

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry: An evaluation from the hotel managers' perspective

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic, which is seen as a source of crisis worldwide, has also had negative effects in many ways in the tourism industry. In this process, it is important to find out the problems caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and its solutions to tourism businesses. The aim of the research is to determine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the tourism industry, to evaluate the views of hotel managers and to offer solutions to problems in hotels. The research data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the hotel managers in Bodrum-Muğla. The interviews, in which a semi-structured interview technique was used to collect data, were held between July-September 2020. The data were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. The analysis was respectively carried out as the conceptual structure, modelling of data, organizing data through tables, and interpretation of findings. As a result, it has been revealed that the Covid-19 pandemic affects hotel businesses economically, socially and psychologically.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, tourism, hotel managers, anxiety, economic impacts, social impacts.

1. Introduction

The tourism industry, which is of great importance for many countries, has a constitution that can be affected by economic, environmental and political factors as well as diseases and crises that threaten human health. Although the tourism industry has gone through many crises, it has never been affected by any other crisis as much it has been by the Covid-19 pandemic. While previous crises caused effected a particular destination or region, this pandemic has shown its impact on a global scale. Thus, Covid-19 which spread from China to the whole world, has not only affected Chinese or Far East tourism but also has hit world tourism economically, socially and psychologically (Demir, Günaydın & Demir, 2020; Cucinotta & Vanelli 2020; Ghebreyesus, 2020). These effects are stronger in countries whose economy is based on tourism.

Covid-19 has had a severe negative impact on both businesses, employees and customers in the tourism industry,

which has large investments in hotels, tour operators and airline companies (Bahar & Celik Ilal, 2020; Demir, 2020; Škare, Soriano & Porada-Rochoń, 2020). This is because the economic consequences of the cessation of activities in the tourism sector, as well as the social and psychological effects on human factors, cannot be unforgotten for a long time. In general, the anxiety caused by being caught unprepared (Manderson & Levine, 2020) turns into fear after a while, revealing the extent of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic more clearly. Covid-19 has caused uncertainty for the activities to be carried out in the hotel industry. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the majority of hotels have experienced difficulties due to information pollution regarding the epidemic, lack of technical and medical equipment, and inexperience in crisis management. Government decisions such as the ban on international flights, closing border gates, domestic travel restrictions, and restriction of public transportation has caused the majority of hotels to cease their activities. The pandemic has affected not only hotels, but also

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all other businesses, institutions and individuals who are directly or indirectly associated with hotels (Anguera-Torrell, Aznar-Alarcón & Vives-Perez, 2020; Jiang & Wen, 2020), and moreover, has required all hotels to reconsider their activities and planning decisions.

2. Literature

The fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has either completely destroyed or negatively affected the tourism experience may cause certain changes in the future behaviours of tourists. According to the findings of Yenişehirlioğlu and Salha (2020), while most of the study's participants stated that the restrictions made during the pandemic go against the spirit of tourism and that they would not go on vacation due to the virus, the participants who stated that they would go on vacation also stated that they would prefer to engage in holidays and accommodations such as camping, glamping, hobbit houses or bungalows instead of mass tourism.

Aydın and Doğan (2020) stated that tourists tend to prefer small-scale accommodation facilities (such as boutique hotels and apart hotels) or different accommodation styles (caravans, camping, housing rentals). The authors also stated that the demand for rural tourism is an increasing trend and that new niche markets may emerge as a result of the increased interest in alternative tourism. Relatedly, Aydın and Doğan (2020) argued that the demand for events with collective participation, such as fairs, congresses and festivals, would decrease, but that in the future, the demand for online activities would increase. Moreover, the author noted that the overall interest in sustainable tourism and nature-based tourism would increase. In another study, which was conducted after the Covid-19 outbreak, it was stated that the trend of tourists to vacation would again increase and that popular tourism destinations would again be preferred.

However, it has been found that tourists are still cautious and thus prefer short-term vacations and travel that offers private vehicles and small-scale accommodation facilities. It has also been claimed that tourists pay attention to issues such as social distancing, certification, cleanliness and hygiene during their holidays (Kılıç, Aslan, & Govce, 2020). Özeltin Türker (2020) emphasized that the demand for tourism would decrease due to Covid-19 and that economic losses and employment problems would consequently arise, while participation in individual-based tourism activities and the importance of digitalization would increase.

During Covid-19, attractions and cultural centres in many destinations have been closed, art and sporting events have been cancelled or postponed, access to beaches and national parks has been restricted, and restaurants, cafes, bars, and other entertainment facilities have been temporarily closed (Baum & Hai, 2020; Bhuiyan, Hassan, Darda & Habib, 2020). During this process, tourists have tried to get back payments attached to vacation reservations that have

been cancelled due to restrictions, quarantines and social distancing. These attempts at reimbursement have mostly resulted in negative outcomes, and these unsatisfactory situations have been shared in places where many people could see them, such as websites, social media channels, and blogs.

As a result of the tendency of potential tourists to seek alternatives to tourism, e.g., to participate in virtual entertainment such as parties, events, festivals, food organizations and visits, their interest in electronic tourism on digital and virtual platforms has increased (Sigala, 2020: 317). Individuals have tried to meet their social needs, such as cultural interaction, by discovering new places, learning, and meeting new people on virtual platforms that offer such activities.

It can be said that COVID-19 has also had individual-level effects on employees in the tourism industry. Issues such as difficulties related to one's working life, demoralization due to uncertainty, negative effects on one's well-being, pessimism, job anxiety and fear of illness are among the most common negative effects on employees (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2020). During Covid-19, hotel businesses have made changes to their human resources plans. Implementation plans such as non-paid leave for employees (Demir, Günaydın & Demir, 2020; Kukanja, Pleninc & Sikošek, 2020; Lai & Wong, 2020), reducing the number of current employees (Altınay Özdemir, 2020; Demir, Günaydın & Demir, 2020) and not recruiting new employees (Bayat, 2020; Demir, Günaydın & Demir, 2020) have created an inevitable situation for hotel businesses.

During the pandemic, hotel businesses have preferred employees in some departments (such as reservation, accounting and HRM) to work from home in the interests of health and reducing costs. This preference also seems to be applicable after the pandemic (Hao, Xiao & Chon, 2020; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2020). In addition, as seen in some research results, hotel businesses have invested more in technological systems, tools and applications both during and after the pandemic. Zeng, Chen, and Lew (2020) found that services such as carrying guest luggage, reception duties and room cleaning in accommodation businesses are often carried out by robot technology. Hao, Xiao and Chon (2020) has stated that there will be a digital transformation – in-room smart control devices for C / in and C / out, individual-based technologies, face and voice recognition systems and mobile payment transactions will increase in hotel businesses in China. Sam, Kim, Badu-Baiden, Giroux, and Choi (2020) found that, during Covid-19, Chinese tourists have preferred hotels with robot technology more than labor-intensive hotels.

Covid-19 has adversely affected people all over the world and caused political, economic and socio-behavioral changes at the social level and started to make life difficult

(Baum & Hai, 2020: 2400). If the effects of Covid-19 on Turkish tourism are evaluated, the number of visitors to Turkey in the first quarter of 2020 amounted to 5,639,413. This is a decrease of 15.1% compared to the first quarter of 2019. In the first quarter of 2020, tourism revenue also decreased by 11.4%, totalling approximately \$4.1 billion (TUIK, 2020a). The decrease in both the number of visitors and tourism revenues continued into the third quarter. Tourism income decreased by 71.2% in the third quarter compared to the same quarter of the previous year and was approximately \$4.44 billion. At the same time, it is seen that all types of tourist expenditures decreased in 2020's third quarter compared to the same quarter of the previous year. It is understood that sports, education and culture expenditures decreased by 82.6%, tour services expenditures by 78.8% and package tour expenditures (the remaining share in the country) by 77.2%. The number of visitors decreased by 74.1% in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the same quarter of the previous year, totalling just 5,604,155 people (TUIK, 2020b).

During the pandemic, the decrease in the number of tourists due to national and international flight bans, the closing of border gates and travel restrictions has affected hotels negatively. The crisis created by the Covid-19 pandemic has caused huge fluctuation in the international hospitality industry and significant declines in the European hotel industry (Nicola et al., 2020: 188). The decrease in occupancy rates in hotels has consequently caused a decrease in revenue generated by restaurant bookings, events, meetings, weddings, etc. In fact, many hotels have temporarily halted their operations. Unfortunately, there was a decrease in the stock values of large hotel chains traded on the stock exchange. In this period, it is known that the occupancy rates of international hotel chains decreased by approximately 50% and their stocks dropped in value by approximately 16% (Siddiquei & Khan, 2020). Due to this decrease, the revenues of the hotels are expected to decrease by 50% (European Parliament, 2020b). On the other hand, it can be stated that in the accommodation industry, which is experiencing a deep crisis, especially small-sized and medium-sized businesses are also adversely affected and because of this situation, many hotels have decided to close because of the decrease in tourism demand (European Parliament, 2020a).

3. Methodology

3.1. Ethics committee approval

This research is a part of the project titled "Covid-19 and Tourism: Social, Human, and Economic Effects, Problems and Solutions of the Epidemic", which was ethically appropriate with the decision of the Ethics Committee of Isparta University of Applied Sciences, dated 14.08.2020 and numbered 27-2.

3.2. Sample

The research sample consists of participants in hotel manager/owner positions. Within the qualitative research method, a "stratified-purposive sampling" was preferred for data collection with semi-structured interview forms. The aim of this technique is to collect in-depth data from participants who are selected for research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Neuman & Robson, 2014; Maxwell, 1996). One of the major benefits of purposive sampling is the techniques that can also be used across qualitative research designs (Rai & Thapa, 2015). Stratified-purposive sampling gives more reliable and detailed information about the sample. According to the data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2020), there are a total of 94 hotels in Bodrum-Mugla in Turkey, including 46 five-star hotels, 33 four-star hotels, 29 three-star hotels and 15 boutique hotels, which were suitable for research purposes. In total, 52 of the hotels were interviewed. The ratio of the number of hotels interviewed to the total number of hotels is 55%.

3.3. Data collection

The research has a qualitative structure and three face-to-face interviews were held with hotel owners / managers in Bodrum, a popular international tourist destination. The first interview was held on 23-26 July 2020, the second interview was held on 18-20 September 2020 and the third interview was held on 23-25 October 2020. A semi-structured interview technique was used to collect data. Each of the interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes, which is a total of 60 minutes in 3 interviews with each participant. A total of 52 hotel managers / owners were reached in the study. However, 13 of the participants did not want to answer half of the questions and therefore they were excluded from the research. In total, the answers from 39 participants were analyzed.

3.4. Data analysis

The data were analyzed with the descriptive analysis technique. Analysis was carried out respectively with a conceptual structure, modeling of data, organizing data through tables, and interpretation of findings. In the analysis, the responses in three different data collection periods were classified using separate tables.

3.5. Demographic characteristics of the participants

As shown in Table 1, the demographic and departmental characteristics of the study participants are given by coding. Approximately 90% of the participants in the manager / owner position are men, while the ratio of women is around 10%. Approximately 98% of the participants are at the age of 40 and over and 74.4% of these are managers, while 25.6% are business owners. 69.3% of the participants have a university or higher degree, 97.6% of the participants have experience in the tourism sector for 20 years and over. 61.5% of them work in 5-star hotel, 15.4% in 4-star hotel, 10.3% in 3-star hotel and 12.8% in boutique hotel management.

Table 1. The characteristics of participants

Code	Hotel type	Gender	Age	Education level	Experience in the tourism industry (Years)	Position
P1	5-star hotel	Male	36	Undergraduate	16	General manager
P2	4-star hotel	Male	41	Undergraduate	41	General manager
P3	5-star hotel	Male	45	High school	25	General manager
P4	5-star hotel	Male	53	Undergraduate	33	General manager
P5	Boutique hotel	Male	45	Undergraduate	25	General manager/owner
P6	4-star hotel	Male	43	Postgraduate	23	General manager
P7	5-star hotel	Female	44	Undergraduate	34	General manager
P8	4-star hotel	Male	51	Undergraduate	31	General manager
P9	4-star hotel	Male	48	Undergraduate	28	General manager
P10	5-star hotel	Male	51	Undergraduate	31	General manager
P11	5-star hotel	Male	50	Undergraduate	30	General manager
P12	Boutique hotel	Female	40	High school	20	General manager/owner
P13	5-star hotel	Male	53	Undergraduate	33	General manager
P14	5-star hotel	Male	47	Undergraduate	27	General manager
P15	5-star hotel	Male	55	Postgraduate	35	General coordinator
P16	5-star hotel	Female	50	Undergraduate	30	General manager
P17	5-star hotel	Male	52	High school	32	General manager/owner
P18	3-star hotel	Male	55	High school	40	General manager
P19	5-star hotel	Male	54	Undergraduate	39	General manager
P20	5-star hotel	Male	46	Undergraduate	26	General manager
P21	5-star hotel	Male	60	Undergraduate	42	General manager/owner
P22	Boutique hotel	Male	61	Postgraduate	44	General manager/owner
P23	Boutique hotel	Male	58	High school	38	General manager/owner
P24	4-star hotel	Male	55	Undergraduate	35	General manager/owner
P25	3-star hotel	Male	59	Primary school	39	General manager/owner
P26	Boutique hotel	Male	62	Primary school	44	General manager/owner
P27	3-star hotel	Male	50	Undergraduate	30	General manager
P28	3-star hotel	Male	48	High school	28	General manager/owner
P29	5-star hotel	Male	51	Undergraduate	31	General coordinator
P30	5-star hotel	Male	48	High school	28	General manager
P31	5-star hotel	Male	52	Undergraduate	32	General manager
P32	5-star hotel	Male	49	High school	29	General manager
P33	5-star hotel	Male	51	Undergraduate	31	General coordinator
P34	5-star hotel	Male	48	Undergraduate	28	General manager
P35	5-star hotel	Male	52	Postgraduate	32	General manager
P36	5-star hotel	Male	49	Undergraduate	29	General manager
P37	5-star hotel	Male	48	High school	28	General manager
P38	5-star hotel	Male	52	High school	32	General manager
P39	4-star hotel	Female	49	Undergraduate	29	General manager

4. Results

Since the occurrence of the first Covid-19 cases in Turkey, the effects of the pandemic have been discussed in the tourism sector. Despite the bureaucratic behavior of official institutions and professional tourism organizations, it is a fact that businesses in the tourism sector communicate faster and follow current issues more closely. Especially hotels with an international customer base can instantly learn the current news in the world due to having a more effective

communication system and strong cooperation with international businesses. Therefore, the foresights of these hotels regarding the spread of the pandemic in the world are realistic and rational.

First of all, it can be stated that determining the concerns of the participants about Covid-19 is a significant indicator for the other stages of the research. When asked "Have you ever worried about the spread of Covid-19 in Asian coun-

tries and Europe?" the vast majority of respondents answered as "I was definitely worried." (56%), 26% answered, "I was partially worried." and 18% answered, "I was not worried". The fact that most of the participants stated that they were worried about the Covid-19 pandemic was the first indicator of a crisis in the tourism industry. Therefore, secondly, the question of "Have you been concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry?" was asked to the participants. It has been determined that 62% of the participants have concerns that the tourism industry would be affected. In this context, it was meaningful that the participants were worried about the situation of the tourism industry and seeing the effects of the pandemic in other countries. On the other hand, 38% of the participants have stated that the pandemic would partially affect the tourism sector, while a few stated it would not. In the first period of Covid-19, the surprising thing was that the owners or managers of boutique hotel businesses stated that they are not

worried by this pandemic (P5, P22, P23, P26). Since the beginning of Covid-19 in the world, despite the Ministry of Health in Turkey informing the public about the pandemic, it was argued that there was inadequate information sharing in the tourism industry. These findings have shown that the tourism industry was caught imprudent for the pandemic. It may also be a factor that some representatives of the tourism industry do not take the pandemic too seriously. Due to the fact that the situation in the tourism sector has an international dimension, and holiday sales were mostly completed in the previous year, early reservation payments were received and all preparations for the season were completed, hotels have been helpless in the face of the pandemic. Both the unreliability of informal information shared at the sectorial level and the delay of the authorities to make the necessary explanations, have increased the anxiety in tourism.

Table 2. The evaluation of the pre-Covid-19 case period in Turkey

Main theme	Title	Subtitle
The pre-Covid-19 case period in Turkey	Anxiety	Common anxiety
		Anxiety for tourism industry
	Information	Information request from institutions
		The requests of institutions from the industry
	Sectoral pre-evaluation and information	Operational approach of tour operators
		Sales and reservation decision of hotels
	Pre-evaluation and decisions of businesses	Revision in decisions
		Plan to start activities
		Priority measures in businesses
		Information and training in businesses

Hotel managers have requested information from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, tourism professional organizations and local administrations on how to struggle with the pandemic during Covid-19. When the answers given by the participants to the question about whether there is a request for information from the specified institutions, "Have you requested any information from official institutions?" are examined, it is understood that there is generally unsatisfactory information and communication is insufficient. Participants coded P2, P3 and P7 stated that the responses were received as "Despite being requested several times, the Ministry, the hoteliers' union, and the authorities could not be reached; they said that they would call us back and the authorities would explain the situation". The participants coded P4, P5, P8 and P9 explained the institutions' responses more clearly as, "Initially they did not even consider us as tourism operators and managers.". Indeed, in the early stages of the pandemic, many institutions, like the general population, had difficulty making decisions due to the effect of being uneasy and caught unprepared. During Covid-19, hoteliers' efforts to communicate

and share information with official and semi-official institutions were evaluated by participants as "Meetings with no results were held" (P11, P16, P17, P32, P33), "They just wanted a report to be prepared" (P18) and P3 stating, "They reminded me of the payment of dues" (P12, P6). Even such responses from institutions have revealed that Covid-19 information sharing and communication in the tourism industry have not been sufficiently realized. Although there were individual efforts of a few hotel managers in this process, it has also been thought provoking that the majority of them did not receive any initiatives from the ministries, governorates, municipalities and tourism professional organizations.

On the other hand, the majority of participants (85%) answered "No" to the question of, "Have government agencies got your opinion or asked about your situation?", whether the ministry, local administrations and professional organizations obtained an opinion regarding Covid-19 from tourism industry representatives. Other participants have stated that some institutions called and asked the following questions; "Do you have a case in your hotel? Are you taking

pandemic measures?" (P39), "Are you going to close the hotel? Are people still booking rooms?" (P6, P10) stated that "Could you prepare and send a report on the pandemic measures of your hotel?" (P11, P12) and "Do you have a training request on Covid-19" (P35). It is understood from these questions that there is no solution-oriented approach to Covid-19 by the authorities.

Hotel managers, who thought that communication and information expectations could not be met at the official level, have begun to discuss the problems at the sectorial level and to seek solutions there. During this process, hotel managers met with tour operators and evaluated current developments in international tourism. Hotel managers have realized that the tourist season would be very difficult, as tour operators began canceling package tour reservations and delayed their operations; beginning to seriously feel the impact of Covid-19. Participants answered the questions of "Was there a preliminary information meeting or meetings at the sectorial level", and "How would you evaluate the change in the operational decisions of tour operators?" based on different priorities from each other. Despite the answers given by participants P1, P4, P5, P6, P7, P10, P15, P16, and P21 as "When the first booking cancellations happened, we realized that Covid-19 would pose a significant threat to hotel businesses. If the pandemic was not serious, there would be no cancellations! Especially in the German, English, Dutch and Belgian markets. There were too many reservation cancellations". Some tour operators adopted a "Wait and See" policy by delaying the reservation instead of canceling sales. The comments of some participants (P2, P8, P13, P19, P23 and P31) as, "Instead of canceling reservations, we had nothing left to do against tour operators who requested to postpone to future dates under the same conditions" have shown that mass tourism in international tourism depends on the policy and planning of tour operators. However, the continuation of reservations in the Russian tourism market, albeit with a future date, was considered to be promising for hotel businesses. Although the participants with the codes P20 and P22 stated "Incomprehensible reservations are made from Russia. They claim that, although it is future dated, flights will definitely begin and operations will take place.", some participants (P9, P25, P26, P27, P29, P33, and P38) stated that they preferred to wait for a while for the hotel opening with the interpretation of "It makes more sense to wait without doing anything." (P7, P12, P20, P34, and P36).

However, towards the end of March 2020, it is seen that some tour operators have changed their operational plans and this has been reflected on hotel businesses. The announcement that "sales have been halted" from tour operators, which have experienced an economic crisis, especially due to a declining holiday demand, has brought to mind bad scenarios for hotel businesses. The comments in the form of "People were very anxious. They first started to think about their health. When they postponed their vacations, demand dropped suddenly, sales decreased. When the cash flow to

tour operators stopped, they could not pay the hotels" (P4, P8, P10, P18, P22, P24) were the beginning of the tour operators demanded a refund of the early reservation payments made from the hotels in the next stage. Participants who stated it as, "The tour operators that we have been working with for 10-15 years have asked back early booking fees. Many hotels have spent this money for renovations and other needs. Unfortunately, this is the state of the sector". P30, P34, P35, and P39 think that hotel businesses were, as always, left out alone against tour operators during the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, the hotels offered alternatives against reservation cancellations and accepted that "if the pandemic continues, reservations will be cancelled free of charge or postponed to a later date under the same conditions" (P36, P37).

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, it has been stated that there are different reasons for hotel businesses to continue group and individual room sales and reservations. The answers to the question of, "How did these pre-information meetings or interviews at the sectorial level reflected in your business's sales, marketing and booking decisions?" were answered with the following comments: "The thought that the pandemic will be temporary" (P1); "Sales agreements were made before the pandemic." (P2); "Travel agency and tour operator pressure" (P3); "Competition in tourism" (P5), "Being compelled" (P6); "Commitment to planning" (P7); "General problems of a tourism professional" (P9); "Openness of the hotel to activities" (P11); "Economic problems" (P12); "A sectorial problem" (P13); and "Lack of communication" (P14, P15) show why hotel businesses continue to sell rooms and bookings despite the pandemic. The validity of these reasons put forward by the participants is discussed. However, it is understood that the following reasons stated by some participants are more acceptable. According to the participants (P8, P30, P31) who expressed, "We cannot see the facts and find a way because of vicious competition, we can't see ahead of ourselves, we exaggerate or underestimate some things, in summary, our prediction is weak", indicates that the main problem is the hotel management style. In fact, the situation summarized as, "we do not care about Covid-19, and we are now trying to solve a problem. We're actually getting worse because we don't care about anything" by the participants coded P4, P10, P16 and P17 has shown why hotels have continued their sales and reservation processes during the Covid-19 process. As the majority of the participants stated, the thought of, "Room sales and reservations continue at a high level" was a sign that there were managerial problems in the tourism sector beyond being able to predict the consequences of Covid-19.

Hotel businesses had to make some changes regarding their pre-pandemic planning. They revised their budget, human resources planning, technology investments, equipment purchases, renovation works and large-scale investment decisions due to cancellation of room sales and reservations, reduced occupancy rates and loss of revenue. The concerns about the hotels' loss of income and the economic difficulties

caused by Covid-19 have pushed the management to new planning. According to the answers given to the question, *"In the preliminary evaluation you made at the business level, was there also an overhaul of your existing decisions? If so, what issues were revised?"* hotels have shown the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic by making a budget revision. While some participants (P1, P3, P10, P17, P18, P20, P24, P27, and P30) explained the evaluation of the budget revision as, *"We had to revise the previously planned budget. Cost control was implemented by revising some expenditures and canceling or reducing them. In particular, we adapted the purchase of perishable materials according to demand. We rearranged personnel payments and we took our own measures by reducing some other expenses."* Some participants stated that they did not make a budget revision. Most of these businesses which did not make a budget revision are boutique hotels.

One of the decision revisions within hotel businesses is the change in human resources (HR) planning during the pandemic. The statements of the participants (P2, P7, P11, P14, P18, P31, P32, and P37) in the form of, *"It is not clear what we will encounter during the pandemic process. We have to control expenses. New planning has been made to keep personnel expenses low"* as a justification for the change in HR planning is important. This is because the easiest cost control method in the tourism sector includes minimum HR employment and minimum wage policy. The evaluation by a group of participants (P8, P9, P13, P28, P29, and P39) as, *"Some of the restaurants, baths and sauna were closed and the open buffet service was removed. We started serving the tables, we put glass partitions between the customer and the staff in the bars, we started to use disposable plates and forks, but the customers were not very happy,"* reveals that there should be some change in the service concept in hotels. For example, it has come to the fore again due to Covid-19 that the all-inclusive system in hotels should be discussed with all its dimensions.

The answers given to the question, *"What are considered as priority measures in your preliminary assessment at the enterprise level?"* were mainly in the form of, *"Hygiene and cleanliness"*. One of the important changes that Covid-19 has brought to hotel businesses was the investments made in technology and the tendency towards digitalization. During the pandemic period, while restrictions were imposed on expenditures in other areas in hotel management, perhaps one of the rare areas invested in are technological equipment and applications. The expressions of the participants (P6, P12, P13, and P19) as, *"Digital menus started to be used. I could not think we would buy kiosks during this period. When we say digital thermometer, a disinfectant machine with the sensor, we became very digital. Smartphone applications for front office C / in and C / out operations, and Qr code operations etc,"* clearly reveal their investments in technology

and digitalization. During the pandemic, some hotel businesses (P21, P33, P34, P35, P36, and P38) halting some investment and renovation works can be considered as a negative effect of Covid-19.

When the responses of the participants to the question, *"When did you predict that you would start operations / activities in your preliminary evaluation at the business level?"* were evaluated, it was seen that there were different opinions about the operating period of the hotels. Some stated that they were preparing for the activity, thinking that Covid-19 would lose its effect before June. However, the vast majority of the participants, had a more cautious approach, stating that hotel activities could be started after June. Some of the participants stated that their hotels were open and active, and participants with codes P7, P12 and P18 would not open their hotels that season. Participants were asked what measures should be taken, and the majority of the participants stated that first of all *"cleanliness and hygiene"*, then *"staff, space arrangement and investment in technological tools"*. When asked whether there is information or training on Covid-19 in the hotel (*"Have you had in-house information and training about Covid-19 in your hotel?"*), the majority of participants (69%) stated that they provided information and training, and they provided *"Covid-19 and Hygiene Training"* for employees online and free of charge during this process.

With the spread of COVID-19 cases, anxiety has increased in hotel managers. Uncertain and potentially dangerous time have turned into a challenge. After the first cases started to appear, people started dying of COVID-19. In this process, the participants were first asked their opinions about "fear". To the question *"Did you have any fear during the Covid-19? If you had, what was fear that first came to your mind?"*, all participants except one (P20) stated that they experienced fear along with other emotions. The thoughts of P1, P2, P6, P14, P26 coded participants in the form of *"What should I lie/confess that/frankly I was generally afraid"*, while the thoughts of P3, P7, P8, P12, P18, P23, P27, P32, P38, P39 coded participants in the form of *"I was afraid of course, I thought of my family, my children, people were dying desperately! How can you not be afraid!"* The thoughts of P4, P15, P24, P34 coded participants in the form of *"I thought I was going to die in pain/I thought I would die for sure now."* These clearly reveal the extent of their fear. It is understood that an important part of the participants' fears is based on economic factors (*"Many people will be broke, will starve. Will that much investment go in vain? Thousands of people make a living from tourism. Everyone will go bankrupt. People will starve, even if not from the coronavirus. The economy collapses. We die in debt. People lose their job, I can't even think about the future, if we don't die from the virus!"*).

Table 3. The evaluation of the Covid-19 in high season for tourism (between June-August 2020)

Main theme	Title	Subtitle
Covid-19 in Tourism Season	Personal feelings	Fear dimension
		Fear process
	Sectoral evaluation	Discussions and recommendations
		Cancellations and refunds
		HR Policies
	Institutional measures and supports	Official notifications
		Applications
		Economic supports

The prolong fear created by Covid-19 can cause people to wear out psychologically and experience situations that are difficult to compensate. The most optimistic response to the question “How long will the effect of the fear created by Covid-19 last? How long will people recover?” was “between 1–3 months”, while the most pessimistic responses were “1–2 years” and even “more than 2 years”. From the expressions of the participants, it was understood that the fear created by Covid-19 would affect them for a while. The opinions of the participants regarding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in the process, which includes the evaluation of the interviews with institutions, local governments and tourism professional organizations, provide some curious issues. The question of “Which issues were discussed with institutions related to tourism, tourism professional organizations, and tour operators?” has revealed different results. The prominent point here was that some demands put hotel businesses in an economically difficult situation in meetings with tour operators. Some participants (P1, P2, P5, P11, P12, P28) reported that tour operators made comments such as “If you do not make a price reduction, we will cancel the reservations and shift them to other discount hotels. In this case, you need to refund the early reservation price we paid.” Some tour operators demanded early reservation payments back without asking for a discount, leaving hotel businesses in a difficult situation. Other participants (P3, P4, P7, P8, P19, P21, P27) reported that “In tourism, you have to get along with the tour operator, and you shouldn't make the relationships difficult. They wanted their checks back, they asked for early reservation payments, we had to accept it. We only asked for a while, but the problem was solved as they wanted.” It is understood that the requests of the tour operators are accepted. In these meetings, while some hotel representatives (P15, P22) accepted to delay the tour operators' debts to the hotel for a while, other hotel representatives (P24, P26) have promised to tour operators that they will offer bonus, additional holidays, gifts, etc. to the guests in case the reservations are not canceled.

In this process, participants met with official institutions, local administrations, and tourism professional organizations with which they previously had not communicated. In

these interviews, the applications, recommendations, and requests of hotel businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic were evaluated. In the meetings with the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the cleaning, hygiene, mask-wearing, and distance rules of the hotels, restricting the food and beverage service provision, measuring the daily body temperature of employees and guests, placing disinfectant stations in all areas, physical distance in restaurants, closing the spas, baths, and saunas, etc. and the circulars and principles to be prepared were evaluated. “There is a difference between what we are told and practice. Many hotels will not be able to benefit from these conditions, such as the situation of foreign employees...” was reported in the meeting about the short work salary application made by the hotels (P17, P37) with İŞKUR and shows that they are not satisfied with the application process. Participants could not give a concrete explanation about the importance of the employment of foreigners, which is a problem in the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, some hotels (for example, P20, P23) made loan negotiations with banks to make the early reservation refunds requested by tour operators, but according to their statements, “we could not benefit from the credits and rates determined because they did not comply with the criteria announced by the ministry.” This application has not resulted in a positive result.

When asked “What happened with individual sales and reservations? What path did you follow in this regard?” the majority of hotels questioned stated that they accepted the reservation cancellations without any deduction, while only the hotels with the codes P1, P5, P12, P25 stated that they issued a reimbursement making some deductions (“Our hotel was already open, most of the customers made reservations during the pandemic. So they knew the conditions.”). Hotels that were in a difficult situation due to economic difficulties have tried to discourage customers who wanted to cancel their reservations by offering different options. Participants with codes P3, P18, P19, P23, P35, P38, P39 offered their customers to move their bookings to 2021 under the same conditions, while participants with codes P4, P6, P11, P26, P27, P31, P36 made efforts to prevent cancellations by giving them additional overnight stays during the holiday period.

The question of whether there was a change in the human resources policy in hotel establishments during the Covid-19 pandemic was also asked. In every crisis period, the most common method used by hotel businesses for cost control and savings is to reduce the number of human resources. The majority of managers state that there was a change in policies due to the decrease in the room occupancy rate and income of the hotels. According to these explanations, it was understood that the employees' qualification increased despite the decrease in the number of HR during pandemic. On the other hand, only the participating hotels with the codes P3, P4, P12, P21, P24, P26, P39 stated that there was no change in their human resources policy during the pandemic.

The relationship between hotels and other institutions are important in solving problems. Communication must be effective to implement measures successfully, although each hotel's approach to problems may differ. During the pandemic, official institutions were informed about health and safety measures, safe tourism practices, safe facility certification, etc (*According to this question; "What is the level of your relations with public institutions and tourism professional organizations? Have these institutions and organizations been informed about the measures?"*).

The most common answer was given by managers to the question of *"What was the most important practice(s) affecting hotel activities during the Covid-19 pandemic?"* was *"Travel restrictions"*. These restrictions on travel, which are the dynamic element of tourism, caused hotel room sales to stop. Because of this, border gates were closed and international flights and domestic traveling were stopped. During this period, many hotels could not open, and those that did had to close.

The answers given to the question *"What are the economic supports for the tourism sector? Do you believe these will solve the problem of the industry?"* were grouped as *"Short-time working allowance, tax deferral, VAT reduction, Credit provision and Deferral of rents to the public"*. During the Covid-19 pandemic, employees in hotels were provided with income support for a maximum of three months, in which they could not work, with *"Short-time work allowance"*. With the *"Tax deferral"*, value-added taxes that hotel businesses have to pay between April and June have been postponed for six months. The VAT rates in hotels have been temporarily reduced from 8% to 1% until the end of 2020. In addition, loans were provided to the tourism sector through the Credit Guarantee Fund and banks, and rents were deferred for state-owned real estates.

Table 4. The evaluation of the Covid-19 in low season for tourism (After September 1, 2020)

Main theme	Title	Subtitle
Covid-19 in Tourism Season	Tourism Demand	Period and size
		Tourism product
		Type of accommodation business
	Hotel management	Administration
		Investment
	Tourism policy	Promotion
		Planning
		Institutional structuring
	The new normal in tourism	Duration of holiday
		Change in expectations
		Accommodation concept

Third round interviews with hotel managers were held in September and October 2020. In this interview, the experiences and the evaluations of hotel managers in the first two rounds were discussed again. It has been noticed that hotel managers' views on the pandemic were clearer and more solution-oriented. The question of *"After the Covid-19 pandemic, will the national or international dimension of tourism become more important in the short and long term?"* has shown that the participants have different approaches to tourism. The majority of hotel managers state that domestic tourism will become more important in the short term, and international tourism in the long term. The reason for this was explained by the participants as, *"The countries should control the pandemic for international tourism; the establishment of travel safety; the completion of vaccines in all*

countries; and the provision of safe tourism services." Participants stated that the *"ease of sales and marketing, high income, foreign exchange, and facilities more suitable for international tourism"* are important for international tourism.

Most of the participants (P5, P12, P22, P23, P26) who stated that domestic tourism was more important in both short and long terms were boutique hotel owners. *"The primary target for quality service, guest value, sustainable business and guest continuity should be domestic tourism because whenever there is a crisis we turn to domestic tourism."* This reveals the situation of the tourism sector in times of crisis. One of the questions directed to the participants was *"What tourism type or product will we tend to see after Covid-19?"* Despite the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, some of the participants argued that the preference of

sea-sand-sun in mass tourism would maintain its importance, while other participants (P1, P5, P7, P12, P15, P16, P19, P25, P27, P29, P31, P35) stated: *“People will now turn to nature, they will be interested in rural services, plateaus and outdoor activities...”* In addition, some participants (P6, P18, P20, P21, P26, P39) stated that people will continue to worry about the pandemic for a while. *“The popularity of yachts, cruisers and boats will increase. This is a matter of preference, but people will try to isolate themselves a little more...”* This includes turning to sea-based tourism. It was understood from the answers given by the participants that cultural tourism would also have an important potential with those who would participate in tourism by acting independently from individual and tour groups.

As long as Covid-19 has an effect, the common reason of the participants who stated that small-scale accommodation facilities would be preferred by tourists was that tourists could be *“away from the crowd, with less human circulation, and easy cleaning and hygiene controls.”* However, while it is seen that the demand for private facilities, such as villas, bungalows or boutique hotels, will increase costs will rise too. *“As demand for private facilities increases, this is reflected in the prices, a more expensive holiday occurs.”* On the other hand, the statements of some participants as *“Large-scale accommodation facilities are more preferred in some country markets, they do not lose their importance,”* have indicated that large-scale hotels would provide a competitive advantage, especially in certain markets. Some participants stated that *“Large-scale chain hotel businesses have created a more reliable situation, so they will always be preferred. The tourist firstly wants trust.”* This shows that hotel businesses may switch to a new structuring and management model after Covid-19.

The question of *“What kind of change do you expect in hotel management after Covid-19?”* has been one of the most challenging questions for hotel managers. This question required managers to both self-criticize and reveal the vision of the manager. The response of participants (P1, P8, P9, P11, P14, P17, P18, P28, P33) could be considered as self-criticism. *“First of all, marketing management must change! By using the new generation digital platforms in the most effective way, there will be big investments and changes to expand the target market and keep it dynamic.”* The subject that some participants (P2, P6, P7, P19, P10, P12, P13, P15, P25) referred to as *“not easy to make a difference with the current human resources structure. Creative talents need to be attracted. Opportunities and fees should be presented that can attract them to the business. If change is desired, the understanding of saving from HR wages, food, and personal rights should be abandoned”* was not only a problem of today but also a summary of a complex situation that has been ongoing for a number of years.

While the participants (P4, P5, P23, P24, P26, P27, P29, P30, P32, P35, P36, P37) argue that a significant change should be in relationship management, they also showed that

they are not unfair, saying *“Official institutions, professional organizations, hotels, and travel agencies cannot communicate with each other. Everyone blames the other. We cannot understand each other and we do not make an effort to understand. We cannot act together even though we think differently, unfortunately, our relations are weak.”* From the statements, one of the important issues to be focused on in the tourism sector is relationship management, and that hotels have always felt powerless against international tour operators for years. Participants believe that there should be a managerial change in issues such as *“budget management, quality management and crisis management”* in hotel management. It was understood that a change in quality management was also needed. Participant P22 stated that *“Quality tourists require quality facilities and management, if there is a quality tourist, there is no problem.”*

Most of the participants have suggested that *“For a certain period, with exceptions, large-scale investments will cease.”* It was meaningful that hotels with a significant decrease in their revenues will stop their large-scale investments. However, as some managers have stated, large capital groups would make new investments by taking advantage of opportunities during the crisis period. One of the expectations regarding hotel investments was that there would be mergers. Particularly the P4 and P11 coded participants who said that *“The pandemic may force some hotels to join international chains or partnerships.”* Covid-19 may cause bankruptcies in the tourism industry due to economic problems. It has also been revealed that rents in the hotel sector may increase due to both economic problems and management weakness. In the third data collection process of the research, almost all administrators gave different answers to the question *“What should be done for the formation of tourism policy in our country? What method should be followed, and what should be the priority issues?”* In addition, the following three questions were also posed: *“Can you explain your criticisms and likes of Turkey's promotion of tourism? Could you share your evaluation of tourism planning with your experiences in the Covid-19 pandemic? And after Covid-19, How should corporate structuring be in Turkish tourism?”*

The evaluations by the hotel managers on tourism promotion were included in three groups. These were indicated as *“We all try to introduce Anatolian culture with mannequins”* (P1, P11), *“When will we introduce our own values?”* (P12, P18), *“Dreams are Anatolian culture, the reality is the dancer from Africa, the show from Russia, the snake, fire, glass shards show from the Turkic republics etc.”* (P22, P26, P29) and *“An original presentation that reflects our own culture,”* (P34, P35, P39) and it has been seen that the common point is *“originality in tourism promotion.”* In many hotels, culinary services, shows, or other activities other than Turkish culture should be abandoned. Instead, it is necessary to provide promotion and services specific to national and regional culture. Managers care about

emphasizing the topic of a "healthy country image" in tourism promotion during the Covid-19 pandemic. For international tourism, if the strengths of the country's health system are used in promotional materials, it increases the level of trust of tourists. On the other hand, it is understood that bringing brand businesses to the forefront and emphasizing healthy and quality service will create value in the promotion of the country.

One of the most critical issues of the participants was "Tourism planning". As a result of the answers regarding this, it has been grouped into three categories as "Investment Planning, Facility Infrastructure, and Hotel Classification". Participants who stated that Investment Planning is a major problem has expressed that there was unplanned-unscheduled development without considering the physical and social capacity of a city or town. Tourism planning should be made within the framework of sustainable values with a long-term perspective and not only economic factors should be considered while planning.

The planning should consider environmental and socio-cultural factors as well. Another issue emphasized by the participants was that the decrease in customer and service quality created by fabricated hotel management, which was planned according to the all-inclusive system, without considering any factors related to the facility infrastructure and hotel classifications. For this, priority should be given to the construction of facilities that are far from the all-inclusive system and suitable for local architecture and aesthetics in tourism centers. Avoiding the planning and construction of an adjacent layout are important for the aesthetic value of tourism. Tourism planning has an important place for all business lines and tourism investments in the sector. These plans should include not only the coastline but also the background of the settlement. Tourism planning should be done with a holistic approach. It is very important to provide the necessary information flow between institutions and local governments for effective tourism planning.

Institutional structuring is another factor that the participants deem important in effectively creating tourism policy. The participants who think that the regional organization authorized to eliminate the difficulties in communication with the central organization of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism will be more effective, claim that the Provincial Directorates of Culture and Tourism have increased bureaucracy and their demands to the Ministry could not be fully reflected. There were opinions that the regional organization would ease the burden on the Ministry and that faster decisions would be taken. This organization can ensure the integration with tourism professional organizations, the formation of effective policies, cooperation with tourism education institutions, and the development of human resources in the tourism sector. Participants, who thought that the lack and inadequacy of sectorial-level inspections harmed tourism, stated that even some hotels which were certified in the

Covid-19 process were reluctant to fulfill their responsibilities. Therefore, they have advocated the establishment of an independent inspection mechanism at the local level.

One of the concepts that emerged during the Covid-19 process was the "new normal". In order to determine how this concept is used in tourism, answers to the questions of "Will the new regular tourists cause a change in vacation times? If it does, what kind of change will there be?", "What kind of changes will there be in hotels after Covid-19?" and "Do you expect a change in the concept of accommodation in hotels after Covid-19?" were sought. The majority of the participants have stated that the holiday period of tourists at the hotel would normally be 4-7 days. It was thought that the shortening of vacation periods would be a personal health-related measure.

After Covid-19, the participants who stated that there would be changes in hotels believed that customer sensitivity would increase regarding hygiene and cleanliness, which would be a control mechanism for hotel management. Therefore, hygiene and cleanliness as an important factor in hotels will also be reflected in costs in the coming periods. In addition, the participants argue that the restaurants will switch to an ala carte service and the all-inclusive system will be gradually abandoned. On the other hand, it is thought that consumers will have different expectations for both destination and hotel preferences. However, in the new normal, where investments in technology and digitalization will gain importance, it will not be easy for hotel businesses to give up their old applications in a short time. Participants have believed that the all-inclusive accommodation package, which has been debated for years, would be replaced by other accommodation packages after Covid-19, and they have expressed that especially bed-and-breakfast type sales would be preferred. As a justification for this, it is suggested that in the new normal people will not want to stay in the facility continuously in terms of health, and there will be an expectation of having different social and cultural experiences.

5. Discussion

The Covid-19 pandemic has negatively affected hotel businesses in many ways. It has been found that hotel managers are concerned about many issues, and these concerns are both individual and sectorial. When the literature is examined, these concerns are based on the problems that can be caused by the spread of the pandemic. Due to the danger of the spread of Covid-19, the closure of international borders, suspension of flights, curfews, social distancing rules, etc. situations can be considered as a normal consequence of this anxiety (Baum & Hai, 2020; Bhuiyan, Hassan, Darda & Habib, 2020; Sigala, 2020). In the current research, it was determined that the anxiety levels of boutique hotel operators were low before Covid-19 became widespread in Turkey. It is seen that this situation does not coincide with some study results in the literature. The reason for this may be the findings of "In the Covid-19 process, consumers will prefer

small-scale hotels" mentioned in the studies of Yenisehirlioglu and Salha (2020), Aydın and Dogan (2020), Kilic, Aslan and Govce (2020) and Özaltın Türker (2020). Another factor that keeps the anxiety of boutique hotel managers at a low level is the preference of such businesses that turn to domestic tourism in times of crisis.

With the impact of Covid-19 increased, hotel managers have tried to obtain information from official institutions about the pandemic process and measures by considering finalized reservations, room sales and seasonal preparedness plans. However, it was observed that official institutions could not provide sufficient information on "*Tourism in the pandemic*". In such crisis situations, it is important that the authorized institutions meet with tourism sector representatives to make risk evaluations, determine tactics and strategies, establish short and long-term plans and programs, and hold meetings and share the decisions taken with all stakeholders (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2009). Late advice of rules and practices related to Covid-19 in the tourism sector put hotel managers in a difficult position. This situation shows that there is no crisis management planning in the tourism sector. In fact, the attitude of some officials by raising different issues has made hotel managers uneasy. It is a requirement that crisis-related planning is carried out in advance and that stakeholders participate in this planning (Coppola, 2006; Carter, 2008). Hotel managers, who could not obtain enough information from authorized institutions during the pandemic process, tried to obtain information from international tourism enterprises as a stakeholder. In the early stages of Covid-19, hotel managers tried to manage the process by negotiating with tour operators, travel agencies and other stakeholders on booking cancellations, stopping room sales, payment refunds, contract obligations and other matters.

With the spread of Covid-19 and the increase in reservation cancellations, it has been seen that hotel managers made some managerial decisions. Radical decisions were made on certain issues such as revision in the budget, reduction of employee costs, unpaid leave applications, no new employees, reduction of expenditures, and renewal and postponement of new investment decisions. As stated in the research results by Demir, Günaydın and Demir (2020), Lai and Wong (2020), Altınay Ozdemir (2020) and Bayat (2020), employees in tourism were the most affected by this situation. As a result of this situation, as stated by Kaushal and Srivastava (2020), the well-being of tourism employees was negatively affected and their pessimistic thoughts increased. In this process, work at home was initiated in units such as sales, accounting and reservation in hotels. Research results indicate that employees who can work at home in the future will primarily be preferred by businesses (Hao, Xiao & Chon, 2020; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2020). Therefore, employees in the tourism sector will need to develop different business skills and increase their technology-related knowledge. In addition, it is known that the importance of technological applications is understood in this process. It is

clear that in the future, hotels will show more interest in automation, digitalization and technological applications. It can be stated that the technological transformation in hotels will accelerate in order to attract potential tourists to their businesses and increase sales. Some research results also support this situation and it shows that robotic technology and technological applications will increase in rooms, front office, restaurant, kitchen, floor and security services and smart hotels will be preferred by tourists (Demir, Günaydın & Demir, 2020; Hao, Xiao & Chon, 2020; Özaltın Türker, 2020; Sam, Kim, Badu-Baiden, Giroux & Choi, 2020; Zeng, Chen & Lew, 2020). Managers' designing their businesses in the style of smart hotels will provide them with an advantage in profitability and competitive advantage in the future.

In Turkey, the impact of a severe form of Covid-19 in the period continued (April, May, June); the anxiety of managers of hotels have been transformed into fear. This level of fear negatively affected both the social and business life of the managers. Managers began to consider the problems to be experienced economically as well as on their own health. In this process (Siddiquei & Khan, 2020), where even many international major hotel chains were negatively affected, many hotels operating in Turkey also stopped their activities or tried to survive with their equity. Issues such as meetings with tour operators (price reductions, refund of early booking payments, postponement of payments, granting holiday rights for 2021, etc.), contacting the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, applications for short work allowances, negotiations with banks (loan applications, deferral of loans, etc.) have taxed hotel managers. In this period when hotel managers were looking for solutions to problems and were greatly affected economically, they paid attention to support and incentives such as tax deferral, VAT discount, credit opportunities and rent deferrals announced by official institutions. Hotel businesses started operations with the safe tourism certification. In this process, hotels operated at half capacity in accordance with the pandemic rules determined by the authorized institutions. During this period, hygiene and cleanliness stood out as the most important factor. Managers stated that hygiene and cleanliness precautions could especially be an important factor for tourists to prefer the hotel during and after the pandemic. This situation is in parallel to some research results in the literature. Kilic, Aslan, and Govce (2020) and Özaltın Türker (2020) stated in their studies that tourists would prefer hotels that meet hygiene standards. In this context, it will be significant for hotel managers to pay attention to the issue of hygiene in the future and to emphasize the hygiene status in their promotions (marketing communications).

The results of the research show that after the pandemic, the demand for nature-based, sea-based, culture-based tourism and individual and independent tours will increase. These findings are similar to the results of the research conducted by Yenisehirlioglu and Salha (2020), Aydın and Dogan (2020), Kilic, Aslan and Govce (2020) and Özaltın

Türker (2020). Tourists who want to stay away from the crowds in tourism centers or hotels have demanded different destinations and hotels. However, this approach will not significantly reduce the demand for the sea-sand-sun tourism concept. As in some researches in the literature (Yenisehrioglu & Salha, 2020; Aydın & Dogan, 2020; Kilic, Aslan & Gövce, 2020; Özaltın Türker, 2020), it has been determined that the hotel preferences of tourists will be small-scale and private facilities.

During the periods when the Covid-19 pandemic declined, it was observed that the communication between hotel businesses, public institutions and tourism professional organizations were more effective. The negative experience during the pandemic process enabled all stakeholders in the tourism sector to work together and the relations developed more positively. It should not be a surprise to see all kinds of developments in the tourism sector. After Covid-19, situations such as company mergers, bankruptcies, downsizing, and participation in hotel chains may be inevitable in the hotel industry. As Kilic, Aslan and Govce (2020) suggested in the context of the new normal in tourism, it is possible to state that vacation durations may be shorter. The main reason for this situation can be stated as tourists' fear of crowded places. In addition, it is possible to say that there will be changes in the expectations of the tourists during the new normal period. Issues such as hygiene and cleanliness, digitalization, facility calmness, etc. will be the main factors in tourists' choice of hotels. Carrying out marketing activities by focusing on the specified factors is important for hotel businesses.

Author contribution statements

M.Demir, S.S. Demir, A. Dalgic and F.D. Ergen contributed equally to the design and implementation of the research, to the analysis of the results and to the writing of the manuscript.

Disclosure statement

No potential competing interest was reported by the authors.

Ethics committee approval

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