



The Effect of Emoji Use on Customer Satisfaction in Hospitality Businesses: A Study in 5-Star Hotels

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Abstract

In this study, the effect of emoji use on customer satisfaction in accommodation businesses in the context of relational marketing was investigated. The questionnaires were applied to the customers selected by the Convenience sampling method in 5-star accommodation facilities in Konya, and because of the examinations and selections, 214 questionnaires were found suitable for evaluation. The collected data were classified, and Chi-square significance, correlation and frequency distribution analyzes were applied. In addition, when the results obtained by considering statistical indicators such as mean, median, and standard deviation are evaluated holistically; It has been revealed that women use emojis more frequently than men, young people more often than old people, and those with a higher education level than those with low levels in social media and messages. Considering the customer profile in accommodation establishments, the fact that their rooms, equipment, indoor and outdoor spaces are covered with various emojis; It has been determined that it will create a friendly and warm environment and provide service differentiation. Therefore, it has been seen that emoji applications are a marketing strategy that will increase customer satisfaction and strengthen the brand image. However, in terms of creating a structural bond improves the quality of relations with customers and sustainability of emoji marketing practice, it is important to use emojis correctly, place them in rooms suitable for customers' personal information, receive continuous feedback from customers and make updates.

Keywords: Relationship Marketing, Emoji Marketing, Brand Image

Article Type: Research Article

Konaklama İşletmelerinde Emoji Kullanımının Müşteri Memnuniyetine Etkisi: 5 Yıldızlı Otellerde Bir Araştırma

Öz

Bu çalışmada ilişkisel pazarlama bağlamında konaklama işletmelerinde emoji kullanımının müşteri memnuniyetine etkisi araştırılmıştır. Anketler Konya'da 5 Yıldızlı konaklama tesislerindeki basit örnekleme metodu ile seçilen müşterilere uygulanmış, yapılan inceleme ve ayıklamalar sonucunda 214 anket formu değerlendirmeye uygun bulunmuştur. Toplanan veriler sınıflandırılarak, Ki Kare anlamlılık, korelasyon, frekans dağılımı analizleri uygulanmıştır. Ayrıca ortalama, medyan, standart sapma gibi istatistiksel göstergeler de dikkate alınarak elde edilen sonuçlar bütünsel olarak değerlendirildiğinde; sosyal medyada ve mesajlarda emojileri kadınların erkeklerden, gençlerin yaşlılardan ve eğitim düzeyi yüksek olanların düşük olanlardan daha sık olarak kullandıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Konaklama işletmelerindeki müşteri profili de dikkate alınarak odalarının, tabaklarının, iç ve dış mekanlarının çeşitli emojilerle kaplı olmasının; samimi ve sıcak bir ortam oluşturacağı ve hizmet farklılaştırması sağlayacağı tespit edilmiştir. Dolayısıyla emoji uygulamalarının müşteri memnuniyetini yükseltecek ve marka imajını güçlendirecek bir pazarlama strateji olduğu görülmüştür. Ancak müşterilerle ilişki kalitesini yükselten bir yapısal bağ oluşturulması ve pazarlama uygulamasının sürdürülebilirliği açısından emojilerin doğru şekilde kullanılması, müşterilerin demografik özelliklerine uygun odalara yerleştirilmesi, müşterilerden sürekli geri bildirim alınıp, gerekli güncellemelerin yapılması önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İlişkisel Pazarlama, Emoji Pazarlama, Marka İmajı

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive environment, innovation and flexibility have gained importance in accommodation businesses as well as in all sectors (İnan, 2019). The product alternatives offered in the tourism sector have become commodities and the brand image of accommodation businesses, which only have distinctive features, is in a strong position in the minds of customers. Therefore, accommodation businesses need to implement more aggressive and innovative marketing strategies.

As a result of technological developments and globalization, emoji today is accepted by many customers as a new way to communicate. In less than 10 years, the volume and variety of emojis has increased to 3000. 95% of people prefer to use emoji. Therefore, the use of emoji in marketing applications has increased in the business world. Every day, people send at least 6 billion emojis and 41.5 billion messages all over the world in mobile messaging applications (Monllos, 2015). In addition, according to the results of a study conducted in the USA, it was determined that 86% of the participants regularly use emojis in their digital communications (Darrow, 2017). In this context, the way people communicate necessarily affects the way marketers communicate.

Research Company Brandwatch analyzed all tweets containing emojis from brands and consumers on Twitter in its "emoji report". In the research, it was seen that 250 million emojis were used on Twitter every month in a two-year period from September 1, 2015, to September 30, 2017, and the month with the highest emoji usage was 293 million in July 2016. The reason for the 49% increase in the volume of tweets containing brand name and emoji; It is stated as the mutual use of emojis by brands and consumers when communicating. In addition, in the study, it has been determined that macro measurement can be made thanks to the use of emoji by brands, organizations and governments. In particular, brands can see in real time how their products and services are perceived on the internet compared to their competitors and can develop the best strategies from emoji analysis (Marketing Türkiye, 2018). The relational marketing model should be preferred in offline marketing strategies (Shammout, 2007).

Quality communication with customers, customer satisfaction and loyalty are extremely important in accommodation businesses. Customer satisfaction creates loyalty and enables the sustainability of accommodation businesses. Therefore, in this research, the effect of offline emoji usage, which is accepted in the structural dimension of relational marketing, on customer satisfaction and loyalty was investigated. No research has been found in the literature on the use of offline emoji. The study is meaningful and important in terms of guiding future research on offline emoji use.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.Emoji Marketing

Emoji: They are pictures or figures standardized on the Internet by a consortium called Unicode, which we accept as electronic gestures that aim to add depth to the message by replacing the words sent digitally and convey the warmth of face-to-face communication. Emojis that comply with Unicode standards, which are members of Apple, Google, and Microsoft, can be used by users both on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and on Android and iOS devices (Unicode, Inc, 2021). So, emoji is an ipso facto universal language involved in informal digital communication on social media and mobile devices. The fact that the Oxford Dictionary chose the "tearful face" emoji as the word of the year in 2015 is proof that emojis have become a universal language in the world. Emoji, in short, is the semiotic equivalent of the emotional features of verbal expression in written language. In other words, emoji is a pictorial writing system that complements and sometimes replaces alphabetic writing (Willoughby & Liu, 2018).

Since emojis are based on visual signs, they eliminate cultural differences and ensure a consistent interpretation of the message, while adding a mood such as happiness to the textuality of the message (Figure 1). Therefore, emoji often contain more creativity and imagination than words to emphasize a message (Stanley & Seung-Eun, 2018).



Figure 1. ALL emoji face (Fanpop, Inc, 2022)

There are three functions for the systematic use of emoji. These are (Danesi, 2017):

1. Utterance opener: To start a conversation, instead of the routine greeting, it can be opened with emoji expressions.
2. Utterance Ending: Emotional emojis such as hearts and smileys are used as a farewell function to end the conversation.
3. Silent avoidance: When the receiver of the message is waiting for a reply, if there is a situation to be avoided, positive and neutral face emojis help the sender to change the subject.

The rapid spread of the use of emojis that emerged to strengthen the transfer of emotion in text messages and the adoption of 17 July as “World Emoji Day” led researchers to investigate the marketing potential of emojis in different sectors (Şahin & Erdoğan, 2019). For example, Moby Dick, one of the world classics, was translated into emoji language (Emoji Dick) by Fred Benenson (Popovich, 2013).

The increase in the popularity of emojis has encouraged the use of emojis in marketing campaigns and has emerged as a new marketing concept (Eru & Yakın, 2017). Emoji marketing (Sümer, 2017), which is accepted as an effective way of learning the brand image and the customer's feelings about the brand, was used in 85% of digital marketing campaigns, while it was also used in offline environments at a rate of 15%. For example, Chevrolet introduced the 2016 Cruze model, which it claims is insufficient to describe, with a press release written entirely in emojis (Media Chevrolet, 2015). Pepsi developed special emoji stickers and physically printed them on their boxes and bottles (Zarya, 2016). In the Gene SayItWithPepsi campaign, a young man used the language of emojis to propose to his girlfriend. The young man assisted by Pepsi, while proposing to his girlfriend, conveyed his feelings using emoji without the need for words (Campaign Türkiye, 2015).

According to Stanley & Seung-Eun’s research (2018), the service and entertainment industry ranks first with 27.3% among the sectors that use emoji the most as a marketing strategy. Li et al., (2019) argue that the use of emoji in the service sector is an effective tool in creating loyal customers by affecting the emotional states of customers. Similarly, in the study of Das et al. (2019), it was

emphasized that the use of emoji by brands in certain products can have positive results and help increase purchase intention.

2.2. Relationship Marketing

First put forward by Leonard Berry (1995) in 1983, relationship marketing is defined as developing long-term business-customer relationship in multi-service businesses. In 2007, Shammout (2007) examined different relational marketing models in his thesis and introduced a new relational marketing model. In this model, commitment, emotion, and relationship quality that is accepted because of customer satisfaction; affected by financial, social, and structural bonds. Financial, social, and structural bonds are accepted as "relational dimensions" between the customer and the business.

Under today's competitive conditions, financial bonds such as rewarding loyal customers with price advantages or membership program applications, especially in accommodation businesses, have become quite common and have lost their effectiveness in terms of long-term communication with customers. In addition, in markets where price competition is fierce, the threat of selling at the breakeven point or zero profit may cause the business to face risks (Erciş, Eivazzadeh, & Türk, 2020).

Social bonds, which can be exemplified by exchanging ideas with loyal customers on new product development, creating a community, and creating a system for the active solution of customer demands, make a lot of difference in accommodation businesses as they lead customers to take an active role in service production (Shammout, 2007).

Structural bonds, on the other hand, consist of innovative services that include original ideas proposed by the company that will create value for the customer. The visual use of emoji, which is the subject of our research, in rooms, restaurants and other service areas in accommodation establishments, apart from the digital environment, is considered within the framework of structural bonds. Structural bonds, which are more difficult to imitate than financial bonds under the current competitive conditions due to the originality of innovative ideas and their high costs, are expected to increase market share and increase customer satisfaction (Kim & Cha, 2002)

Emotions, which are accepted as the output of the relational dimension created by financial, social, and structural bonds in the Shammout model; The use of the benefits offered by the business occurs in the form of positive or negative reactions according to the customer's experience and emotional state at the time of use. Emotions are a variable that directly affects relationship quality in the creation of customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Relationship quality is a general evaluation of the business-customer communication, according to the level of satisfaction of wants and needs (Shammout, 2007).

Theoretically, acquiring new customers is more costly than retaining existing ones. A small increase in the number of loyal customers in the hospitality industry results in higher increases in profitability. However, nowadays, it is getting more and more difficult to achieve and maintain customer loyalty (Liang & Wang, 2005). According to the results of Shammout's research (2007), the level of quality of the relationship between customers and businesses is increased by using social and structural bonds. Therefore, trust, satisfaction and loyalty emerge the general evaluation of the customers' relationship with the hotel businesses and determines the future direction of this relationship. When customers become emotionally attached to a service provider, it has proven to be extremely difficult to change that business. For this reason, it is thought that the popularity of emojis will have an increasing effect on the quality of relations between accommodation businesses and customers and will make a remarkable difference in creating emotional bonds. In addition, determining the feelings of customers

about the innovations offered by the business will guide the accommodation businesses about which strategies they should implement or develop.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the effect of offline emoji use on customer satisfaction and loyalty in accommodation businesses was investigated. In addition, the effect of innovative products offered to customers in accommodation businesses on the level of brand loyalty was evaluated. In this context, the demographic information of the customers, how often they use emoji in daily life, and how they would feel if there were emoji-containing interiors and equipment were questioned.

The sample of the research is 5-star accommodation establishments operating in Konya. For an easy and fast access to large-scale data, the participants of the survey were selected by Convenience Sampling method (Nakip & Yaraş, 2016). Data were collected by face-to-face survey method, and 214 valid surveys were obtained by examining the collected data. In the first part of the questionnaire used for data collection in the research, the demographic information of the employees was questioned with 4 questions. In the second part of the questionnaire, there are 3 multiple-choice items. In the third part of the questionnaire, 9 5-point Likert type questions were asked, and the answers of the participants were taken as “Strongly agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, strongly disagree”.

The survey was applied to customers in 5-star accommodation facilities in Konya between 26.03.2022 and 31.03.2022 by face-to-face survey method, and as a result of the examinations and selections, 214 survey forms were found suitable for evaluation. The collected data were classified, and Chi-square significance, correlation and frequency distribution analyzes were applied with SPSS 22 program. The results were interpreted, and inferences were made by considering statistical indicators such as average, median, and standard deviation.

4. FINDINGS

In this research, 214 data obtained from the questionnaire applied to the customers were analyzed with the SPSS 22 package program and the following results were obtained.

4.1. Demographic Information

Table 1. Demographic Information of Customers Participating in the Research

Group	Subgroup	Number	Percent %
Gender	Woman	97	45,3
	Man	117	54,7
Age	18 -24	50	23,4
	25-31	68	31,8
	32-38	34	15,9
	39-45	37	17,3
	46 and above	25	11,7
Education	High School	105	49,1
	Vocational School	48	22,4
	Bachelor	47	22,0
	Master/PhD	14	6,6
Monthly Income (TL)	3000 and below	47	22,0
	3001-4499	40	18,7
	4500-5999	59	27,6
	6000-7499	43	20,1
	7500 and above	25	11,7
Total		214	%100

As can be seen from the table 1, the number of people in the independent groups formed by the customers is sufficient for the validity of the analysis results. The distribution of men and women is balanced, among the age groups, customers aged 25-31 make up the majority. It is seen that high school graduates are in the majority. The distribution of customers according to monthly income is appropriate.

4.2. Frequency of Customers Using Emoji in Messages and Social Media

Customers' use of emoji was examined under two headings: messaging and social media. Below is the data on the frequency of using emoji in messaging.

Table 2. Frequency of Using Emoji in Customers' Messages

Group	Subgroup	Data	How often do you use emojis in your messages in daily life?			
			Do not use	Less often	Often	Very Often
Gender	Woman	97	17	38	23	19
	Man	117	6	23	43	45
Age	18 -24	50	0	0	16	34
	25-31	68	2	17	29	20
	32-38	34	2	14	12	6
	39-45	37	9	18	6	4
	46 and above	25	10	12	3	0
Education	Foundation	105	23	30	23	29
	High	48	0	16	18	14
	Bachelor	47	0	15	19	13
	Master/PhD	14	0	0	6	8
Monthly Income (TL)	3000 and below	47	4	8	15	20
	3001-4499	40	4	15	15	6
	4500-5999	59	9	10	20	20
	6000-7499	43	4	15	12	12
	7500 and above	25	2	13	4	6
Total		214	23	61	66	64
		100%	10,70%	28,50%	30,80	29,90

According to the frequency data of customers using emoji in their messages, only 10.7% (23 customers) out of 214 customers who participated in the survey stated that they do not use emojis. This data shows that the use of emoji is quite high. Chi-square significance test was applied to determine the significant difference between demographic groups in using emoji. It was determined that the frequency of using emoji in the Gender, Age, Education, and Income groups differed significantly among the customers in the subgroups (p values were found to be 0.000, there was a significant difference since it was less than 0.050).

According to the findings obtained from Table 2;

1. While the total rate of those who use emojis frequently and very frequently in the messages of female customers is 75.3%, this rate has decreased to 43.30% for men.
2. While the total rate of those who use emoji frequently and very frequently in the messages of the customers between the ages of 18-24 is 100%, this rate decreased as the age groups increased, and decreased to 12% in the age group 46 and over.
3. While the total rate of those who use emoji frequently and very frequently in the messages of high school customers is 49.5%, this rate increased as the education level increased, and this rate increased to 100% for those with graduate/doctorate level education.

4. While the percentage of customers who use emoji frequently and very frequently in the messages of customers with the lowest income level is 74.5%, this rate decreased as the education level increased, and this rate decreased to 40% for those with graduate/doctorate education.

According to the analyses, it has been determined that female customers use emoji more frequently than men in their messaging, the rate of using emoji in their messages decreases as the age of the customers increases, the percentage of customers using emoji in messaging increases as the education level increases, reaching 100% in the most educated group, and the rate of customers using emoji in their messages decreases as the income level increases.

Secondly, the use of emoji in social media in groups using emoji in messaging was also investigated. The relevant data is below.

Table 3. Frequency Of Using Emoji on Social Media

Group	Subgroup	Data	I use emoji a lot on social media.				
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	hesitant	Agree	Strongly agree
Gender	Woman	97	25	21	9	26	16
	Man	117	4	17	4	43	49
Age	18 -24	50	0	0	2	14	34
	25-31	68	0	13	4	32	19
	32-38	34	2	6	2	16	8
	39-45	37	14	13	2	4	4
	46 and above	25	13	6	3	3	0
Education	High School	105	24	21	0	31	29
	Vocational	48	3	6	11	11	17
	Bachelor	47	2	11	2	19	13
	Master/PhD	14	0	0	0	8	6
Monthly Income (TL)	3000 and below	47	2	6	0	17	22
	3001-4499	40	2	11	2	11	14
	4500-5999	59	7	10	2	25	15
	6000-7499	43	11	6	6	8	12
	7500 and above	25	7	5	3	8	2
Total		214	29	38	13	69	65
		100%	13,6%	17,8%	6,1%	32,2%	30,4%

In the analysis of the frequency of customers using emoji on social media, only 13.6% (29 customers) out of a total of 214 customers stated that they do not use emoji. This data shows that the use of emoji in social media is quite high. It was investigated whether the demographic groups showed a significant difference in using emoji, and by applying the Chi-square significance test, it was examined whether there was a statistically significant difference between the subgroups of the mentioned groups. As in messaging, it was determined that the frequency of using emoji in Gender, Age, Education, and Income groups differed significantly among the customers in the subgroups (as the p values were less than 0.050, there was a significant difference).

According to the findings obtained from the table 3;

1. From her female customers, “I use emoji very often on social media.” While the total percentage of those who said I agree and strongly agree with his statement was 78.6%, this rate decreased to 43.30% for men.

2. Customers between the ages of 18-24 “I use emoji very often on social media.” While the total percentage of those who say I agree and strongly agree with his statement is 96%, this rate decreased as the age groups increased, and it fell to 12% in the 46 and over group.

3. Customers with high school education say, “I use emoji very often on social media.” While the total percentage of those who say I agree and strongly agree with his statement is 57.1%, this ratio increased as the education level increased, and this rate increased to 100% in those who received education at the master's/doctorate level.

4. Customers with the lowest income level say, “I use emoji very often on social media.” While the total percentage of those who say I agree and strongly agree with his statement is 83%, this rate decreases as the level of education increases, and this rate has decreased to 40% in those who receive education at the master's/doctorate level.

According to the analysis, it has been determined that female customers use emoji more often than men on social media. In addition, it was concluded; the rate of using emoji in social media decreased as the age of the customers increased, the number of customers using emoji in social media increased as the education level increased, reaching 100% in the most educated group, and the use of emoji in social media decreased as the income level increased. The similarity of these results with the results on messaging was remarkable.

Secondly, in the study, it was questioned whether those who use emojis in messaging continue their habits in social media. To measure this, the use of emoji in social media by groups of customers who show the same behavior in messaging was investigated. The relevant data is below.

Since $p=0.000<0.050$ was found in the chi-square analysis, it was determined that there was a significant difference between the groups. These differences from the table 4;

1. The group who said "I don't use" for the use of emoji in their messages in daily life said, "I use emoji very often on social media." They did not agree with their word,

2. In daily life, the group, who said "Less often" for the use of emoji in their messages, said, "I use emoji very often on social media." The total rate of their participation in his speech is as low as 19.7%,

3. The group who says “often” for the use of emoji in their messages in daily life also says, “I use emoji very often on social media.” Their participation rate is as high as 87.9%,

4. The group, who said “Very often” for the use of emoji in their messages in daily life, also said, “I use emoji very often on social media.” It was determined that the rate of participation in his speech was 100%.

Table 4. Message-Social Media Relationship Between Emoji Use

Survey Item	Response Groups	Data	I use emoji a lot on social media.				
			Strongly disagree	Disagree	hesitant	Agree	Strongly agree
How often do you use emojis in your messages in daily life?	Do not use	23	17	6	0	0	0
		100,0%	73,9%	26,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%
	Less often	61	12	32	5	8	4
		100,0%	19,7%	52,5%	8,2%	13,1%	6,6%
	Often	66	0	0	8	44	14
		100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	12,1%	66,7%	21,2%
	Very often	64	0	0	0	17	47
		100,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	26,6%	73,4%
Total		214	29	38	13	69	65
		100%	13,6%	17,8%	6,1%	32,2%	30,4%

Considering all the analyzes made in this section together, the following conclusions were reached, and comments were made:

1. Customers participating in the survey continue their emoji usage habits on social media and in their messaging. For example, it has been revealed that those who do not use emojis in messaging do not use them in social media, that is, they continue to use emojis as they are. This result was interpreted as customers' emoji habits as a lifestyle.

2. It has been determined that female customers use emoji more frequently than men in their messaging and social media, and this data is interpreted as the fact that women attach more importance to visuality and expression of emotions than men.

3. It has been interpreted that this decrease in the rate of using emojis in messages and social media as the age of the customers' increases may be due to the fact that the use of emoji is a new concept and the relatively old customers' skills because they are more limited than the younger ones on technology.

4. As the level of education increases, the percentage of customers using emoji in messaging and social media generally increases, reaching 100% in the most educated group. This data has been interpreted that as the level of education increases, the skill in technological tools increases and the ability to use visual intelligence more effectively increases.

5. It has been determined that the percentage of customers using emoji in their messages and social media decreases as the income level increases. The reason why the use of emoji decreased as the income level increased was also investigated within the scope of the study. The reason for this is assuming that there may be men who use relatively less emoji and customers who are older, and the number of customers in the two upper groups with the highest income in the research is looked at. Indeed, it has been determined that the number of male customers and older customers constitute the majority of the groups with high income levels. While the number of older customers is 36 in the two groups with a high-income level, this number is 26 in the other three groups with a medium or lower income. Similarly, the number of men in the two groups with the highest income is 46, while the number of women is 22. Considering these data, it was concluded that the increase in the income level is not a factor that reduces the use of emoji, and that this decrease because of the fact that the gender distribution in income level groups is not suitable for the normal distribution.

4.3. Customers' Attitudes Towards Emoji Use in Accommodation Environment

Table 5. Customers' Responses to Emoji Use on Equipment

Survey Item	Response Groups	Data	Does it make you happy to see emoji on the bedspreads and towels in the hotels you go to?			
			Yes	No	Partially	Other
How often do you use emojis in your messages in daily life?	Do not use	23	4	11	8	0
		100,0%	17,4%	47,8%	34,8%	0,0%
	Less often	61	16	16	29	0
		100,0%	26,2%	26,2%	47,5%	0,0%
	Often	66	43	6	17	0
		100,0%	65,2%	9,1%	25,8%	0,0%
	Very often	64	56	6	2	0
		100,0%	87,5%	9,4%	3,1%	0,0%
Total		214	119	39	56	0
		100 %	55,6%	18,2%	26,2%	0%

In this part of the research, the effect of seeing emojis in the environments they live in, in the items they use, in the containers they put their food and drinks on has been examined. Do emojis increase

customer satisfaction? Or, if these images and symbols come from digital media to real life, will they make customers uneasy? To find answers to these and similar questions, necessary analyzes were made in this section of the questionnaire.

First of all, in the groups formed according to the frequency of customers' use of emoji, "Does it make you happy to see emoji on the bedspreads and towels in the hotels you go to?" Their answers to the question were analyzed. Related analyzes are in the table above.

Since $p=0.0000<0.050$ in the applied Chi-square analysis, it was determined that the differences between the groups were significant. When the data in the table 6 is examined; "Does it make you happy to see emoji on bedspreads and towels in hotels? 17.4% of customers who do not use emojis in their messages; 26.2% of customers who use emoji less frequently in their messages; 65.2% of customers who frequently use emoji in their messages; 87.5% of customers who frequently use emoji in their messages said yes. As can be seen, as the frequency of using emoji in messages increases, the positive response rates to this question also increase. In total, 119 (55.6%) of 214 customers answered yes to this question. While more than half of the customers stated that they would be happy to see emoji on their bedspreads and towels, the number of customers who stated that they would be partially happy was 56 (26.2%). Only 18.2% of the customers said they would not be happy. These data have been interpreted as the need to consider the displeasure of a substantial number of customers, despite the high number of people who are happy with the use of emoji. For this reason, it has been interpreted that it would be wiser to carry out this application selectively on bed linens and towels.

Secondly, in the groups formed according to the frequency of customers' use of emoji, "Does it make you happy to have emoji on the plate you eat at the restaurant?" Their answers to the question were analyzed. Related analyzes are in the table below.

Table 6. Responses of Customers to Emoji Use in Restaurants

Survey Item	Response Groups	Data	Does it make you happy to have emoji on the plate you eat at the restaurant?			
			Yes	No	Partially	Other
How often do you use emojis in your messages in daily life?	Do not use	23	4	15	4	0
		100,0%	17,4%	65,2%	17,4%	0,0%
	Less often	61	10	26	25	0
		100,0%	16,4%	42,6%	41,0%	0,0%
	Often	66	30	10	24	2
		100,0%	45,5%	15,2%	36,4%	3,0%
	Very often	64	46	6	12	0
		100,0%	71,9%	9,4%	18,8%	0,0%
Total		214	90	57	65	2
		100 %	42,1%	26,6%	30,4%	,9%

Since $p=0.0000<0.050$ in the applied Chi-square analysis, it was determined that the differences between the groups were significant. When the data in the table is examined; "Does it make you happy to have emoji on the plate you eat at the restaurant?" 17.4% of customers who do not use emojis in their messages; 16.4% of customers who use emoji less frequently in their messages; 45.5% of customers who frequently use emoji in their messages; 71.9% of customers who frequently use emoji in their messages said yes. As can be seen, as the frequency of using emoji in messages increases, the positive response rates to this question also increase. In total, 90 (42.1%) of 214 customers answered yes to this question. While less than half of the customers stated that they would be happy to see emoji on the plates they eat, the number of customers who stated that they would be partially happy was 65 (30.4%). 26.6% of the customers said that they would not be happy. These data have been interpreted as the need to consider the dissatisfaction of a substantial number of customers, even though the ratio of customers who will be happy at some level in the use of emoji has reached 72.5% in total. For this reason, it has

been interpreted that it would be wiser to carry out this practice selectively in restaurants, and it would be more appropriate to make an arrangement that would allow the customers to take the plates with or without emoji according to their wishes.

4.4. Emoji Scale Analysis Results

In the research, a 5-point Likert-type Emoji scale consisting of 9 questions was created and the evaluations of customers on emoji were determined. Since there were no negative questions in the scale, the scoring was evaluated as "Strongly agree (5 points), Agree (4 points), Undecided (3 points), Disagree (2 points), Strongly disagree (1 point)".

For the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which is an internal consistency analysis suitable for use in likert type scales, was calculated. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.783 in the analysis. Since this value is greater than 0.7, scale reliability was interpreted as good (Darren and Mallery, 2003).

Since it was determined that removing any item in the if Item Delated (Cronbach Alpha When Item Deleted) column of the Item – Total Statistics table would not increase the reliability of the scale, all items were included in the Emoji Rating Scale. The total scores obtained by the participants from the scale were calculated and named as the Emoji Evaluation Score (EES) of the participants. It was analyzed whether the EES's were suitable for normal distribution, and it was determined that the data were not suitable for normal distribution as a result of the Single Sample Kolmogorov Smirnov Test. Therefore, non-parametric tests were used in the analysis. The statistics of Emoji Perception scores obtained from the scale according to demographic groups are below.

Table 7. Customers' Emoji Rating Scores Statistics

Group	Subgroup	Number	Average	Std. Dev.	Std. Error
Gender	Woman	97	29,28	5,91	0,60
	Man	117	32,95	5,87	0,54
Age	18 -24	50	34,66	4,65	0,66
	25-31	68	32,00	6,31	0,77
	32-38	34	32,21	5,03	0,86
	39-45	37	28,03	5,29	0,87
	46 and above	25	26,16	5,80	1,16
Education	High School	105	30,07	6,80	0,66
	Vocational	48	32,65	4,42	0,64
	Bachelor	47	31,30	5,78	0,84
	Master/PhD	14	35,71	4,63	1,24
Monthly Income (TL)	3000 & below	47	33,38	5,12	0,75
	3001-4499	40	29,30	5,78	0,91
	4500-5999	59	31,36	6,51	0,85
	6000-7499	43	31,63	6,54	1,00
	7500 & above	25	29,76	6,02	1,20
Total		214	31,29	6,15	0,42

In the applied Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests, the p values were found to be less than 0.050, therefore, it was determined that the EES's of the groups differed significantly. According to the data obtained from the table 7; It is seen that the customers participating in the survey got an average of 31.29 points out of the 45 points that can be obtained from the scale. It is also seen that the average scores of men and customers aged 39 and over are clearly lower than the general average. This

data has been evaluated as the dissatisfaction of men and relatively elderly customers may arise if the use of emoji becomes widespread in accommodation establishments. Examining how the average scores are distributed among the groups; scores of women from customers than men; The scores of those in the 18-24 age group are compared to other age groups; The scores of M.Sc./Ph.D. graduates are higher from other education groups, and the scores of customers with an income below 3000TL are on average higher than those of other income groups. The averages in the table coincide with the finding previously obtained those women, the relatively younger group, and the group with a high level of education were highly happy with the use of emoji. As a result, it was revealed that the data obtained from the scale and other items of the questionnaire confirmed each other.

The statistics regarding the average scores of the customers from the Emoji Rating Scale items are as follows.

According to the analysis of the average scores obtained from the survey items, the customers said, “The fact that the tile faces of the children's pool of the hotel where I stay are covered with emojis makes the children more comfortable.” item gave the highest scores (average 4.09). This information has been interpreted as customers suggesting that emojis should be used in areas that are more interesting to children. In none of the other questionnaire items, the average scores of the participants could not exceed 4 averages. This data was found to be important in terms of showing that it is not possible for all customers to adopt the applications on emoji. When the 7th item with the lowest score was examined, it was interpreted that the customers would not adopt confusing or coercive practices.

Table 8. Customers' Emoji Rating Scores Statistics - in Descending Order

Item Num	Survey Items	Average
2	The faience of the children's pool of the hotel I stay in are covered with emojis, which makes the children more comfortable.	4,09
6	New versions emojis pay my attention.	3,57
1	The fact that the walls of the room I stay in are decorated with emojis makes me friendly towards the hotel.	3,53
3	It would be nicer and more sincere for employees to wear emoji-patterned clothes.	3,52
4	It is interesting to me that the desserts made in the restaurant are in the form of emoji.	3,49
9	Emoji make hospitality businesses more friendly.	3,42
8	The fact that the hotel keys are in the form of emoji attracts my attention.	3,39
5	It is better if the hotel I stayed in was decorated with emojis.	3,38
7	The fact that the names of the dishes on the menu are emoji names increases my interest.	2,89

5. CONCLUSION

When the data obtained in the research is interpreted holistically; It has been concluded that women use emoji more frequently in social media and in their messages than men, young people than

old people, and those with a higher education level than those with lower levels of education. Offline emoji marketing applications are distinctive from competitors and are at a level that will find application in accommodation businesses in the presentation of aggressive and innovative touristic products. With this differentiation application, it is possible to achieve the goal of providing lifetime benefits from existing customers. In addition, it is thought that the unique emojis to be used will contribute to the brand value.

On the other hand, it was a result obtained from the survey that there was not a high level of satisfaction in the analysis to support the implementation of emoji applications that would cover 100% all customers. Considering the costs of touristic products to be offered as innovations for structural bonds in relational marketing, it is necessary to use emojis correctly in accommodation businesses and to make arrangements by receiving continuous customer feedback on social media and other communication platforms. This is prerequisite for sustainable emoji marketing app. It has been determined that customers prefer to use emojis in areas where children are present in accommodation establishments, applications that are more personal than general applications in accommodation establishments, giving the option to choose will make the customer feel special, and thus support individual applications.

It is thought that it would be appropriate to make emoji applications available to a limited number of customers as a pilot application within the accommodation business, and to measure the attractiveness of the customers within the business first. It is considered necessary in terms of cost control that the customers are placed in these pilot application rooms in accordance with their demographic characteristics at the time of entry to the accommodation establishments, the places containing emoji and whether they are satisfied with the equipment or not, and the arrangement of the service is made of according to this result. Because it is among the findings that the use of emoji symbols in places that interest all customers, such as menus, interior, and exterior walls, will not make nearly half of the customers happy. In relationship marketing, emotions are one of the most important factors affecting customer loyalty. To get rid of similar services and gain loyal customers, it is an activity that takes time and effort to bring the customer to the center of production and to reveal the demand needs that he is not aware of. For this reason, it would be beneficial to plan sectoral applications considering the current customer profile.

Ethical Statement

Research and Publication Ethics rules were followed during the writing and publication of the research titled "The Effect of Emoji Use in Accommodation Businesses on Customer Satisfaction: A Study in 5 Star Hotels" and no falsification was made in the data obtained for the research. Ethics committee approval was obtained with the decision of Selcuk University Faculty of Tourism Scientific Ethics and Evaluation Committee dated 25.03.2022 and numbered E.259761.

Contribution Rate Statement

From the drafting of the research article to the final version, the author contributed to all processes with his knowledge and equipment and evaluated and approved the final version.

Conflict Statement

This study did not lead to any individual or institutional/organizational conflict of interest.

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