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Analyzing TripAdvisor Reviews: Investigating Customer Feedback to Enhance Guest Retention Strategies in Leading Ankara Hotels

TripAdvisor Değerlendirmelerinin Analizi: Ankara'daki Önde Gelen Otellerde Müşteri Sadakatini Artırmaya Yönelik Stratejilerin Geliştirilmesinde Müşteri Geri Bildirimlerinin İncelenmesi

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Öz

This study investigates how premium hotels in Ankara can leverage data-driven strategies to enhance customer experiences, boost loyalty, and increase repeat guest expenditure. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on 186 TripAdvisor guest reviews from four leading luxury hotels in Ankara: Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, Lugal, a Luxury Collection Hotel, and Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center. The reviews were analyzed focusing on key themes such as service quality, room cleanliness, breakfast offerings, and staff interactions. The study employed a thematic analysis approach to identify recurring patterns and themes within the guest feedback. The sample was selected based on the hotels' premium status and pricing, ensuring representation of the luxury segment in Ankara's hospitality market. Findings reveal high levels of overall satisfaction but also highlight areas for improvement, particularly in side services. The study emphasizes the importance of analyzing guest feedback to create personalized and targeted service offerings. Recommendations for hoteliers include optimizing service quality and tailoring experiences to meet guest preferences, thereby strengthening long-term customer loyalty.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Data Analysis, Customer Loyalty, TripAdvisor, Customer Experience, Hotel Service Quality.

Abstract

Bu çalışma, Ankara'daki premium otellerin, müşteri deneyimlerini geliştirmek, sadakati artırmak ve tekrar eden misafir harcamalarını yükseltmek için veri odaklı stratejileri nasıl kullanabileceğini incelemektedir. Araştırmada, Ankara'daki dört önde gelen lüks otelden (Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, Lugal, a Luxury Collection Hotel ve Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center) alınan 186 TripAdvisor misafir yorumu üzerinde nitel içerik analizi yapılmıştır. Yorumlar, hizmet kalitesi, oda temizliği, kahvaltı sunumları ve personel etkileşimleri gibi ana temalara odaklanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmada, misafir geri bildirimlerinde tekrarlayan düzenleri ve temaları belirlemek amacıyla tematik analiz yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Örnekleme, otellerin premium statüsü ve fiyatlandırmasına göre seçilerek, Ankara'nın konaklama piyasasındaki lüks segmentin temsil edilmesi sağlanmıştır. Bulgular, genel memnuniyetin yüksek olduğunu ortaya koymakla birlikte, yan hizmetlerde iyileştirme yapılması gereken alanları da vurgulamaktadır. Çalışma, misafir geri bildirimlerini analiz etmenin, kişiselleştirilmiş ve hedefe yönelik hizmet sunumları oluşturmadaki önemine dikkat çekmektedir. Otelcilere yönelik öneriler arasında, hizmet kalitesinin optimize edilmesi ve misafir tercihlerini karşılayacak deneyimlerin tasarlanması, böylelikle uzun vadeli müşteri sadakatinin güçlendirilmesi yer almaktadır.

Key Words: Veri Analizi, Müşteri Sadakati, Tripadvisor, Müşteri Deneyimi, Otel Hizmet Kalitesi.

Extended Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how premium hotels in Ankara can utilize customer feedback from online platforms, especially TripAdvisor, to enhance guest experiences, foster loyalty, and increase repeat business. Specifically, the research focuses on understanding key factors that influence guest satisfaction, the effectiveness of loyalty programs, and how hotels can benefit from data-driven strategies to create personalized services. By analyzing customer reviews, this study aims to provide insights for hotel managers and marketers in the hospitality industry, helping them to implement strategies that improve customer loyalty and retention.

Background

In the vast competitive hospitality industry, particularly in the high-value hotel sector, customer satisfaction and loyalty are essential for lasting success. Such hotels cater to a clientele with extraordinary expectations for elegance, individualized services, and memorable experiences. The rise of user-generated content (UGC) on platforms like TripAdvisor has allowed consumers to share their experiences and opinions with a large audience, influencing the decision-making process of potential guests. Positive online reviews can significantly boost a hotel's reputation and booking rates, while negative comments can deter prospective visitors. Therefore, understanding customer feedback and leveraging it to improve service delivery has become crucial for top hotels. Previous research focuses on the importance of delivering overarching customer experiences in building loyalty, particularly in luxury hotels where guests expect more targeted and exclusive services. Studies have also shown that loyalty programs, when designed systematically, can encourage repeat visits and customer retention by offering rewards and recognition. However, the success of loyalty programs depends on various factors, such as program design, rewards structure, and customer preferences. Additionally, behavioral economics principles suggest that customer decision-making in hospitality is influenced by heuristics and mental shortcuts, which can be leveraged to enhance the usefulness of loyalty programs.

Method

This study employs a qualitative content analysis to evaluate online reviews of three luxury hotels in Ankara: Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, and Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center. A total of 186 customer reviews (both positive and negative), collected from TripAdvisor between December 31, 2022, and December 31, 2023, were analyzed using the Nvivo qualitative analysis program. Only reviews containing three or more words in English or Turkish were included in the analysis, and Turkish reviews were translated into English to maintain consistency. The content analysis followed a directed approach, where coding categories were established based on themes identified in the literature. These categories included customer experience quality (e.g., service, cleanliness, location), the effectiveness of loyalty programs, and behavioral economics principles (e.g., mental accounting, heuristics). The analysis aimed to identify common themes in customer feedback and assess how these elements influence guest satisfaction, loyalty, and return visits.

Findings

The analysis revealed several key themes in customer feedback across the three premium hotels. Positive comments frequently highlighted the quality of staff interactions, room cleanliness, and the overall satisfaction with the hotel's services. Specifically, 95% of comments related to overall satisfaction were positive, indicating

that guests were generally pleased with their experiences. Cleanliness and service quality were also significant factors contributing to guest satisfaction. In contrast, negative feedback often focused on areas for improvement, such as room facilities or concierge services, though these were less frequent compared to positive remarks. Loyalty programs were another critical area of focus. Reviews indicated that guests appreciated recognition and rewards offered through these programs, but the design and structure of the programs could be improved to better align with customer preferences. The study found that factors such as ease of use, communication, and personalization played a major role in the perceived success of loyalty programs. Guests were more likely to engage with programs that offered tailored rewards and were simple to navigate. Behavioral economics principles, such as mental accounting and heuristics, were observed in customer decision-making processes. Guests tended to simplify complex decisions by relying on online reviews and loyalty programs to guide their choices. The study suggests that incorporating these principles into loyalty program design could positively influence guest behavior, encouraging repeat visits and higher spending.

Results

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into how premium hotels in Ankara can enhance customer experiences and foster loyalty through data-driven strategies. Key recommendations include:

1. **Personalized Services:** Hotels should leverage customer data, including feedback from online reviews to tailor services to individual guest preferences. Targeted offerings, such as room amenities or dining recommendations, can enhance the guest experience and increase loyalty.
2. **Loyalty Program Optimization:** Hotels should design loyalty programs that are easy to navigate and offer focused rewards that align with customer preferences. This will encourage greater engagement with the programs and foster long-term relationships with guests.
3. **Behavioral Economics Insights:** By integrating behavioral economics principles into the design of loyalty programs, hotels can influence customer decision-making and improve program effectiveness. For example, offering immediate rewards or simplifying the decision-making process can increase customer participation in loyalty programs.

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of the hospitality industry, hotels face increasing challenges in differentiating themselves and maintaining a competitive advantage. The sector, particularly the hotel industry, is characterized by intense competition and rapidly evolving customer expectations. As a highly service-driven industry, the ability to deliver personalized and memorable experiences provides a critical competitive edge (Kandampully et al., 2015; Berezina et al., 2015). Therefore, hotels are continually seeking innovative strategies to enhance guest experiences and foster loyalty.

Customer experience has emerged as a key factor in hospitality management, encompassing all interactions between the guest and the hotel, from pre-stay research to post-stay reflections (Knutson et al., 2009). This holistic approach requires hotels to consider every touchpoint in the guest journey, including personalization during the booking process, in-room services, and post-stay follow-ups (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). In

the service industry, prioritizing customer satisfaction and ensuring positive interactions at every step is essential for building strong, lasting connections with customers (Yoon & Lee, 2017). Customer experience, loyalty, and guest expenditure on return visits have been widely studied as factors that significantly influence a hotel's long-term success and sustainability (Bodaghi & Rostamzadeh, 2018; Magatef & Tomalieh, 2015). These factors are particularly crucial in the hospitality industry due to its high dependence on repeat business and word-of-mouth recommendations (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Bowen & Chen, 2001). To address these challenges, hotels have increasingly adopted data-driven approaches that analyze guest payment information and behaviors to develop personalized marketing communications and customized service offerings (Ahmad et al., 2012). The integration of big data in hospitality has transformed how hotels manage customer relationships and enhance guest experiences (Mariani et al., 2018). This shift is particularly relevant for premium hotels, where guests often expect highly personalized and exceptional experiences (Walls et al., 2011a). By leveraging these insights, hotels can craft tailored experiences that resonate with individual guest preferences, fostering loyalty and enhancing overall satisfaction (Gretzel, 2011).

While existing research has explored various aspects of customer experience and loyalty in the hospitality industry, there remains a gap in understanding how premium hotels in specific regional contexts, such as Ankara, can effectively utilize data-driven strategies to enhance customer experiences and foster loyalty. This study aims to address this gap by investigating how premium hotels in Ankara can leverage data analysis to strengthen customer experiences, foster loyalty, and encourage higher spending on repeat visits. The importance of this research lies in its potential to provide context-specific insights that can be directly applied by hotel managers in Ankara's premium hotel sector, potentially leading to improved customer satisfaction, increased loyalty, and ultimately, better business performance.

In the context of modern hospitality management, technology has become indispensable in shaping consumer experiences (Bilgihan, 2016). The internet has created a space for interactive communication while overcoming the limitations of traditional media. Users can easily express their opinions and experiences through features like "send message" and "comment" sections, fostering a dynamic and interactive communication process (Çakır & Topçu, 2005).

The rise of User-Generated Content (UGC) has significantly altered how travelers share their experiences and how potential customers evaluate service providers (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008). UGC offers authentic perspectives on travel experiences, shaping tourist preferences and satisfaction. Platforms like social media, travel forums, and review sites have transformed travel marketing by fostering genuine connections between travelers (Akyol & Arica, 2016; Xu et al., 2021). UGC not only influences destination image and satisfaction but also indirectly impacts tourist loyalty (Nguyen & Tong, 2023). Thus, UGC serves as a critical tool in both marketing and service improvement, as it provides hotels with direct and unfiltered feedback from customers (Fotis et al., 2012).

In this context, guest payment and behavioral data play a vital role. Payment data encompasses transactional information such as payment history, spending patterns, and preferences, while behavioral data captures guest interactions, preferences, and sentiments throughout their stay. The integration of these data types

allows hotels to develop a deeper understanding of their customers, delivering more targeted and effective services (Zarezadeh et al., 2022). By examining this data, hotels can gather valuable insights into guest preferences and behaviors. In hospitality management, the ability to interpret such data has transformed how hotels curate guest experiences (Gretzel, 2011). However, preferences are not constant; they evolve over time (Ali et al., 2013). Personalized service delivery, a key focus in hospitality management, adapts to these shifts, driving guest loyalty (Walls et al., 2011a). By understanding guests' preferences, past behaviors, and spending patterns, hotels can curate targeted marketing campaigns that offer relevant services, amenities, and experiences. This tailored approach enhances guest satisfaction, increases the likelihood of repeat visits, and strengthens loyalty (Murniati & Bawono, 2020; Laškarin, 2013).

At its core, hospitality must consider every detail of a guest's stay, aiming not only to meet but also to surpass their expectations. It should embrace individuality, starting with the ambiance created by attentive staff and culminating in personalized service (Goryushkina et al., 2016). By leveraging insights derived from guest payment and behavioral data, hotels can create customized service offerings that meet specific guest preferences. Luxury hotels, in particular, benefit from such strategies as personalized offerings nurture customer loyalty, build a positive reputation, and enhance economic gains (Zhang, 2018; Ivanova et al., 2021). From personalized room amenities and dining recommendations to tailored spa treatments and concierge services, these individualized offerings elevate the guest's experience, fostering a sense of exclusivity and satisfaction.

By analyzing guest feedback on platforms like TripAdvisor, this research will provide actionable insights for hotel managers and marketers in the hospitality industry. It seeks to identify best practices and opportunities associated with leveraging data-driven strategies to enhance customer experience, loyalty, and expenditure on return visits. It seeks to identify best practices and opportunities associated with leveraging data-driven strategies to enhance customer experience, loyalty, and expenditure on return visits. The findings from this investigation will provide crucial insights to various hospitality professionals, including hotel administrators, marketing specialists, and other industry leaders. These insights will empower them to implement data-driven approaches more effectively and make well-informed choices in their daily operations and strategic planning.

The subsequent sections of this paper will review the relevant literature, outline the methodology for collecting and analyzing guest feedback data, present the findings, and conclude with implications and recommendations for premium hotels in Ankara.

2. Literature Review

The hospitality industry, particularly the hotel sector, faces intense competition and evolving customer expectations. In this dynamic environment, understanding and enhancing customer loyalty has become crucial for sustainable business success. Research has shown that positive customer experiences play a vital role in building customer loyalty and satisfaction (Samaké et al., 2023; Bhatt et al., 2022). However, customer loyalty in the hospitality industry is not only a function of the quality of services provided but also of the emotional connections and personalized experiences

offered to guests (Kandampully et al., 2015). In the hospitality sector, the importance of retaining loyal patrons is paramount, as it fundamentally shapes an establishment's ability to thrive and expand in the long run. Studies suggest that loyal customers tend to spend more, recommend the hotel to others, and are less likely to switch to competitors, making loyalty programs a valuable long-term strategy (Bowen & Shoemaker, 2003). This is particularly relevant in the context of premium hotels, where guest expectations are high, and competition is fierce.

The hotels selected for this study—Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, Lugal, a Luxury Collection Hotel, and Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center—were chosen because they are among the most expensive hotels in Ankara, as validated through their online pricing. The hotels selected for this study—Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, Lugal, a Luxury Collection Hotel, and Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center—were chosen because they are among the most expensive hotels in Ankara, as validated through their online pricing. These upscale establishments exemplify the pinnacle of lodging choices available in the metropolis, serving a discerning demographic that anticipates opulence, tailored attention, and an air of distinction in their accommodations. In such luxury settings, guest loyalty is even more critical, as guests paying premium prices expect exceptional service and experiences. Therefore, examining customer experiences and loyalty strategies in these hotels provides insights that are particularly relevant for the luxury hotel segment. In such luxury settings, guest loyalty is even more critical, as guests paying premium prices expect exceptional service and experiences. Therefore, examining customer experiences and loyalty strategies in these hotels provides insights that are particularly relevant for the luxury hotel segment.

Luxury items are mentally linked to higher prices. Companies charge more for luxury products and services to make people view them more positively. However, luxury has transformed from being merely about price and product quality to an experiential and emotional concept (Tynan et al., 2010). It is now more fluid, contextual, and experiential. Individual interests and intangible benefits have become increasingly significant in shaping consumers' perception of luxury (Allsopp, 2005). It is no longer just about expensive goods for the elite & rich. Luxury these days is centered on aspirations met and memorable moments created. People with discretionary incomes are searching for superior quality and upgrading to premium products that match their desired lifestyle (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006).

Holiday accommodation is considered the market segment where consumers are most likely to feel it is worth paying more for premium or branded products. Approximately 70% of consumers agreed that premium accommodation is usually or always worth paying extra for (Allsopp, 2005: 189). This highlights the importance of not just meeting but exceeding customer expectations in luxury hotels, where personalized services and unique experiences are vital for fostering customer loyalty (Walls et al., 2011b). In the past, luxury hotels were renowned for their prime real estate, spacious accommodations, exquisite cuisine, impeccable cleanliness, elegant designs, and offering guests privacy, security, and customized service (Sherman, 2007; Küçükusta et al., 2014). However, modern luxury hospitality now emphasizes creating personalized, memorable experiences that align with guests' individual preferences (Knutson et al., 2009).

In the high-end market, preserving existing clientele is especially vital as fierce rivalry makes acquiring fresh patrons increasingly difficult. Repeat customers are a more reliable source of revenue compared to newly acquired ones (Dowling & Uncles, 1997), motivating companies to consistently make efforts and be reliable in retaining their existing clientele (Tjahjaningsih et al., 2021). In the hospitality industry, customer loyalty is especially important due to the competitive nature of the market, where hotels often offer similar services (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). Customers' perceptions of a business profoundly impact their decision to make a purchase, recommend the business to others, and become repeat customers. Positive experiences foster loyalty and encourage customers to return, while negative experiences can have adverse effects on sales and result in negative word-of-mouth (Patil & Rane, 2023). Leading the charge in adopting tailored promotional tactics and consumer fidelity schemes is the accommodation sector. Herdem's study addresses the need for businesses to redefine their marketing strategies in a highly competitive market and adapt their products, services, and marketing tools to the changing dynamics. It emphasizes the importance of integrating customer experience into marketing strategies and showcases how businesses are utilizing experiential marketing tools and policies to differentiate their products and cultivate loyal customers in a highly competitive market (Herdem, 2019). This is particularly relevant for premium hotels, where guest expectations for personalized experiences are high.

The adoption of loyalty programs in the hospitality industry has been widely studied in terms of their effectiveness for customer retention and brand loyalty (Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Loyalty programs have been widely used as a strategic tool to encourage repeat visits and spending. These initiatives serve as crucial mechanisms for nurturing patron connections, necessitating enduring dedication and integration into comprehensive promotional blueprints. Companies use loyalty programs to retain valued customers and discourage them from switching to competitors, especially in competitive markets (Daly & Shakeel, 2021; Szczepańska & Gawron, 2011). Nevertheless, studies suggest that fidelity programs in isolation are inadequate for maintaining enduring consumer allegiance. Personalized services and emotional connections must complement these programs to create a lasting impact (Meyer-Waarden, 2008). In the context of premium hotels, loyalty programs often offer exclusive benefits and personalized services to enhance guest experiences and foster long-term relationships. This approach aligns with the growing trend of experiential marketing, where customers value unique and memorable experiences over purely transactional rewards (Schmitt, 1999). Customer loyalty is considered an asset that entrepreneurs value greatly. To cultivate loyalty among existing customers and establish strong connections, many entrepreneurs opt to implement loyalty programs (Hofman-Kohlmeyer, 2016). Many programs aim to maintain customer relationships, either through transactional approaches focused on communication, quality, and satisfaction or through relational approaches that consider customers' life cycles. Detecting risky periods and signs of defection is crucial for effective customer retention (Meyer-Waarden & Benavent, 2001). Previous studies have highlighted that the effectiveness of loyalty programs is dependent on several factors, including the program's design, the rewards structure, and the preferences of the target customers (Tanford, 2013; Xie & Chen, 2014; Meyer-Waarden & Benavent, 2001; Nunes & Drèze, 2006; Hu, Huang & Chen, 2010). Liu's study found that during the initial phase of the loyalty program, heavy buyers received the greatest benefits from claiming their rewards. However, their spending and loyalty did not show significant growth over time.

In contrast, the program had a positive impact on light and moderate buyers, leading to increased purchase frequency, larger transaction sizes, and enhanced loyalty to the store. The most significant change for these buyers occurred within three months of joining, with steady growth afterwards. By the end of the analysis period, their average purchase frequency was like the next tier (Liu, 2007). These findings have important implications for how premium hotels design and implement their loyalty programs to maximize effectiveness across different customer segments.

The rise of digital platforms and online reviews has significantly impacted the hospitality industry, particularly in how customers make decisions and form expectations. Online reviews, particularly on platforms like TripAdvisor, have become a critical touchpoint for customer decision-making and hotel reputation management (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). The increase in the number of tourists, both local and international, who check online reviews before choosing a hotel, has created a need to understand how satisfied and engaged consumers are with other people's opinions and experiences about a hotel's offerings. Electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) is now recognized as one of the most influential factors in the hospitality industry, shaping both customer perceptions and hotel management strategies (Cantalops & Salvi, 2014). This understanding is important from different perspectives (Vo et al., 2021). Online reviews have emerged as a remarkable phenomenon for consumers seeking to enhance their purchasing decision-making process. E-WOM is recognized as a marketing tool that holds considerable influence in the hospitality industry (Zhang et al., 2009; Kamble et al., 2020). Hotel managers, particularly those in premium establishments, increasingly use these reviews to improve their service and tailor their offerings to meet guest expectations. This results in more profit from customers staying loyal for a long time. Research shows that positive online reviews not only improve a hotel's reputation but also significantly increase booking intentions, highlighting the importance of managing and responding to guest feedback effectively (Sparks & Browning, 2011). They contribute to a favorable image and evoke positive sentiments among customers, whereas negative reviews can adversely affect hotel booking intentions and tarnish the hotel's image (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Consequently, online reviews have a significant impact on the perception and subsequent actions of potential customers, regardless of whether the reviews are positive or negative (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009).

The relationship between guest satisfaction, customer experiences, and loyalty in the hospitality industry has been well-established in the literature. It has been known for a long time that guest satisfaction and experiences are very important factors that help customers stay loyal, return, and speak positively about a hotel to others (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015; Padma & Ahn, 2020). In the luxury hotel segment, the link between personalized service and guest loyalty is particularly strong, as guests expect unique and tailored experiences (Walls et al., 2011a). The hotel industry, characterized by intense competition and providing similar services, places great emphasis on guest satisfaction as a key performance factor (Mohsin & Lengler, 2015).

Based on the literature reviewed, several research questions emerge that are particularly relevant to the premium hotel sector in Ankara, Turkey. These questions aim to explore the relationships between customer experiences, loyalty programs, and behavioral economics principles in the context of premium hotels.

In such a highly competitive environment, understanding and prioritizing guest satisfaction becomes essential for hotel performance. It is critical to note that positive customer experiences play a pivotal role in nurturing customer loyalty (Research question 1). The combination of a well-designed loyalty program and positive customer experiences can foster strong relationships between customers in premium Ankara hotels. This research question is grounded in the literature that emphasizes the importance of customer experiences in fostering loyalty (Samaké et al., 2023; Bhatt et al., 2022). It seeks to explore how the unique experiences offered by premium hotels in Ankara contribute to customer loyalty. Positive experiences can enhance customer satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and ultimately contribute to higher levels of customer loyalty (Szczepańska & Gawron, 2011). Therefore, it is questioned that positive customer experiences have a significant positive impact on customer loyalty in premium Ankara hotels. By providing exceptional customer experiences, Ankara hotels can strengthen customer loyalty, resulting in increased customer retention and positive word-of-mouth recommendations thus resulting in the emergence of the first research question:

RQ1: How do positive customer experiences influence customer loyalty in premium Ankara hotels?

While researchers have traditionally used different methods to understand the elements of guest satisfaction and experience, the advent of big data has provided new opportunities to gain valuable insights into this subject (Xiang et al., 2015). By harnessing the power of big data analytics, researchers can uncover novel understandings and develop actionable insights that help improve guest satisfaction and ultimately drive customer loyalty. Moreover, loyalty programs are widely utilized in the hotel industry as strategic tools to enhance customer loyalty and encourage repeat visits. However, the effectiveness of these loyalty programs may be influenced by various factors such as program design, rewards structure, and customer preferences (RQ2). This question builds on the research of Daly & Shakeel (2021) and Szczepańska & Gawron (2011) on loyalty programs. It aims to investigate how these factors specifically impact the effectiveness of loyalty programs in the context of premium hotels in Ankara. A well-designed loyalty program that aligns with customer preferences and offers attractive rewards can significantly impact customer loyalty and retention in premium Ankara hotels. Therefore, it is aimed to clarify the effectiveness of loyalty programs employed in Ankara hotels is influenced by factors such as program design, rewards structure, and customer preferences. By understanding and incorporating these factors, premium Ankara hotels can optimize their loyalty programs to effectively drive customer loyalty and retention.

RQ2: How do factors such as program design, rewards structure, and customer preferences influence the effectiveness of loyalty programs in premium Ankara hotels?

Research shows consumers will keep searching for information as long as the benefits exceed the costs. During decision-making, individuals can't consider all available sources due to time/effort limitations. So, they selectively evaluate source importance, quality and trustworthiness to identify the most useful options. Bell (2016) found in his study that the perceived utility of information sources—based on factors like bias, relevance, accessibility, and value—affects whether the sources are used. This perceived utility is linked to the likelihood of a destination being chosen or rejected. Additionally, demographic differences influence how people perceive and use

information sources, as well as their destination choices. The importance of online reviews in the hospitality industry has grown tremendously with the advent of platforms like TripAdvisor. Reviews serve as e-WOM, which has a significant influence on hotel reputation and guest decision-making (Vo et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022). Positive reviews contribute to a hotel's favorable image, leading to increased bookings and repeat visits, while negative reviews can damage the hotel's reputation (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Understanding and leveraging these reviews is essential for any hotel's success, particularly in an era where customers heavily rely on UGC to shape their travel decisions (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009).

These findings can help destination marketers improve their strategies by focusing on the most useful information sources for their target audience to increase the chances of their destination being selected. Drawing from economics theories, travelers determine the most valuable sources providing insights with minimal costs. Most pre-purchase research thus involves just a subset of options. Studies found people usually use five or fewer external sources, even though more are available - with family/friends, reviews and search engines as top influences (Gürsoy & McCleary, 2004; Gürsoy et al., 2016). The way people shop involves personal choices that really affect how satisfied they are, how loyal they are, and other things they may want to do. Research on how people act when they shop in places like hotels, meeting places, fun parks, nature areas and transport look to understand customer and visitor behavior in different leisure and tour locations (Dixit et al., 2019). When making travel decisions, tourists often do not act as purely rational actors seeking to maximize individual utility. Instead, behavioral economics suggests that people frequently rely on mental shortcuts known as heuristics to simplify complex choices (Li et al., 2022). When making travel decisions, tourists often do not act as purely rational actors seeking to maximize individual utility. Instead, behavioral economics suggests that people frequently rely on mental shortcuts known as heuristics to simplify complex choices (Li et al., 2022). This concept of "bounded rationality" recognizes that individuals may prioritize simplicity and convenience over comprehensive optimization in decision-making processes. The principles of behavioral economics offer a pragmatic framework that goes beyond the assumptions of fully rational economic decision-making. By incorporating insights from behavioral economics into loyalty program design, the hospitality industry can positively influence consumer decision-making and enhance customer loyalty (RQ3). This question stems from new ideas about how people make money choices and how these ideas might help hotels. It looks at ways hotels can use things like how people think about spending, make quick decisions, and avoid losing money to make their reward programs better and give guests at fancy hotels a nicer stay. Customer behavior in the hospitality industry is also shaped by behavioral economics principles, which recognize that consumers do not always act as purely rational decision-makers. Rather, they rely on heuristics and mental shortcuts when making decisions (Li et al., 2022). This concept of bounded rationality implies that simplifying complex decisions, such as selecting a hotel or choosing a loyalty program, can positively influence customer decision-making. Incorporating behavioral economics into loyalty program design can provide hoteliers with a framework to better understand customer preferences, thereby improving customer loyalty (Bell, 2016; Gürsoy & McCleary, 2004). The third research question, therefore, examines how behavioral economics principles can be applied to improve customer loyalty in premium Ankara hotels:

RQ3: How can incorporating insights from behavioral economics principles into loyalty program design influence consumer decision-making and enhance customer loyalty in the hospitality industry?

The rise of individualized marketing in the hospitality industry is also transforming how hotels interact with their customers. Hotels look at what guests like and do. This helps them introduce special offers for each person. When they do this, guests are happier and more likely to come back. Personalized marketing approaches allow businesses to create stronger connections with their customers, fostering long-term relationships that result in higher customer retention and increased revenue (Chen, 2017; Zhang, 2018). Hotels are now focusing more on what each guest wants. This means they are using special ways to market themselves that fit each person. It helps them stand out from other hotels. While standardized models were suitable in the past, embracing individualization will be key for industry leaders moving forward. Today's travelers expect customization throughout their journey, from booking preferences to in-stay requests. Hotels adopting personalized programs demonstrate a commitment to truly understanding each guest's unique needs and desires. Capturing such insights allows properties to consistently deliver service that exceeds expectations in a seamless, thoughtful manner.

Providing exceptional, tailored experiences for guests has become a critical element for hotels to strengthen their competitive edge. Implementing innovative services customized to individual preferences and needs allows properties to meet consumers' evolving demands for memorable personalized care. Personalized approaches give patrons a sense of importance and fulfillment, helping foster brand loyalty. Individualized concepts are inevitable as the industry progresses (Chen, 2017). Quality of staff is also elevated through personalized service training, as employees gain skills to attentively anticipate and address each guest's unique requests. This level of service excellence and relationship building with patrons cannot be replicated through standardized approaches (Zhang, 2018).

In recent years, text mining techniques have been employed to analyze UGC, extracting meaningful information and insights from the vast amount of data generated by travelers. These techniques, such as semantic analysis and sentiment analysis, help destinations and businesses better understand their customers' preferences, emotions, and experiences, ultimately aiding them to make more qualified decisions in marketing and service delivery. By monitoring the nature of UGC and its influence on tourist perceptions, destinations and businesses can leverage the power of UGC to build brand loyalty, enhance travel experiences, and promote sustainable tourism practices (Wang et al., 2022).

3. Methodology

This study employs qualitative content analysis to evaluate customer reviews and comments on TripAdvisor for three premium hotels in Ankara—Hilton Ankara Hotel, JW Marriott Ankara Hotel, Lugal, a Luxury Collection Hotel, and Sheraton Ankara Hotel & Convention Center. Content analysis has been widely used in various fields, including education, communication, sociology, psychology, social psychology, information science, healthcare, and business research (Neundorff, 2002).

It is important to note that this study, being a content analysis of publicly available online reviews, does not require ethical committee approval (Demir, 2024). This is in line with similar studies in the field, such as the work by Metin and Ünal (2022), who conducted a content analysis study in communication sciences and sociology without the need for ethical committee approval.

A total of 186 positive and negative comments in English and Turkish on the TripAdvisor website, between December 31, 2022, and December 31, 2023, are analyzed to better understand the content of the reviews. The data analysis is performed using the Nvivo qualitative analysis program. Only meaningful reviews in Turkish or English containing 3 words or more of textual commentary are included. Data preprocessing, such as removing empty or corrupted reviews, follows common practices in literature (Atabay & Çizel, 2020). For the analysis of Turkish reviews, an additional translation process was implemented. Turkish comments were first translated into English using online translation tools when necessary. These translations were then reviewed and refined by a bilingual academic to ensure accuracy. Finally, a random sample of translated sentences was back-translated from English to Turkish to verify that the original and final translations maintained the same meaning. This process ensured consistent analysis of both English and Turkish reviews.

A directed approach to content analysis is utilized, where initial coding categories are established based on themes from the literature (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Customer experience quality is assessed based on aspects such as service, cleanliness, location, and value, which are important determinants of satisfaction (Taşdağıtıcı & Tuna, 2022). Access, transparency, and risk assessment are key factors contributing to a positive customer experience in hotels (Solakis et al., 2021). Loyalty program features are examined in relation to rewards, recognition, communication, and ease of use, all of which have been shown to impact effectiveness (McCall & Voorhees, 2010). Behavioral economic principles of mental accounting, heuristics, and loss aversion also guide the analysis (Virgineni & Rao, 2017).

The main aim of this study is to analyze the reviews on the TripAdvisor website related to guest experiences in premium hotels in Ankara, Turkey, in terms of quality and satisfaction elements during a predetermined period. The sub-objectives of the research are to:

1. Analyze the most focused factors in customers' positive and negative comments,
2. Incorporate insights from behavioral economics principles into loyalty program design, as implied by the visitors' comments,
3. Investigate the effectiveness of loyalty programs, influenced by factors such as program design, rewards structure, and customer preferences,
4. Assess the likelihood of customers returning to the same facility based on the comments.

The population of this study consists of guests who visited these hotels. The sample comprises those who provided either positive or negative written feedback about their stays. As part of the filtering criteria, comments containing offensive language, lacking meaningful expression, or feedback where the sentiment (positive or negative) could not be discerned (e.g., comments such as "shocking!") were removed. Including such reviews would have undermined the study's application goals,

objectivity, and generalizability. Furthermore, false, manipulative, hostile reviews, non-English or non-Turkish reviews, and those outside of the time frame are excluded. Reviews deemed hostile or lacking constructive feedback can skew results and introduce bias, which is why their exclusion is considered a common practice (Greenhalgh, 1997). Categories include elements related to satisfaction, return intention, spending levels, and willingness to recommend (Bagherzadeh et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2009; Ariffin & Maghzi, 2012).

Insights obtained from this analysis inform recommendations for individualized marketing and personalized service design, which are shown to optimize guest experiences and retention (Bergès-Sennou et al., 2009). The current study focuses on online reviews for a single travel destination, limiting the scope to specific categories like resort. These findings may not be broadly applicable to the entire hotel market. Nonetheless, the study showcases how hotels can leverage guest feedback from the internet to enhance their services. It's worth noting that TripAdvisor.com offers restricted information about reviewers to maintain confidentiality, keeping reviewer identities private (Berezina et al., 2015).

4. Findings

The data were gathered from 186 positive and negative comments on the TripAdvisor platform between December 31, 2022, and December 31, 2023. The analysis yielded 563 codes. Only meaningful reviews in Turkish or English containing 3 words or more of textual commentary were included in the coding. While analyzing only comments that contain text and disregarding evaluations that only provide scores appears to reduce the sample size, the fact that comments generally address multiple factors, and thus multiple positive or negative inferences can be made from a single comment, has increased the sample size. Therefore, the numerical distribution of the analyses conducted was greater than the number of comments coded.

Table 1: Main and sub-themes created while coding the comments and their distribution.

	Negative	%	Positive	%	Total	%
Customer Experience:						
Ambience	-	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	100.0%
Areas for improvement	6	100.0%	-	0.0%	6	100.0%
Breakfast experience	2	22.2%	7	77.8%	9	100.0%
Cleanliness	2	10.5%	17	89.5%	19	100.0%
Concierge recommendations	1	100.0%	-	0.0%	1	100.0%
Facilities	1	6.7%	14	93.3%	15	100.0%
Food & beverage	-	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	100.0%
Location	1	4.5%	21	95.5%	22	100.0%
Lounge area service	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Overall satisfaction	3	4.8%	60	95.2%	63	100.0%
Room quality	4	13.8%	25	86.2%	29	100.0%
Staff interactions	1	1.7%	57	98.3%	58	100.0%
Travel experience with family	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Value for money	-	0.0%	8	100.0%	8	100.0%
Window opening in rooms	1	100.0%	-	0.0%	1	100.0%
Cleanliness:						
Cleanliness	2	10.5%	17	89.5%	19	100.0%
Cleanliness appreciation	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Hygiene standard appreciation	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%

Table 1 Continued

Facilities:						
Facilities	1	6.7%	14	93.3%	15	100.0%
Facilities - Parking, Amenities	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Facility appreciation	1	2.4%	41	97.6%	42	100.0%
Hotel facilities	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Location:						
Location	1	4.5%	21	95.5%	22	100.0%
Value for Money:						
Value for money	-	0.0%	8	100.0%	8	100.0%
Staff Interactions:						
Staff interactions	1	1.7%	57	98.3%	58	100.0%
Staff appreciation	-	0.0%	15	100.0%	15	100.0%
Front desk role appreciation	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Motivation of staff	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Food & Beverage:						
Food & beverage	-	0.0%	3	100.0%	3	100.0%
Food quality	3	8.8%	31	91.2%	34	100.0%
Food variety	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Restaurant service quality	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Restaurant staff interactions	-	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Amenities:						
Room amenities	-	0.0%	5	100.0%	5	100.0%
Upgrade and room amenity appreciation	-	0.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Rewards and Loyalty Programs:						
Loyalty	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Loyalty program benefits	-	0.0%	4	100.0%	4	100.0%
Loyalty Program influence	-	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Loyalty to hotel	1	4.5%	21	95.5%	22	100.0%
Satisfaction:						
Overall satisfaction	3	4.8%	60	95.2%	63	100.0%
Grand Total	35		528		563	

The results indicate that overall, the hotels delivered a positive customer experience for most guests. Specifically, 95% of the total reviewed comments expressed satisfaction with their stay, while 5% shared negative feedback. This suggests that most guests feel positive about the charges they pay to the hotel, implying they get their money's worth. Certain key aspects like staff service, value proposition, and leisure amenities received unanimous praise from customers, demonstrating the hotels' strengths in building guest rapport and offering good value.

However, a deeper analysis of the results reveals that some experience dimensions could be optimized further. While a majority of 86% rated their room quality favorably, the remaining 14% highlighted issues like dissatisfaction with certain room types or facilities. In addition to low room quality, guests expressed concerns about issues such as breakfast experience, cleanliness, concierge recommendations, and food quality. This shows that - although the hotels examined are city hotels - guests do not intend to compromise on basic services that a hotel should offer, such as breakfast, hygienic accommodation, and food quality. Furthermore, the findings suggest that hotels need to pay attention to factors such as facilities, staff interactions, and overall satisfaction to maximize customer satisfaction. This is supported by the study of Laipan et al. (2022). Previous research has indicated that a few central aspects significantly influence customers' overall experience at hotels, including the quality of interactions with staff, the physical condition of facilities, and the standard of outcomes obtained. Thus, hotels seeking to prioritize certain experience factors would

Figure 1 depicts a word cloud visualizing the 100 most commonly occurring terms found within the reviews. It contains only words with a minimum length of 5 to exclude meaningless words like conjunctions and prepositions. A word cloud visually represents text data by adjusting word sizes to reflect their frequency of occurrence in the text. **Figure 1** generates such a word cloud displaying the most prevalent and meaningful keywords extracted from the reviews based on their usage. The use of word clouds is common in similar studies (Kalmukov, 2021; Taşdağıtıcı & Tuna, 2022). It is created via software called NVivo, which is used for the analysis of qualitative data. This software also enables users to sort synonym words. For example, instead of counting each of these similar words separately: "experience, experienced, experiences, feeling, feel, getting, knows, lived, lives, received, seeing", they are scored and collected under a single word: "experience". This enabled the visualization of the words in a highly beneficial way.

According to the output of the word cloud represented, the most frequently used 30 words in the comments were hotel (count: 181, percentage: 3.1%), thanks (count: 112, percentage: 1.89%), service (count: 125, percentage: 1.71%) and staff (count: 73, percentage: 1.25%) respectively. The remaining part of the list is constituted respectively as follows: great, stayed, breakfast, experience, location, clean, comfortable, beautiful, excellent, quality, especially, friendly, employees, lounge, restaurant, helpful, rooms, amazing, extremely, family, place, perfect, interest, provided, manager, and recommend.

When analyzing the cloud deeply, "hotel", as the most frequent word, makes up a great percentage of the weight. This word appears frequently in the image and is the most dominant in the word cloud. Some of the other highly frequent words like "thanks", "service", "staff", and "great" suggest that many of the reviews positively highlighted and commended aspects like the quality of service, efforts of staff members, and overall experience provided. These terms indicate reviews praising the service, staff, and general experience received across different hotels. Words like "location", "place", "center" also feature highly, suggesting location is an important factor. Words about cleanliness ("clean"), comfort ("comfortable") and quality ("quality", "excellent") show these are priorities for guests. Terms like "experience", "stayed", "breakfast" provide context about what is being reviewed. The prevalence of words like "helpful", "friendly", "attentive", "smiling" portrays the staff in a positive light. Facility-related terms such as "rooms", "lounge", "restaurant", "facilities" indicate aspects discussed. Superlative words ("amazing", "perfect", "wonderful") imply many glowing reviews. Other features mentioned include the "executive lounge", "business", and amenities like "buffet". The appearance of brand names ("hiltonsa", "marriott", "sheraton") shows these hotels were reviewed. Verbs like "recommend", "enjoyed", "arrive" provide action/perspective. Terms like "value", "choice", "variety", "relevance" point to considerations beyond the core product.

Overall, the word cloud implies positive feedback regarding the hotel's service, staff, cleanliness, and overall experience. The frequency of words like "great," "excellent," and "friendly" indicates that guests had positive impressions. However, it's important to note that the word cloud provides a general overview and doesn't capture the full context or sentiment of the reviews.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Customers shape their expectations in parallel with their spending and form their purchasing habits and perceptions accordingly. They also expect goods and service providers to adapt based on these spending habits and expectations. In the hospitality industry, where both tangible and intangible elements are offered, managing these expectations becomes even more critical (Kandampully et al., 2015). In this regard, hotel businesses are somewhat more vulnerable as they offer tangible products while also selling an image and perception (Yarcan & Ertuna, 2002; Alvarez et al., 2009). Hotels essentially sell experiences, which are often subjective and emotionally charged (Walls et al., 2011b). Due to these characteristics, such businesses need to be more meticulous in ensuring customer satisfaction, while guests tend to express not only their satisfaction but also vocalize their concerns regarding the perception and image they have purchased (Marcus & Mackuen, 1993). Therefore, businesses must carefully analyze areas of customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction and make improvements accordingly.

This study aimed to investigate how premium hotels in Ankara can leverage guest payment and behavioral data through data-driven approaches to enhance customer experience, loyalty, and expenditure on return visits. The use of online reviews as a data source allows businesses to glean insights into customer satisfaction and areas for improvement, aligning with the growing importance of digital feedback in hospitality management (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009).

The main objective of this study was to analyze TripAdvisor reviews of guest experiences in premium Ankara, Turkey hotels to evaluate quality and satisfaction elements over the predetermined period. This objective was achieved through a qualitative analysis of over 186 customer reviews, from which 563 codes were inferred related to different experience dimensions. The methodology employed, relying on qualitative content analysis, is suitable for exploring the rich, nuanced feedback provided in online reviews (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005)

In terms of the sub-objectives:

1. The most outstanding factors in positive and negative customer comments were evaluated by coding reviews into themes represented in **table 1**. This sub-objective was fully achieved.
2. Insights from behavioral economics principles that could potentially enhance loyalty program design were incorporated based on implicit feedback in customer comments related to preferences. However, directly testing impacts on decision-making was beyond scope.
3. The effectiveness of loyalty programs and influence of design, rewards, preferences were investigated through analyzing suggestions for improving experiences like breakfast offerings based on identified preferences. However, surveying program participants could strengthen understanding of impacts.
4. Judgments about the likelihood of returning were made by coding reviews that referenced return intentions or recommendations. Close to 95% reported satisfaction and high likelihood, indicating this sub-objective was achieved.

The findings revealed that premium hotels delivering positive customer experiences through superior service, cleanliness, and desirable locations succeeded in boosting customer satisfaction and loyalty. First, the study reinforces and extends

the established link between positive customer experiences and loyalty in the context of premium hotels. The analysis revealed that factors such as service quality, cleanliness, and personalized attention were strongly associated with positive reviews and expressions of intent to return. This aligns with and builds upon previous work by Samaké et al. (2023) and Bhatt et al. (2022) on the crucial role of customer experiences in fostering loyalty. However, this study extends current literature by specifically focusing on premium hotels in Ankara, providing localized insights that may not be fully captured in more general or geographically diverse studies.

The factors of guest online reviews, including customer feedback, management response, and the decision-making process, have a positive impact on customer engagement behaviors (CEBs) in luxury hotels, mediated by the perceived service quality. This highlights the importance of active engagement with customer reviews as a means of enhancing perceived service quality and, consequently, customer loyalty (Cantalops & Salvi, 2014). Elements such as staff service, amenities, and price received praise, showing how experiences impact loyalty. The key factors that contribute to a positive customer experience in hotels are service, room, and value evaluations, according to Dash et al. (2023). However, the current research goes further by highlighting specific areas of criticism, particularly regarding cleanliness standards, which were not as prominently featured in previous studies. This nuanced understanding of both positive and negative factors provides a more comprehensive view of customer experience in premium hotels.

The vast majority of reviews expressed overall satisfaction, indicating experiences play a pivotal role as discussed in the literature (Szczepańska & Gawron, 2011). However, diving deeper into the specific experience dimensions revealed opportunities to optimize certain elements further. While room quality received strong ratings, other factors received some criticism. Most notably, around half of guests voiced dissatisfaction with cleanliness standards, suggesting this is an area the hotel could prioritize to minimize complaints and maximize excellent reviews over the long run. Addressing sources of negativity is important to truly maximize loyalty.

The analysis also indicated loyalty programs could be optimized based on their design, rewards structure, and alignment with customer preferences, providing partial support for RQ2. This aligns with the findings of Meyer-Waarden (2008), who emphasized the importance of personalized loyalty programs in enhancing customer retention. Thus, the research provides new insights into the specific factors that influence loyalty program effectiveness in premium hotels. The findings suggest that key differentials are critical determinants of program success, expanding on the work of Daly & Shakeel (2021) and Szczepańska & Gawron (2011). This contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how loyalty programs can be optimized in the luxury hotel segment. The analysis proposed loyalty program effectiveness depends on design, rewards, and fit with preferences. The findings provided initial but partial support, as most reviewers expressed return/recommendation intent. However, some comments highlighted potential shortcomings like poor communication and complex rewards processes. This indicates room for refinement based on a more nuanced understanding of member preferences, as discussed by Liu (2007). Drawing deeper insights from guest data analysis and actively monitoring programs over time could help hotels continuously evolve offerings to better incentivize loyalty according to members' evolving needs and behaviors.

Combining the insights obtained from guest data analysis with behavioral economic principles when designing loyalty programs, as proposed in RQ3, could help positively steer consumer decision-making and strengthen loyalty in a nuanced way. The application of behavioral economics in loyalty programs, particularly through concepts like loss aversion and mental accounting, has been shown to positively influence consumer behavior (Thaler, 1999; Virigineni & Rao, 2017). While not directly tested, RQ3 posited that incorporating behavioral economics into loyalty program design could positively shape decision-making. The perceived value of a loyalty program, as highlighted by Koo et al. (2020), plays a key role in building customer brand loyalty, which is critical in a competitive environment like luxury hospitality. Loyalty programs have significant importance as a strategy for customer loyalty and are essential for competitive programs to achieve success.

The emergent themes from this exploratory study corresponded with key constructs in the loyalty program and behavioral economics literature, demonstrating how various principles could be operationalized. For instance, tailoring communications and benefits leveraging mental accounting and heuristics insights as discussed by Virigineni & Rao (2017). The emergent themes corresponded with constructs found impacting satisfaction, return intention, spending, and recommendation in the literature. To fully leverage guests' payment and behavioral patterns using data-driven strategies and individualize marketing initiatives as discussed, some key recommendations for premium Ankara hotels include:

1. Conduct in-depth profiling of guests to deeply understand their unique preferences, past behaviors and value perceptions.
2. Tailor marketing communications, promotional offers and service designs precisely according to customer profiles to boost relevance and delight.
3. Refine cleanliness routines and front desk procedures based on critical feedback to consistently deliver defect-free operations.
4. Enhance loyalty programs by incorporating behavioral economics-backed features, custom rewards and two-way communication channels for ongoing member engagement.
5. Provide staff training to empower employees with individualized service skills and tools to anticipate guest needs proactively.
6. Continuously re-evaluate programs and refine based on evolving guest data for sustained competitive differentiation and retention.

6. Limitations and Future Research

While this study offered valuable initial insights, further research analyzing a broader range of properties, platforms, and time periods could provide more robust and generalizable knowledge. Additionally, primary guest surveys could offer complementary perspectives. Overall, the findings highlight opportunities for Ankara hotels to optimize guest experiences through innovative data-driven strategies.

This study faced several constraints due to limitations in accessing hotel guest review data and time restrictions for analysis. Moreover, the emotional content and intensity of comments posed another challenge. As Bickart & Schindler (2001) have pointed out, tourist evaluations provide information not only about hotels and destinations but also about the tourists' emotions. Consequently, the objectivity of tourist-generated comments, potential misunderstandings, perception differences,

cultural comprehension, and understanding disparities during encoding create constraints in the evaluation process. Due to language barriers, only English and Turkish language comments on TripAdvisor were included, preventing the capture of perspectives from international travelers who may have left reviews in other languages. Furthermore, Booking.com reviews could not be analyzed as the platform is banned in Turkey. Incorporating reviews from major alternative booking sites popular in the domestic market, such as Google Reviews, may have provided additional viewpoints. The number of hotels and reviews evaluated was also limited by the available time to perform an exhaustive evaluation. Similarly, focusing on premium hotels in the Ankara region could potentially result in a biased emphasis on their favorable attributes and qualities. Therefore, the implications might not be transferable to all premium or Ankara hotels.

Future studies addressing these limitations could draw more robust and generalizable conclusions. Researchers could consider performing analyses without restrictions on languages or data sources, gathering multi-lingual reviews from multiple online booking and travel platforms. This approach would offer a more holistic representation of guest sentiments. Looking at how guests feel and stay loyal over a long time can show if special offers and rewards work well. Experimental studies testing the impact of specific behavioral economics-inspired interventions on customer behavior in real-world hotel settings would be a valuable next step in this line of research. The sample size could also be expanded to include larger datasets from a broader set of hotels and reviews spanning longer evaluation periods. Innovative hybrid methodologies may help gain direct input from guests who do not contribute reviews. Furthermore, future coding frameworks could be developed to comprehensively map all potential experience dimensions rather than focusing only on major aspects due to scope limitations. Addressing the current constraints through such enhanced study designs could better serve industry stakeholders seeking to optimize experiences through informed data-driven strategies.

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Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.	Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu: Tüm taraflar kendi rızaları ile çalışmaya dâhil olmuşlardır.
Teşekkür: Katkılarından dolayı hakemlere teşekkür ederiz.	Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı: Yazarlar çalışmaya eşit oranda katkı sağlamıştır (Tek yazarlı çalışma).
Destek Bilgisi: Herhangi bir kurum ve/veya kuruluştan destek alınmamıştır.	Çıkar Çatışması: Yazarlar arasında çıkar çatışması yoktur (Tek yazarlı çalışma).