main departments in hotels. The hotels closed due to canceled reservations, hotel restaurant supply chain problems encountered, and closed hotel restaurants are the indicators of this situation. While this situation encouraged people to be more conscious and aware of their hotel selection behavior, it leads hotels to change their marketing activities by emphasizing the measures taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Jiang and Wen, 2020; Li et al., 2021; Lai, 2020).

In this context, delivering high-quality service and increasing customer satisfaction by taking expectations and requests of the customers into consideration has become the main objective of the hotels. The hotels that offer high-quality service may have high customer satisfaction and increase profitability (Sigala, 2020; Im et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be stated that the main criteria affecting customer satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic include some factors, such as the precautionary COVID-19 measures, cleanliness, food quality, service quality, price, etc. (Hao et al., 2020; Lai and Wong, 2020; Kim et al., 2021; Bonfanti et al., 2021). The negativity reflected in the quality of tourism products and services due to the pandemic shows that the service offered will not be the same as before the outbreak, and it is observed that this will lead to customer dissatisfaction. The COVID pandemic has increased e-commerce and therefore, the enterprises started receiving customer complaints as e-complaints (Bhatti, 2020; Alfonso et al, 2021; Kim, 2020). It is considered that the complaints submitted after the pandemic may be different from the complaints before the coronavirus pandemic. Understanding the importance of knowing the cause of customer complaints is essential for accommodation enterprises and hotel restaurants.

Delivering high-quality food service and maximizing customer satisfaction by meeting the customer needs and determination of the points to be improved in the light of the complaints during the COVID-19 pandemic are considered as determining factors in customer preferences. Therefore, defining the content of complaints about hotel restaurants and improving the service quality plays a crucial role. In this context, the study is considered important since it focuses on a subject that was not examined before and the findings of this study may be supported by various studies in the literature. It is the aim of this study to contribute to the literature since it determines what are the customer complaints about the restaurants of accommodation enterprises during the COVID-19 pandemic and which criteria come into prominence and to which elements do consumers pay attention in restaurants by comparing the elements before and during the pandemic. The study aimed to determine the e-complaints of the hotel restaurants in 5-star hotels in Antalya during the coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, comments on TripAdvisor, a website offering international travel recommendations, and e-complaints on hotel restaurants were evaluated. The comments were analyzed by using qualitative research methods.

## Literature Review

A literature review shows that the customers report dissatisfaction as complaints to the enterprises and that customers complain if they are not satisfied with the service they received or if their expectations were not met (Chang and Chin, 2011; Lam and Tang, 2003). Heung and Lam (2003) stated that not receiving any complaining does not necessarily mean that the enterprise delivers excellent quality service or meets customer expectations perfectly and that customers shy away from complaining. Considering that there are no businesses that do not receive complaints, it is known that the businesses that understand the reason for the customer complaint may build effective complaint resolution strategies and may have a positive effect on repeat visitation (Ngai et al., 2007). The customer complaints submitted play a crucial role in warning the business about an existing problem and for helping businesses to take quick actions to prevent the problem (Zheng et al., 2009; Lee and Hu, 2008).

The COVID-19 outbreak has become a global pandemic, and therefore, new complaints arise in the hospitality sector and reshaping customers expectations for customer service (Bakar and Rosbi, 2020; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Gössling et al., 2020; Lew et al., 2020; Sigala, 2020; Skare

et al., 2020). Some negative factors, such as terminating employees, the closing of hotel restaurants, social distancing measures, travel restrictions, etc. in the hospitality sector are reflected in the service offered by the accommodation companies and have started to have a negative effect on customer satisfaction. People avoided traveling at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic; however, they eventually started traveling to accommodation enterprises that comply with health and COVID-19 protective measures (Kim and Lee, 2020; Lai and Wong, 2020; Shin and Kang, 2020). Based on this finding, it can be observed that tourism consumers are changing their preferences for travel motivations and the expectations from the accommodation businesses. Therefore, the trust concept in accommodation enterprises that are taking the necessary steps to build trust expresses compliance to COVID-19 measures (face mask, social distancing, cleaning, etc) and also taking human health factor into consideration (Hao et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2021; Kourgiantakis, 2020; Sigala, 2020; Kodera et al., 2020; Pillai et al., 2021).

A review of complaints about restaurants in accommodation enterprises before coronavirus pandemic shows that some certain issues, such as type of cuisine, the quality, and price of meals and beverages, menu variety, and decoration come into prominence (Defranco et al., 2007; Lundberg, 2011). However, it is considered that customers started taking health measures and good food experience into consideration following the COVID-19 pandemic, and since there are precautionary measures taken and innovations are required during this process, this will lead to some changes in the service provided before and after the pandemic.

Zhong et al, (2020) stated that consumers have negative reactions to price increases in restaurants of accommodation enterprises following the pandemic; while in their studies, Kim and Lee (2020) and Kim et al. (2021) showed that consumers prefer private facilities more, especially for restaurants, despite the risk of transmission. In the study conducted by Hu et al. (2021), it was shown that the hotel reviews were different before the COVID-19 pandemic, and that, on the contrary, there are major differences in service quality and that one of the departments with low performance during enhancement phase is hotel restaurant (Lew et al., 2020; Gössling et al., 2021; Sigala, 2020). Abbas et al. (2021) indicated that customers, who prefer hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic, expect "individualized service and reasonable price" and that hotels should adopt regulations to meet customer expectations by improving employees' quality of work, digitalization, developing menus for this process and reducing crowds by working in shifts (Im et al., 2021; Gunnell et al., 2020; Pillai et al., 2021; Jones and Comfort, 2020).

In this study, the aim was to examine the contents of complaints about hotel restaurants during the COVID-19 pandemic to determine the elements of the complaints. It is considered that this study conducted on restaurants in hotels offering mass tourism will contribute to literature as it reveals the complaints, especially about the all-inclusive concept during coronavirus pandemic. It is believed that the findings of this study may help the hotel restaurants to improve their service quality by revealing the missing points.

## **Methods**

### ***Sample***

The sample of the research consists of restaurants of 50 5-star hotels in Antalya, Turkey's most visited tourist destination. The complaints of customers written in English on hotel restaurants

during the COVID-19 pandemic in TripAdvisor between December 2019 and March 2021 were reviewed. There were a total of 300 reviews with scores average (3 points), poor (2 points), and terrible (1 point) for 50 hotel restaurants in Antalya. Of these 300 reviews, 852 complaint content were determined. The qualitative data analysis of the comments was performed by using MAXQDA 2020.

### ***Data Collection***

In this study, the complaints about hotel restaurants of 5-star hotels in the Antalya region were examined. The study was conducted in hotels in Antalya, due to the fact that Antalya is Turkey's most visited tourist destination. The reason for choosing 5-star hotel restaurants is the change in hotel preferences of consumers during COVID-19 and the customer complaints as a result of these changes gained importance for the accommodation enterprises. TripAdvisor was used for the complaints since it is one of the most common online customer complaint websites. In the study, four main categories of the content of complaints were determined as "Food Quality" (51,39), "Service Quality" (23,03), "Other Factors" (14,79) and "COVID-19 Precautions" (10,79). Upon content analysis, 27 complaint codes were determined and they were interpreted by descriptive analysis method.

### **Findings**

The complaints about hotel restaurants in 5-star hotels in Antalya during the COVID-19 pandemic were evaluated over negative reviews on Tripadvisor. A total of 300 comments were detected for 50 hotel restaurants in TripAdvisor. The comments were divided into three as "terrible", "poor" and "average"; 160 (%50) "average", 80 (%27) "terrible" and 60 (%20) "poor". Table 1 shows the distribution of the reviews.

**Table 1: Reviews on 50 Hotels**

<b>5 Star Hotels in Antalya Region</b>	
<b>Rating Score</b>	<b>Number of Comments</b>
Average	160
Poor	60
Terrible	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

A total of 300 complaints were reviewed. These comments include 825 complaints consisting of 4 different complaint themes and 4 different categories. The four different categories of the complaints are presented in table 2. The categories were as follows: "Food Quality" (51.39%), "Service Quality" (23.03%), "Other Factors" (14.78%), and the "COVID-19 Precautionary Measures" (10.78%).

**Table 2: Categories of Complaints**

<b>Complaint Number</b>	<b>Complaint Category</b>	<b>Number of Complaints</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
1	Food Quality	424	51,39
2	Service Quality	190	23,03
3	Other Factors	122	14,78
4	COVID-19 Measures	89	10,78
<b>Total</b>		<b>825</b>	<b>100</b>



Table 3 presents the complaints about "food quality", which ranked first among the customer complaints. In this category, the "Food standard" code was at the top of the list with 25.70% of the complaints. The "Food poisoning" code was the last on the list with 0.70%.

**Table 3: Complaints in Food Quality Category**

Complaint Number	Food Quality	Number of Complaints	Percentages (%)
1	Food standard	109	25,70
2	Menu variety	83	19,60
3	Tastes and flavor	63	14,85
4	Food temperature	57	13,45
5	Food repetition	48	11,30
6	Beverage standard	40	9,45
7	Food presentation	12	2,85
8	Size of portions	6	1,40
9	Food safety	3	0,70
10	Food poisoning	3	0,70
	<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of the complaints under this category are in the food standards code. Customers who visit 50 hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic stated that the food standards were changed in comparison with the previous year. In their comments, the customers indicated that food standards are low for a 5-star hotel and that they were disappointed. Some of the comments are as follows:

Food is not up to a standard of a 5-star hotel, not even close. I came to eat traditional Turkish cuisine and was disappointed that there weren't too many to chose from and from the ones that were on display by the way they looked I didn't have the courage to try them, very disappointed about this. I was upset to see that even on grilled food, i saw many of them overcooked and in one night, i saw a burnt turkey. In the afternoon, the restaurant was even worse so I did prefer to eat at a snack restaurant where the food was much better.

...The breakfast was so-so, the smoked salmon was awful, a 3 minutes cooked egg was like 11 minutes cooked egg. The yogurt and the jam were nice. Only once we decided to have dinner at the hotel, it was not a good decision, because the food was mediocre and the bread they served us tasted old.

Food is poor. I mean really poor. We eat out most nights. Italian was good for an extra 10 euro each. Can't get a bed around the pool after 10 am. Not a lot to do outside the hotel. Clean room every day and top mini bar up with two beers, 1 coke, 2 water, 1 Fanta, and 1 sprite. The massage was decent. Fake stuff in shops is expensive and crap. Definitely not a 5 star. I'd say a good 3 or poor 4 stars. Wouldn't come back.

We sat religiously on the app. at 9 am with the hope that we would get a reservation, but no. We did speak to the concierge but they just took our number and said they would contact us if there is a cancellation. Not heard from anyone. We only manage to get reservations for one Ala carte restaurant on our last day and the staff was non-attentive, to say the least, and after all this, the food was very substandard. Most staff in all the restaurants barely speak English, bar one or two. Overall, we were absolutely disappointed with the hotel and felt conned in thinking the restaurants were included for which we paid more. Food was substandard except for desserts...

...Half the hotel is closed, as the al carte restaurants and there is absolutely no entertainment or anything to do in the evening. The food was terrible (and tasted like it was reheated) and ran out on a daily basis if there was even staff there to serve there. They used to turn off the lights when people were eating and you had to go search for your own cutlery and clean the tables on your own.

In the study, the "Service Quality" category was the second among hotel customer complaints. Table 4 shows the complaints coded under this category. "Rude Staff" code ranked the first in the list by 20.19%. "Food Label" code was at the end of the list with 0.70%.

**Table 4: Complaints in Service Quality Category**

Complaint Number	Service Quality	Number of Complaints	Percentages (%)
1	Rude employees	38	20,19
2	Slow service	37	19,50
3	Employees indifference	37	19,50
4	English proficiency of the employee	30	15,80
5	Long food queues	21	11,10
6	Reservation	20	10,60
7	Lack of cover (cutlery, plate)	4	2,80
8	Food labels	3	0,70
	<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100</b>

The "Rude Staff" code at the top of the list indicates that the employees were rude and disrespectful during food service. The "Food Label" code refers to the confusion due to the lack of food labeling on the food served at the buffet. Some of the complaints in this category are as follows:

The food is not bad some dishes were very tasty others were lacking. I traveled with my 1-year-old daughter and very glad I bought food from home. No options for children at all. Staff members were very rude, they often rolled their eyes or seemed reluctant to help out. (can't fault the bar staff though). You were lucky if you got offered a drink at dinner I resorted to getting my own drinks at dinner which meant leaving the table several times.

(Food) very disappointed, all they serve for breakfast is fried eggs, a few pastries, cheese, ham, and fruit. It's a buffet-style dinner and the chefs have to put it on your plate due to COVID, not a great selection, and the style comes across as quite rude. We ate out last night at a lovely restaurant next door (Shakespeare's). There is no minibar and no kettle in the room (apparently due to COVID!) only 2 bottles of water. The All-inclusive does not include branded drinks (you pay extra) really disappointing! I have to pay extra for a Bacardi and coke!

Waiters and Buffet staff were rude and sometimes aggressive. Wait for drinks at mealtimes took forever and often didn't materialize. Lack of English speakers made it difficult and confusing for both us and them. The buffet food wasn't good. The A La Carte food was excellent but you have to pay €10 per person even though it's all-inclusive. Buffet portions very small you often have to ask for more seemed a bit cheap to dish out so little each serving. I'm not overweight or greedy but two boiled potatoes with the chicken is ridiculous. Waiters and staff looked harassed or didn't care, were too hot, or overworked or hated their masks who knows? But they were a poor reflection on the hotel.

The staff are extremely rude. Food is the same every night. Service is poor. Its only suited to Russians. The staff only speak Russian even in the kids' play area staff only speak Russian so kids from other countries don't really understand anything. This hotel should only accept Russian visitors since all they speak is Russian I did not know whether I was in Russia or Turkey. We came here from London and we feel so unwelcomed I'm still in this dreadful hotel for one more night. I have been in Antalya for many years now and this is the only bad experience I had. Avoid this hotel at all costs.

We would describe the food as being of a high 3 Star standard, but nothing more. A lot of it was quite bland and unexciting. Many food items in the buffet restaurant had absolutely no label next to them, and were impossible to identify visually. When asked, often the staff didn't know what the dishes were, or were unable to say what they were in English.

Ranked third among customer complaints, the complaints about "Other Factors" are shown in table 5. "Expensive/not worth" code ranked first in the list, counting for 45.08% of the complaints. "Interior Design" code was at the bottom of the list by counting for 8.21% of the complaints.

**Table 5: Complaints in Other Factors Category**

Complaint Number	Other factors	Number of Complaints	Percentages (%)
1	Expensive / not worth	55	45,08
2	Under expectation / disappointment	44	36,06
3	Equipment cleaning (cutlery, plate, buffet etc.)	13	10,65
4	Interior design	10	8,21
	<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

The "Expensive/ not worth" code ranked first place in this list. This code shows that customers had to pay extra for some services, that they could not get their money's worth, and that although they were staying at a 5-star hotel, the service offered was expensive. The "Interior Design" code shows that the interior design of the hotel was not appropriate for a five-star hotel and that they considered the restaurant space as limited. Some of these complaints include:

It's a shame because I would have given a 5 stars review because the majority of the staff, the food, the pools, the cleanliness and everything about the hotel is excellent apart from SOME dishonest scamming people working there. Telling a guest something is free so he will overuse it and charge him accordingly afterward. I am absolutely furious to have been fooled and overcharged like that ! It's not a matter of money, but a matter of principles. Thankfully I was all day out of my room so I didn't even get the chance to use the minibar apart from those 3/4 groceries I took and for which I paid £46 (54€).

Absolutely vile food, had a bad stomach ache every single day from how bad the food is here. Same breakfast every day which was vile. Have to pay £10 per head at each restaurant and wasn't even nice, was the same food and drinks served in the buffet restaurant (complete waste of money) Alcoholic drinks are awful, cocktails taste the same and make you feel sick. All cocktails are served differently every single time (almost like they make it up as they go along). Flight wasn't until 10:30pm and asked if we could stay in room til 3, but was charging £60 for 3 hours !!! Absolute rip off. Only good thing about this holiday was coming home.

...When we went there this man was unpolite. The room was no ready. We have been other resorts but no one has been so bad and not helpful. The food was bad. Only menu. Not open bufe. The same food every day, bored. Not fresh orange juice only extra payment. Evening no shows not interesting activities empty everything...

.... My main problem is the food. I've never been to an all-inclusive where you pay extra just to go to the a la carte restaurants. The quality of food in the main restaurant was very poor, especially at dinner time. Meat is fatty and not very good quality, the variety is poor and often we left the hotel to eat in restaurants by the end due to the quality. We did try the Asian a la carte one night with a €10 supplement per head, another disappointing meal. I 100% would not return purely based on the food and sadly the service from the restaurant and bar staff nor the pool can outweigh it. We were a party of 8 and all felt pretty similar when it came to the food. I have no idea how this hotel has such high reviews with no mention of the foods quality. I worried it may have been the food in Turkey as a whole but after eating in some of the restaurants around the land of legends and in the old town it is definitely just the hotel.

Table 6 shows the COVID-19 precautions, which ranked fourth in the list of customer complaints obtained in the context of the study. The "Closed Restaurants" code is at the top of the list of this category with 28.11%. The " Employees not changing gloves" code was in the last place with 7.86%.

**Table 6: Complaints About COVID-19 Measures**

Complaint Number	COVID-19 Measures	Number of Complaints	Percentages (%)
1	Closure of restaurants	25	28,11
1	Crowded	20	22,47
2	Use of masks	19	21,34
3	Social distance	18	20,22
4	Employees not changing gloves	7	7,86
	<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>100</b>

Ranked first in the COVID-19 Precautionary Measures category, "Closed Restaurants" indicate that customers are complaining about the lack of options and that it is hard to find a place in the current restaurants. In the "Employees not changing gloves" code, customers expressed that staff working in the open buffet do not change their gloves and that the restaurant should pay more attention to cleanliness during the COVID-19 pandemic. The comments about complaints of the customers include:

Food was ok but again has 6 restaurants which were al a cart menu and only 3 were running out of 6. On site, it said they had shisha but again only in summer. Even though we raised a complaint it was ignored no one goes back to us to compensate for all things that had happened.

The food in the all-inclusive was of good quality similar to that of most all-inclusive we have visited, although there was minimal to no choice for children. Only 2 out of 4 of the restaurants were open which was blamed on 'covid'. We visited the Italian al la carte during our stay and enjoyed the food there. There is only one choice of larger at the hotel which we found to be disappointing for a 5-star all-inclusive resort

Coffee is not always hot and food are good but Nothing spectacular. With Covid, it felt that they were more interested in getting g you in and out. The special restaurants, not all open so sushi and Italian never appealed to us. Takes a while to navigate the layout of the hotel but overall had a very relaxing stay. Not a hotel for a lively night or dance the night away but great for a relaxing quiet break...

Fourthly the food was very disappointing. Only the main food hall was open and basically the same options for food for lunch and dinner with the odd change here or there. Just 3 pasta options(no bespoke pasta station) and no fresh meat grill stations. The meat was usually fried or stewed. Did bother with the fish. And by the time I sat down to eat the food was lukewarm and never hot. Fifthly. The tables had plastic water bottles inside leather sleeves sitting on the tables for guests to use. But not new water bottles. They just refilled them. And the quality of the food was not great with the coffee tasting like instant coffee and the orange juice was not fresh o.j. But cheap tasting juice. And lastly, the staff were hit and miss. Some outstanding and some were very indifferent.

Table 7 presents all codes produced for customer complaints about 5-star hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic in a general order. In the list, the "Food Standards" code ranks first with 13.21%, the "Menu variety" code is at second place with 10.06% and the "Savor and Taste" code ranks third with 7.63%. The "Food Poisoning" and "Food Safety" codes are at the end of the list with 0.36%.

Among codes produced, more than half of the customer complaints are especially about food standards, menu variety, taste and savor, food temperature, expensive/not worth, meal repetition, expectation/disappointment codes. These codes count for 55.62% of the complaints. According to the complaints received during COVID-19, it can be stated that the customers travel to Antalya with great expectations; however, they consider that the five-star hotel restaurants in the region do not meet their expectations of the food quality standards compared to previous years and that the

menu variety is very limited in the scope of the low-quality service offered. They were not satisfied with the savor and taste of food offered and stated that the foods were not at optimum serving temperature. In their comments, the customers express that they were unsatisfied with the presentation of the same meal every day and they consider that they cannot get their money's worth, and therefore, they were disappointed.

**Table 7:** General Order of Codes Produced

Complaint Number	Complaint Issues	Number of Complaints	Percentages (%)
1	Food standard	109	13,21
2	Menu variety	83	10,06
3	Tastes and flavor	63	7,63
4	Food temperature	57	6,90
5	Expensive / not worth	55	6,66
6	Food repetition	48	5,81
7	Under expectation / disappointment	44	5,35
8	Beverage standard	40	4,85
9	Rude employees	38	4,60
10	Slow service	37	4,48
11	Employees indifference	37	4,48
12	English proficiency of the employee	30	3,65
13	Closure of restaurants	25	3,05
14	Long food queues	21	2,54
15	Reservation	20	2,45
16	Crowded	20	2,45
17	Use of masks	19	2,30
18	Social distance	18	2,18
19	Equipment cleaning (cutlery, plate, buffet etc.)	13	1,57
20	Food presentation	12	1,45
21	Interior design	10	1,21
22	Employees not changing gloves	7	0,84
23	Size of portions	6	0,72
24	Lack of cover (cutlery, plate)	4	0,48
25	Food labels	3	0,36
26	Food safety	3	0,36
27	Food poisoning	3	0,36
	<b>Total</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>100</b>

## Conclusion

In the scope of the study, data obtained from TripAdvisor, an online website for creating a review on enterprises, such as restaurants, hotels, etc, were analyzed and four different complaint categories were determined. Among these categories, a total of 825 content complaints were detected. It may be observed that the customer complaints are about "average" values. It was determined that the food standard category ranked first, service quality category second, other categories third, and COVID-19 Measures category fourth among the complaints. In the food quality category, it was observed that customers were not satisfied with the quality of food served. In the service quality category, the customer indicated rude restaurant staff in the first place. For other factors category, it was determined that the expensive/not worth code ranks first place. It was noted that the closed restaurants' code is at the top of the list in the COVID-19 Measures category. When all the complaints were evaluated, it was detected that the complaints about food standard, menu variety, taste and flavor, optimum serving temperature, expensive/not worth, food repetition, and expectation/disappointment formed the majority.

Upon a literature review, it was found that there are some differences in the order of the categories between other studies conducted and this study. In similar studies, service quality and the quality of the physical environment rank first among the complaints (Zheng, Youn, and Kincaid, 2009; Chan, Hsiao, and Lee, 2016). In their studies, Vasquez (2010), Au et al. (2014), Le and Hu (2004) ve Namkung et al. (2011) found that service quality was at the top of the list among customer complaints. In their study, Au et al. (2014) concluded that the customers care about the service quality most during their stay at a hotel. Namkung et al. (2011) showed that the service quality is at the top of the list for customer complaints and that the customers complain about the indifferent behavior of restaurant staff. In the study conducted by Han and Hyun (2018), it was found that the quality of the physical environment in restaurants due to restaurant design ranks first in the complaint categories. They stated that it is essential to improve the physical environment to increase customer satisfaction in hotel restaurants. Moreover, they noted that the restaurant service and food quality play a crucial role in customer satisfaction, and therefore, the improvement of the restaurant service and food quality is essential.

In literature, there are studies showing that the categories ranking first among the complaint categories about hotel restaurants are at the bottom of the list in the complaints about hotel restaurants in the Antalya region during the COVID-19 pandemic. This may be due to the fact that some enterprises faced downsizing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the customers started to pay more attention to eating healthy and delicious food. Moreover, the customers who stated that the menu variety in hotel restaurants does not meet their expectations, are the customers who visited the enterprises before the COVID-19 pandemic. This is considered to be due to the increasing expenses and restrictions in accommodation enterprises due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, a new complaint category titled Complaints about COVID-19 Precautions emerged and the customer complaints had a new dimension. The complaints such as not using face masks, not changing gloves, and social distancing were not analyzed in previous studies. It is considered that the customers will expect the enterprises to continue the precautionary measures against the disease during the COVID-19 pandemic, for some certain period after the pandemic ends or maybe continuously.

Based on the results of the study, some suggestions can be made to accommodation enterprises. The accommodation enterprises should provide the necessary conditions to serve high-quality and delicious food and beverages at optimum serving temperature. The restaurant staff should be trained to be kind during communication with the customer and learn to have a good command of English. The enterprises should balance the price/performance ratio. The accommodation enterprises should supervise the restaurant staff by taking the COVID-19 precautionary measures into consideration. The enterprises should improve their menus to increase their menu variety, and the customers should be given the right to choose.

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