Chapter 4

AN EVALUATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA USERS' E-REVIEWS OF FOOD-BEVERAGE BUSINESSES: THE CASE OF RIZE

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1.INTRODUCTION

Consumers express their positive or negative thoughts while making their evaluation and customer reviews are an important criterion for customer satisfaction (Narangajavana& Hu, 2008). Marketing forms have undergone many changes thanks to technological developments and the 2000s have been entirely shaped by developments in the age of information and technology (Williams, 2009). The significant growth of the food and beverage services industry has led to a huge increase in the demands of individuals participating in outdoor catering activities, which seems to be an important factor that affects tourists' likes and dislikes of their destinations (Arsezen-Otamış, 2015). Communication in social media is beyond individuals and millions of individuals come together and transfer information thanks to various platforms (Sabuncuoğlu & Gümüş, 2008). In this context, using the internet and social media, tourists can decide which company to choose by following the path of social approval. Tourists' need for this social approval can lead them through a more advanced flow in new media environments (Yanık, 2016). Additionally, in the era of Web 2.0, tourists have become more active, being both producers and consumers. Prominent examples of this can include user reviews, experiences, and opinions concerning communication and services in food and beverage businesses (Bayram & Bertan, 2015). Therefore, social media has been of growing importance for the tourism sector in obtaining information about products and services (Bayram, Görkem & Bayram, 2016).

The need to learn about the experience-based service offered by food and beverage businesses leads to a greater value of social media platforms (Zhang

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tation, *behaviors of other customers*, *the quality of food and drink*, *the taste of food*, *and price*. In summary, collectively considering the 10 most reviewed businesses in Rize, negative reviews had a low average level and a small percentage among all reviews analyzed, while positive reviews had a large percentage. Thus, food and beverage businesses can provide better-quality services by taking into consideration these reviews.

5.CONCLUSION

Given the growing importance of social media in destination and business preferences, it is important for the food and beverage businesses in Rize to take into considerations the positive and negative reviews revealed by this study. Although the study found that visitors mostly have a positive eating experience, there is a definite need for efforts to ameliorate negative experiences.

Much of the research up to now has focused on either positive or negative visitor reviews of businesses. This study investigated both positive and negative reviews of food and beverage businesses. This study might be repeated for destinations in different regions.

This study focused on visitor reviews. Further research should be undertaken to explore how tourism practitioners perceive the effect of social media use on consumer preferences. Thus, it helps discover practitioners' perceptions of the importance of social media, thereby facilitating effective business marketing.

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