

A Study on Evaluating Tourists' Destination Accommodation Experiences

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Abstract

Today, tourists' destination selection processes are directly shaped by the comments and evaluations shared on digital platforms. Especially potential tourists who are searching for information before their travel get a preliminary impression of the destinations they plan to go through these platforms. This situation increases the importance of online user comments in terms of the promotion of touristic destinations and destination marketing. Sinop is one of the important touristic destinations known for its nature and historical texture, located in the north of the Black Sea Region. This study aims to evaluate the opinions of visitors who visited the Sinop destination and received service from public and private accommodation enterprises regarding their accommodation experiences by examining the Google comments. By examining the comments made on the Google platform, it will be possible to understand in depth the perceptions, expectations and experiences of tourists towards accommodation enterprises. In this way, the strengths and weaknesses of both the accommodation enterprises and the destination they are a component of are determined, and information that can contribute to Sinop destination tourism strategies is presented. In this context, comments regarding accommodation enterprises were evaluated using the content analysis method. Within the scope of the research, positive visitor comments regarding public accommodation enterprises include the concepts of price, proximity to the sea, silence, comfort and ideal holiday destination; in negative visitor comments about public accommodation establishments, the concepts of management indifference, old room equipment, expensive restaurants, no standard breakfast service and low product variety came to the fore. In positive visitor comments about private accommodation establishments, the concepts of magnificent atmosphere, hospitality, quality service, clean rooms and comfort came to the fore; in negative visitor comments about private accommodation establishments, the concepts of expensive prices, reservation problems, poorly equipped rooms, parking problems and old room equipment came to the fore.

Keywords: Tourism, Accommodation, Experience, Google Comment, Sinop.

1. INTRODUCTION

Competition in the tourism sector for accommodation establishments began to become evident in the 1950s and made diversity in service and investments necessary. Liberal policies in the 1980s and later accelerated this process and made competition even tougher. With the technological infrastructure of the 1990s, airlines became accessible and the concepts of branding and destination marketing came to the fore, and the competitive environment was reshaped within this framework. In the period extending from 2000 to the present, touristic competition has created a period in which the importance of sustainability, customer experience and digital visibility has become even more acute. The field of competition has evolved into online competition, and a new step has been created for all stakeholders in the sector in terms of achieving competitive advantage with big data analysis, online systems and user comments (Ioannides & Debbage, 1997; Cooper et al., 2008; Pike & Page, 2014; Buhalis & Law, 2008). Today, these

fierce competition conditions continue unabated. However, the platform has changed and it has become possible for a destination or a touristic business to remain in the competitive field and to represent itself by distinguishing itself from others only with the power of mastering technology. It seems that technology has changed all the parameters in the world and the flow of the process.

Day by day, public space is being redefined on digital platforms, and social sharing is turning into electronic messages. At this point, the effective marketing, promotion and dissemination power created by the word of mouth transfer of a holiday experience among consumers has also turned into a kind of electronic word of mouth communication, or e-wom, in today's conditions. The changing and developing era in terms of technology also differentiates tourist behavior. Sharing the experience of every tourist who experiences tourist products also has an important place in this experience. At the same time, every comment made and every data shared about the touristic product or destination experienced reproduces the meaning of this touristic activity, and this understanding, which literally reproduces what is consumed on digital platforms, becomes the new form of expression of the age.

The public sphere of the global digital age has evolved into online platforms, and the sharing made on these platforms has begun to bear the characteristics of an advisory group and a close circle, as distance has lost its meaning and boundaries have blurred. In the age of digitalization, online services, platforms and user comments have gone beyond being tools that guide individual consumers' decisions, and have become factors that have significant effects on the production methods, processes and operational policies of destinations and tourism stakeholders operating in these destinations. Consumers have begun to show a tendency to direct their preferences according to the comments of users who have previously experienced the same place, product or service in their evaluations before traveling, during a stay or after experiencing a touristic product. This situation has also led to some changes for all stakeholders. For example, it has shown itself in the form of determining expectations by examining comments on online platforms, resolving problems and basing a digital branding suitable for the new age on digital data. Social media platforms such as Google and other social sharing areas, which have become today's public sphere; have ceased to be places where comments on product or service content are collected, and have turned into a power potential that reproduces perception, image and brand value. Digital traces in these areas have become not only feedback for tourism businesses but also dynamic data that can create sectoral competitive advantage. The study prepared based on this has chosen Sinop as a sample study area among Google comments since there was no similar study before and has aimed to analyze tourist accommodation businesses in Sinop province through Google comments and to create a detailed portrait of tourist perception, expectation, satisfaction and image.

This study aims to contribute to the literature, local tourism and local governments by analyzing the comments shared by tourist visitors on the Google platform regarding accommodation establishments operated by the public and private sectors operating in the destination of Sinop. While the research contributes to revealing the strengths and weaknesses of accommodation establishments, which are important components of destinations, by analyzing Google user comments (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014), it is anticipated that it will fill the gap in the literature due to the lack of a similar study on the destination of Sinop and contribute to the future academic and local tourism-related studies on the destination of Sinop. Today, user comments made in digital environments are an important roadmap in terms of the promotion of destinations and visitor satisfaction (Litvin et al., 2008). This research provides valuable and important information to understand the positive and negative experiences and suggestions of visitors by subjecting digital comments about accommodation establishments in Sinop to content analysis. This approach will contribute to the development and change of destinations from different perspectives by meeting the expectations of visitors and by differentiating and expanding their experiences (Liu et al., 2021). Knowing the sufficient and deficient aspects of tourist destinations and determining their strengths and weaknesses forms the basis for local governments and tourism establishments to develop initiatives and policies that will increase the attractiveness of the destination. The content analysis method aims to obtain data that will be determined according to the needs of tourists in the field of destination management and marketing (Xiang et al., 2015). In particular, emphasizing the deficiencies of destinations that need to be improved as well as their prominent strengths can contribute to the policies to be implemented in terms of tourism to better meet visitor expectations (Dolnicar, 2019).

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Reproduction of Tourist Experience in Online Public Space

The wave of change experienced in the world has affected the tourism sector as well as all sectors, and while supply has changed, demand has also been reshaped. With the internet and social media becoming more and more adapted to daily life, shopping habits have also changed, as have living habits. Today, like all consumers, tourists also look at internet comments and do preliminary research on social media before planning their travels. In addition, sharing their experiences has become a part of the holiday experience. As it is understood, the touristic target audience comes to the forefront and gets involved in the process at every stage from the design of the holiday plan to the end of the process (Summak & Arı, 2015). The situation is similar for destinations and touristic businesses. Tourists reproduce the image and brand value of the destination by conveying their holiday experience, and they also individualize the promotion and marketing role for touristic businesses. At this point, it can be said that tourists are also prosumers (a combination of the concepts of consumer and prosumer) (Şahin & Doğdubay, 2017; Şahin & Yağcı, 2017). As stated in Toffler's book *The Third Wave* (Toffler, 2008), today's consumers have become structures that are prone to technology, use it actively, and reproduce it and its value by somehow being involved in its consumption. It can also be said that consumers and tourists of this age have tendencies such as being interaction-oriented, virtual socializing and creating online communities (Moca & Sabina, 2012). Kheiri & Nasihatkon (2015) mention that the internet and social networks have become highly effective tools for information search, recognition, promotion and communication for tourists as well as for tourism businesses and all sectoral stakeholders. Buhalis & Law (2008) also emphasize that the internet, platforms such as Google and social networks have re-created the way people program their travels and consume.

Comments shared on online platforms have entered our lives as a system product supported by Web-2 technology and have been addressed as a clear example of E-Wom in the literature. The place of online comments within electronic word of mouth (E-Wom) is considered as “users freely sharing their experiences” and “an area of impartially shared experiences”. Online customer comments provide strong data for businesses or destinations to clearly reflect the dissatisfaction and satisfaction of visitors there (Gan et al., 2016; Banerjee & Chua, 2016). Online comments are also seen as a successful tool because they are informative, contain tips to improve experiences are entertaining or ‘clearly show errors that affect the satisfaction of real people’.

Online comments, which are an easy, free and fun tool to obtain feedback from consumers of a product or service or to observe their feelings, ideas and thoughts about the service they consume/experience (Bilgihan et al., 2014; Guo et al., 2017) are concentrated on digital platforms, the most prominent of which are Yelp, Amazon, TripAdvisor and Google comments. While each of them hosts online comments, sometimes about movies or products, sometimes about hotels, restaurants or experiences, Google also offers a wide and holistic data area for destinations. In addition, Google creates a successful range in terms of seeing touristic businesses within destinations collectively. Google's frequency of use, the breadth of the market it addresses, the number of users and the scope of its coverage also ensure that online comments collected through Google represent a very broad and heterogeneous audience. On the platform where users create a profile, become members and can comment, it is possible to come across expressions of emotions, experiences and suggestions and warnings, including interactions between users. In this respect, Google is seen as a very efficient channel for getting ideas, planning and making choices for a destination as well as a touristic establishment (Bailey, 2005; Racherla et al., 2013; Ye et al., 2014).

Today, online comments have become the most common and effective type of feedback in the tourism sector. User experiences shared through digital platforms not only reflect individual satisfaction levels, but also constitute an important data source that shapes the perception of destinations, evaluates the service quality of businesses, and guides the strategic decision-making processes of local governments. Comments made on platforms such as TripAdvisor and Google Comments provide critical and constructive information on many issues, from the accessibility of historical and touristic sites to their physical conditions, from environmental arrangements to guide services. These comments increase the promotional power of the destination, and also pave the way for improvement efforts by ensuring that deficiencies are noticed. Online feedback is of great importance, especially for businesses, in terms of developing a customer-oriented service approach, providing competitive advantage and reinforcing brand

reliability. In this context, online comments are not only a reflection of individual opinions, but also seen as strategic tools that support the sustainable development of the sector (Jeacle & Carter, 2011; Filieri et al., 2015; Zhao et al., 2019).

In the recent past, it can be said that online comments emerged as a result of comments made by people such as critics or reporters on news or promotions published in media tools that appeal to the public. As technology became widespread, supply increased and competition became more intense, demand became more daring and now each consumer became a reporter and a critic of the products and services they consume. Thus, online comments have transformed into what we see and use today. As social media usage becomes increasingly widespread with its power and representational ability, the frequency of use of online comments, which can be considered as an important source of word-of-mouth information, is also increasing at the same rate (Park et al., 2007; Yan et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2017; Li et al., 2018).

A potential consumer of a product or service can witness the experiences of those who have consumed that product or service by examining online comments, and can see complaints and suggestions. In the mind of the potential consumer, these comments create a simulation of consumption by creating a preview of the experience. Making the right decision for the consumer becomes easier by seeing the majority of positive comments or by considering specific suggestions and complaints. Online comments have become important data sources for today's consumers. In addition, online comments are of critical importance for consumers in purchasing decisions and have the feature of being an influencing factor for up to 50% of decisions (Mathwick & Mosteller, 2017). Of course, comments do not only affect consumers' decisions. Businesses or destinations also derive inferences about themselves from these comments and detect errors or gaps. Therefore, online comments are actually perceived as a complete marketing and promotion tool in this respect (Duan et al., 2008).

The importance of online comments is actually hidden in the changing age. In the age of information and technology, where production and consumption practices are changing, demand reacts differently to innovations as much as supply has renewed itself. In order to understand today's consumer; it is necessary to know that the heart of the wheel that transforms the age beats on the internet. Today's consumers tend to take online comments into consideration and plan their consumption decisions and visits accordingly (Baltescu, 2020; Koç & Şahin, 2023). The reason for this is that online comments are more personal, unfiltered, and full of hard-to-reach details, unlike a skillfully prepared advertisement or promotional text. Personal judgments are conveyed in a natural speaking style and experiences are shared from a more personal point than ever before (So & Shin, 2020). With online comments, digital platforms are turning into transparent public spaces where digital profiles sincerely share their experiences with the whole world at the same time, just like conversations with faces encountered on the streets of daily life. This situation affects the brands and images of destinations as well as plays an important role in recreating the product-service quality, processes, customer relations and changing strategies of accommodation businesses, which are among the main touristic businesses.

Accommodation businesses, which are among the main tourism businesses, are primarily considered as commercial businesses that meet accommodation, food and beverage and other expectations in cases of relocation for various reasons. Accommodation businesses are seen as pioneer businesses in the context of touristic attraction (Kozak et al., 2000). The factors that affect the preferences of accommodation establishments are discussed in various ways in the literature. For example, Mody et al., (2023) mentions that quality, service, facilities, accessibility and security factors are at the forefront. Mohamad et al., (2024) also states that theme, design, location or room adequacy are more effective in tourists' hotel choices. Goral (2020) states that security, entertainment and room facilities are the most selective factors in hotel selection. Of course, in terms of consumer behavior, choices are likely to vary according to the consumer profile. Therefore, understanding the desire of demand becomes more complex and difficult as demand expands. The way to understand why tourists prefer what they prefer and to what extent they are satisfied can be facilitated by more free and transparent comments made on online platforms.

2.2. Related Studies and Context

In tourism research, online customer comments are used as an important data source, especially in the evaluation of hotel and destination experiences. Hennig-Thurau et al., (2004) drew a portrait of today's consumer profile in their study on the motivations of writing online comments. De Ascaniis & Gretzel (2013) examined the distribution of comments through the function of recommending and complaining

in online environments, while Tian (2013) focused on the interaction structure in online hotel comments. Park & Nicolau (2015) also focused on the effect of negative online comments on preferences. Liu et al., (2020) stated that comments containing both positive and negative expressions are more effective on preferences. As can be seen, it can be said that there is a wide literature on the area and size of influence of online comments in the literature.

In studies conducted on data obtained from platforms such as Google or TripAdvisor, user comments are used in analyses to understand both satisfaction levels and consumer behavior (Amira & Irawan, 2020; Mahfiroh & Mahripah, 2023). When the literature is examined, it is possible to come across many studies in which online comments constitute the basic data of the analyses. For example, in studies conducted on hotel businesses, customer-business interaction, service quality perception and corporate response styles were examined through content analysis and linguistic strategies of the comments (Cenni & Goethals, 2017, 2020; Tian, 2013). In addition, there are also studies that focus on the emotional content of online customer comments and address the factors affecting the usefulness and persuasiveness of the comment and evaluate the reliability level of the comments and the information reality among the factors that directly affect the decision processes of potential customers (Lopes et al., 2021; Fan et al., 2022). It is also discussed in the literature that the empathy capacity and emotional interaction forms of user comments in online travel agency applications constitute an important dimension of the digital tourism experience (Hossain & Rahman, 2023). In this context, online customer comments are considered not only as a sharing area of individual experiences, but also as a critical indicator for measuring the quality of tourist services and shaping the destination image. Apart from this, although their numbers are increasing day by day, it is possible to talk about a wide range of online comments that are considered in different parameters. For example, in the literature, there are studies examining Google and Tripadvisor comments of museums and theme parks in Europe in the context of destination research (Mellinas & Sicilia, 2024) and studies that examine tourist attractions in general and try to measure perception by analyzing Google comments in a holistic way (Akherwaray & Spocter, 2024). On the other hand, it is possible to come across studies that analyze hotel comments on travel sites via Google and investigate which factors affect satisfaction (Kim & Kim, 2022), that examine online Google comments of restaurants in the context of touristic establishments (Çuhadar et al., 2017; Koç & Şahin, 2023), that examine online comments in the context of the effect on hotels or hotel sales prices (Tunçalp, 2018; Ateş et al., 2019) or that specifically examine online comments in the choice of airports (Ateş et al., 2019). Studies examining tourism values in terms of destination (Sunar et al., 2018), hotel guest satisfaction (Bayram, 2018) or specific examinations of facilities such as room, location and service (Sodanil, 2016) are also noteworthy. It is also possible to come across more detailed studies such as sentiment analysis on online comments of hotels (Demir et al., 2020), studies examining experiences on chain hotels through online comments (Acar & Uğur, 2021) comments on green practices in accommodation services and the impact of these comments on brand value (Fronza et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2021). Searching for clues about consumer behavior on online platforms, the new public space of the digital world, has become a popular topic today and in the future and it is thought that it will attract even more attention in the future.

3. METHOD

3.1. Purpose of the Research

This study aims to analyze the comments shared by tourist visitors on the Google platform regarding accommodation businesses operated by the public and private sectors operating in the Sinop destination. In this context, the perceptions, experiences, complaints and suggestions of tourist visitors regarding accommodation businesses operating in the Sinop destination will be understood more clearly and the strengths and weaknesses of the destination in terms of accommodation capacity will be revealed. The analysis of the comments aims to create suggestions for local governments, destination management organizations and tourism businesses in the Sinop destination.

3.2. Importance of the Research

Today, digital platforms have become an important data source for understanding visitor perception in the tourism sector (Sigala, 2018). This situation has brought about a major transformation in terms of destination marketing and management and has revealed that tourist experiences are shaped by comments shared in the digital environment (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). In this context, analyzing Google comments

on accommodation establishments in Sinop destination is an important step both to understand the current touristic appeal of the destination and to determine the areas that need to be developed.

The difference of this research is that it provides special implications for local governments and tourism strategies by examining the digital comments about accommodation establishments in the destination Sinop with a detailed content analysis. An approach that combines subjectivity and objectivity is developed by emphasizing the contribution of digital comment analysis to tourism literature. While similar analyses in previous studies generally focus on general destinations (Ye et al., 2009) this research makes a difference by highlighting a relatively less examined destination such as Sinop.

3.3. Method of the Research

In this study, the content analysis method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used to evaluate visitor comments on accommodation establishments in Sinop. Content analysis is a method that allows the meaning of data to be given by determining the themes, expressions and key concepts in the texts (Krippendorff, 2018). This method is widely used especially in the analysis of user comments shared on social media and digital platforms and allows individuals to examine their experiences, perceptions and suggestions in a systematic framework (Neuendorf, 2017). Within the scope of the research, online comments on accommodation establishments in Sinop destination on Google platform were used as primary data source. These comments obtained from Google comments were examined in order to detail positive and negative feedbacks about the touristic appeal of Sinop in line with the individual opinions of the tourists. Since Google comments provide visitors with a direct and sincere view of the destination, they provide valuable information in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of Sinop destination in terms of accommodation opportunities. The comments used in the research were created by analyzing all Google comment pages of public and private accommodation establishments. Thanks to this method, an in-depth analysis of user experiences towards accommodation establishments in Sinop destination was made and visitors' expectations and perceptions were tried to be understood. The findings obtained provide guiding data for the management and development of the touristic appeal of accommodation establishments in Sinop destination and it is anticipated that they will contribute to destination marketing and tourism strategies.

3.4. Data Collection Process and Analysis of the Research

In this research, all user comments shared on the Google platform were examined in order to analyze the experiences and perceptions of tourist visitors towards Sinop destination accommodation businesses. These comments, which are accessible in the digital environment, were evaluated as a qualitative data source since they reflect the direct experiences of the visitors. The comments (8618 comments) were compiled starting from the first sharing date and as of 28.04.2025. In this context, all public and private accommodation businesses were included in the analysis via Google comments. Comments that were sufficiently long and descriptive regarding the research data were particularly taken into consideration. It is assumed that these comments reflect the tourist experiences, satisfaction levels and suggestions of the users. The collected data were categorized using the qualitative content analysis method. Support was received from the Maxqda data analysis program in this process.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Sinop Destination Public Accommodation Enterprises Visitor Positive Google Comment Analysis

According to the word cloud (Figure 1) created within the framework of the positive comments of the visitors about the public accommodation establishments where they receive service in Sinop destination, it was determined that the concepts that were repeated the most were; "clean room", "beach facilities", "children's playground", "cleaning", "quality service", "ease of transportation", "evening meal", "unique view", "delicious food", "sea", "comfort", "calm", "nature" and "friendly staff".



Sample Comment 1: “I think it is a perfect price/performance hotel, its location is perfect, right next to Hamsilos Bay and Nature Park, do not leave without seeing Hamsilos Bay, Lighthouse and Nature Park.” (12.03.2025).

Sample Comment 3: “Currently, prices are between 3200 TL-3500 TL including breakfast. The price is reasonable compared to the city, other places want very high prices. It is far from the city, close to the airport. Breakfast can be considered average, we can interpret the market value as 200 TL. Potatoes, nuggets, boiled eggs, 5-6 cheese varieties, butter, chocolate, watermelon, etc. The rooms are spacious, the air conditioning function is quiet and nice, there is a passage to the beach from within, there is a staircase process of approximately 50 steps in different places. The sea is very nice and shallow, the beach is clean, I can stay again.” (23.08.2024).

Sample Comment 4: “We stayed at the hotel with our guests between July 21-24. It has a very nice location. It is both a quiet place away from the city and you can easily reach the city center. The rooms were clean and tidy. The food was very delicious and quite affordable compared to outside. We were pleased with the service. All food and beverage services in the hotel are closed after eleven o'clock. I think it would be more efficient if the period was extended a little longer. I would like to thank all the staff. It is definitely the only place I will stay every time I come to Sinop.” (26.07.2024).

Sample Comment 5: “Our hotel is located in the Hamsilos area of Sinop, overlooking the sea, where you can stay with your family or individually with peace of mind. The restaurant has a sea view and delicious food. We especially recommend the traditional manti and mixed grill. The sea is shallow, the rooms are clean and comfortable, and the staff is attentive and caring. I recommend you to stay if you go to Sinop.” (16.06.2024).

4.2. Sinop Destination Public Accommodation Enterprises Visitor Negative Google Comment Analysis

According to the word cloud (Figure 2) created within the framework of the negative comments of the visitors about the public accommodation establishments from which they receive service in Sinop destination, it was determined that the concepts repeated the most were; “small rooms”, “rooms old”, “heating problem”, “late service”, “shortage of materials”, “humidity problem”, “hot water problem”, “broken air conditioners”, “lack of fly services”, “small TV”, “routine cleaning”, “product diversity”, “management indifference” and “old/worn room equipment”.



Figure 2. Public Accommodations Visitor Negative Google Comments Word Cloud

Some of the sample comments of tourists who made negative comments about public accommodation establishments in Sinop destination are coded and quoted directly below.

Sample Comment 1: “Everyone has different expectations from a holiday, the rooms are very dirty, if you want water to flow in your room, the taps are broken, the shower jet does not work, if you want to sleep after walking around all day, the bed is just like a tombstone, you are sleeping in a hole. If you want to go to the sea, there is no beach, you go down the iron stairs to the water, just like a pool, the sea is terribly dirty and filthy, no one with sense would go to the sea anyway. There are no social activities, backgammon, okey, playing cards, nothing in the hotel... You just sit on the couch in the hall all day long... And that is if there is room. I definitely regretted going, I would never recommend it to anyone... I am sure we would have enjoyed it more in another three-star hotel with the money we paid for the hotel.” (22.06.2024).

Sample Comment 2: “The hotel is only beautiful in appearance, our suite was huge, luxurious and clean. However, there were about 50 mosquitoes and more bugs than I could count in our room. I didn’t sleep at all at night, I kept killing flies and bugs. They didn’t put up mosquito nets, they didn’t spray the grass. When we told the reception, they said they couldn’t do anything. However, since I was the third person in the room, I slept on the couch. It was the most uncomfortable couch I’ve ever slept on. The springs sank. I couldn’t sleep much because of killing bugs anyway. We were confused about how we were going to escape. The breakfast was also terrible, never mind that it was an open buffet, there were four different types, we woke up hungry. The eggs were over-boiled and had a green sulfur inside.” (10.06.2024).

Sample Comment 3: “You have put nice pictures on your website but in reality you are offering filthy rooms. There is dirt on the floors of the rooms you show as clean rooms. When we asked for the deposit you took in advance to be refunded, the manager made us write a petition and said we will refund it. Now you are evading payment. You are saying no, there is an institution decision and we cannot send it. We could not stay in your dirty and filthy rooms, you are not giving our money back. We will complain about

you to the consumer court. I also call on the management to take action on this situation immediately. Go and look at other guesthouses. You might be ashamed!!!” (07.03.2024).

Sample Comment 4: “Don’t come, no one with a brain should come. Should I write about the rooms being dirty and neglected, or should I write about the cockroaches and the huge spiders of unknown species coming out of the beds every night. The hotel is standing, but in addition to the humidity everywhere, which will collapse in the first storm, there is no escape from the spider webs and filth. On the first night, cockroaches came out of our room on the 2nd floor, accompanied by the clicking of mice. They were coming out of every room in the hotel anyway. We changed our room, and from the next room, this time a huge red and black spider of unknown species came out of my bed while I was sleeping. It is interesting that these are considered natural by the staff, as if this is the only hotel in the country by the sea and the forest. There are no mosquito nets on the balcony door in the room, so you will never open it so that no one can enter, you will have to endure the smell of humidity. The worst hotel I have ever seen, the worst public hotel... It is not clear if there is a cleaning staff in the hotel! Those who want to come should bring insect repellent, but God knows what else they will come out of!” (04.02.2024).

Sample Comment 5: “We stayed one night as a school group on holiday. We chose this hotel because it had a sea view, but there was no sea. It would be more accurate to call it a mossy puddle. It is unkempt, the rooms are filthy everywhere. Ants are everywhere. Cigarette butts on the plate on the balcony... Even the toilet had been used but not flushed. The room price was 1500 TL. We chose this hotel to be comfortable when there were cheaper hotels. A complete disappointment. I would not recommend it. We had to sleep for a few hours and escape early in the morning.” (02.02.2024).

4.3. Sinop Destination Private Accommodation Enterprises Visitor Positive Google Comment Analysis

According to the word cloud (Figure 3) created within the framework of the positive comments of the visitors about the private accommodation establishments where they receive service in Sinop destination, it was determined that the concepts that were repeated the most were; “quality services”, “view”, “unique beach”, “location”, “nature”, “room equipment”, “comfort”, “ambiance”, “delicious food”, “by the sea”, “air conditioning”, “amazing atmosphere”, “hospitable”, “perfect”, “beach facilities”, “close to the center”, “suitable for children”, “friendly staff” and “employee attitude”.



Figure 3. Private Accommodations Visitor Positive Google Comments Word Cloud

Some of the sample comments of tourists who made positive comments about private accommodation establishments in Sinop destination are coded and quoted directly below.

Sample Comment 1: “The hotel’s beach is very nice. The sea and the beach are clean. The staff is very helpful but the rooms are a bit small. When they put a cot for our child, unfortunately there was no room to move. You can choose

a large room to avoid this situation, but since only breakfast is included at that time, the price may be a bit high. For a calm and different experience, you can choose this place rather than the south.” (01.11.2024).

Sample Comment 2: “I was very pleased with the accommodation I had with my family. First of all, the team is wonderful. There is always someone authorized everywhere, including the beach, and they are very attentive. Every part of the hotel is spotlessly clean, and I observed that they work very well in this regard. The restaurant is of very high quality. Due to its location, the view is also very beautiful. Eating at the hotel restaurant is as nice and high quality as eating at a very stylish restaurant. The prices are a bit expensive, but there is nothing cheap in Sinop anyway. As a result, we were very pleased with everything.” (10.08.2024).

Sample Comment 3: “The hotel is very well located, it has the sea and a pool. There is a parking lot and it is free. Luckily, the sea was very calm, it was not crowded, but it may have been because we went in November. Everyone working there is friendly and understanding. Although the prices are a bit expensive, there was plenty of variety at breakfast. It is a hotel we can easily choose if we come again.” (11.11.2024).

Sample Comment 4: “We came from Samsun with my friends. The sea was amazing, the sand was very clean! We were very pleased with the service and liked the food very much. It is a great environment for families and young people can also have fun. We definitely plan to come again.” (10.07.2024).

Sample Comment 5: “The location of the hotel is very nice. The view is right on the sea. It is very nice. The staff is helpful and friendly. The food is a bit strange. It has a very nice restaurant. But it is empty every day. I think it has to do with the price. We didn’t use it. We had to go down to the market. Breakfast is the same menu every day but it is sufficient. Eating and drinking on the beach of the hotel is sufficient but the prices are a bit high. The young people working there are very nice. The resting area in the hotel is limited in the evenings. It wouldn’t be bad if there was live music or an activity for children. The sea and sand are very nice. It is a real family hotel. In short, we were generally satisfied except for the price.” (12.07.2024).

4.4. Sinop Destination Private Accommodation Enterprises Visitor Negative Google Comment Analysis

According to the word cloud (Figure 4) created within the framework of the negative comments of the visitors about the private accommodation establishments from which they receive service in Sinop destination, it was determined that the concepts that were repeated the most were; “small rooms”, “parking facilities”, “price expensiveness”, “reservation”, “food presentation”, “neglected rooms”, “transport”, “internet problem”, “airport services”, “landscaping”, “misuse”, “mosquito-pest problem”, “lack of additional duvet-pillow”, “personalized service”, “food service” and “beach facilities”.



Figure 4. Private Accommodations Visitor Negative Google Comments Word Cloud

Some of the sample comments of tourists who made negative comments about private accommodation establishments in Sinop destination are coded and quoted directly below.

Sample Comment 1: “The thing I liked the most about this hotel, where I stayed for three nights, was the smiling faces of the staff. From the reception staff to the gentleman who served tea at breakfast, they were very smiling and polite. I also think the breakfasts were nice and varied. It was not possible to sit on the balcony in the evenings due to

mosquitoes, I think a solution should be found for this issue. The rooms were nice, but I think they should be more meticulous about cleaning. For example, there were water and lime stains in the shower cabins as if they had never been cleaned. The mirrors were very stained. Apart from this, the pool was not hygienic enough like in many other hotels. As a personal opinion, I think you should not enter the pool without a swimming cap. Because I was very disgusted by the hair I saw in the pool. There was also sea sand at the bottom of the pool. I think precautions should be taken to ensure that holidaymakers pay attention to this. I think it will be an even more perfect hotel if these deficiencies are eliminated. (01.09.2024).

Sample Comment 2: “The older lady at the reception is really inconsiderate and rude. I can say that there is no such thing as guest satisfaction. They accept customers from outside to the beach and pool and you are lucky if you can find a sunbed. They have a tiny pool and all the customers they accept from outside use it. If you don't mind hygiene, you can go in. (Of course, if you can move around in the pool.) There is no such thing as accommodation privilege. It is a public environment... Will I come again? Never! (10.08.2024).

Sample Comment 3: “We went with great hopes but we left the hotel halfway. There was blood, yellow women's hair and yellow sweat marks on our duvet cover. We slept on it because we couldn't see it in the dim light. When we asked the hotel manager to change it, it remained like that for two hours. No one did. Also, the breakfast was incredibly little. Two groups were coming for a mixed breakfast. Everyone was interested in that table. 40 different dishes were put out. An incredible class distinction was made. There are definitely big problems with the management. It was one of the hotels I will never choose again. Although the hotel is very expensive, it is not a clean hotel... The rooms smell of humidity... The bathroom is dirty... There is zero interest... It is not as seen on the internet... (18.08.2024).

Sample Comment 4: “The rooms are large and spacious. The reception and pool staff are friendly and helpful. Negative features: It is difficult to enter the sea, the pool is quite small so there is no room to move when 10-15 people get in. They say not to pass through the restaurant when going to the pool/sea, but the alternative, walking from outside, is not comfortable, it is ridiculous to go through the outside while wet, another way should be found. The food in the restaurant is not very good, the staff is not friendly, the waiters are running around but the staff is definitely insufficient... This is actually the management's problem. The children's playground is poorly maintained and not sufficient. (01.09.2024).

Sample Comment 5: “The location is really good. The staff, especially the reception staff, are really kind and helpful. However, I think there is a serious problem with the management of the hotel. We have encountered constant problems since the moment we arrived. After settling into our room, we went down to the beach cafe. It wasn't very crowded. We chose our sunbed. Of course, we asked for towels. Up until this point, everything was normal. The response we received regarding the towels was really surprising. “Unfortunately, we ran out of towels. They are being washed right now. They will arrive in 10 minutes.” After about half an hour finally our towels arrived. The reason for the lack of towels was stated as congestion. Then, during our two nights and three days of stay, we had a water problem that caused us to call the reception four times. Unbelievable but true, we had to call the reception four times to tell them that our water had been cut off and that we couldn't take a shower. The real pain was the response we received when we finally told the hotel manager about our complaint. He explained to us: “I'm sorry. The pool was congested, we had to pump too much water there. I think we neglected your floor a bit.” Would you laugh or cry? Finally, in order to get our car out of the parking lot, we had to ask three people to move the cars in front of us, and half an hour later we had to ask the manager again. When we left, we left the hotel with only a half-hearted “excuse me”. That's it... The hotel management is really far from professionalism. (08.07.2024).

It has been determined that the concepts of “view”, “amazing atmosphere”, “nature”, “calm”, “employee attitude”, “beach facilities”, “child friendly” and “trustworthy” are common concepts that visitors interpret positively for both public and private accommodation establishments. The common concepts interpreted negatively by visitors are “mosquitoes-pest”, “price”, “internet”, “neglected rooms”, “small rooms”, “transportation”, “service quality”, “additional fee requests”, “food services”, “parking facilities”, “personalized service” and “food and beverage content and presentation”.

5. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aims to evaluate the views of visitors who received service from public and private accommodation establishments in Sinop destinations by examining their Google comments regarding their accommodation experiences within a thematic framework. Technological innovations brought by the digital age contribute to major changes in the travel and tourism sector. Especially the widespread use of the internet and the development of online platforms significantly affect the habits of consumers in

travel planning processes. One of the most obvious elements of this transformation is the role of online user comments in the tourism sector. Google plays a central role in this transformation as one of the most used search engines and service providers worldwide. Through platforms such as Google comments, users can comment on the places they travel to, and these comments can directly affect the decisions of other potential visitors (Sparks & Browning, 2011; Xiang et al., 2015). Google comments, as a platform reaching billions of users worldwide, has become an important tool for tourists to learn about the destinations they travel to. In particular, the visitor comments provided by Google comments allow consumers to access information based on real user experiences about businesses and destinations. These user comments and ratings allow visitors to make more informed choices (Yoo & Gretzel, 2011). Understanding the importance of Google visitor comments in tourism is of great importance both for academic studies and for the strategic decisions of professionals in the sector. With the widespread use of the Internet, consumers' purchasing and decision-making processes have changed significantly. The impact of online comments in particular is very significant in this change. Consumer comments shared on the internet play an important role in changing the perception of potential customers about a product or service (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). For these reasons, online comment management is of vital importance for companies and brands in terms of directing corporate reputation and ensuring customer satisfaction (Filiari, 2015). Online comment management involves the process of businesses monitoring, analyzing, and responding to feedback shared on digital platforms. According to research, it is known that positive comments positively affect consumers' decisions during the purchasing process, while negative comments negatively affect them (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Therefore, responding quickly to negative comments with the right approach and ensuring customer satisfaction offers a great advantage for businesses (Xie et al., 2014). Today, many businesses evaluate consumer feedback and create predictions using social media listening tools and artificial intelligence-supported analysis systems (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Google visitor comments based on real user experiences create an important bridge between businesses and consumers in the tourism sector, allowing consumers to make more informed decisions, while providing businesses with the opportunity to improve service quality and develop existing and potential customer relationships (Filiari et al., 2015). Therefore, businesses should monitor these comments carefully and respond constructively to both positive and negative comments in order to manage their sustainability and reputation (Lappas et al., 2016).

In the context of the research purpose and the results obtained, in subsequent studies, researchers can diversify the online comments that can be accessed during the research process by determining a destination on a larger scale. Research can be conducted to determine visitor comments and opinions about Sinop destination, especially in its districts and nearby touristic destinations. In subsequent studies, different sample-based results can be obtained and compared by taking into account popular comment sharing platforms such as Tripadvisor, etc.

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