



Innovation and New Product Development: Delving into Food and Beverage Managers' Perspectives

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Abstract

In order to survive in a competitive environment and make sustainable profits, hotel businesses must be different for competitive advantage and innovation. When the literature on innovation in hotel establishments is examined, it is seen that the studies reflecting the views of food and beverage managers are insufficient. The aim of this study is to reveal the perspectives of food and beverage managers about innovation and new product development processes in 4 and 5 star hotels in Antalya. For this purpose, semi-structured interview form was applied to hotel managers and the data were analyzed with qualitative analysis program. As a result of the analysis, two important themes emerged in 14 sub-themes. The first is the experience of food and beverage managers' in process of new product development. The second theme is the innovative features of their hotels as perceived by food and beverage managers'.

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INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of the twentieth century, globalization has affected the tourism sector as well as all other areas of life. The removal of borders in the economy, developments in transportation, information and communication technologies have brought competition to a global dimension. Each customer has become important in global competition. Together with the developments in information and communication technologies, customers are also affected by the change. Customers who have instant access to all kinds of information, can compare hotels for the holiday, they intend to purchase and can easily access the comments of former customers have begun to give preferences based on this information. Hotels have now had to contact customers who have become questioned in the market, equipped and able to make their choices consciously (O'Reilly, 2007; Morgan, Chan & Mackenzie, 2011).

Hotels that want to provide sustainable competitive advantage in the global competitive environment, increase their market share and grow have to follow innovations in the world, changes in the sector, differences in products, services and technological trends (Raab, Ajami, Gargeya & Goddard, 2008). Closely following the changes, improving themselves and at the same time environmentally sensitive, hotel businesses that create a magical atmosphere with their internal and external architecture, in other words, which can make themselves different, can survive by standing ahead of their competitors. Therefore, innovation is the key to success in the hospitality industry (Alsos, Eide, & Madsen, 2014).

In the field of economics, innovation was first studied in 1912 by Joseph Alois Schumpeter. He defines it as “the setting up of a new production function”. But in the field of service, innovation was first studied by Richard Barras in 1986. He started with the service characteristics and also proposed a theoretical model of process innovation in services (Andrea, 2012). Being part of the service sector, tourism has inevitably been associated with innovations (Stamboulisa & Skayannis, 2003). A number of challenges and international competition in the past have forced tourism destinations and companies to innovate (Camisón & Monfort-Mir, 2012). In recent years, tourism innovation has increasingly become a topic of research within the tourism field just as other fields (Paget, Dimanche, & Mounet, 2010). Also, innovation is associated with many concepts. One of these concepts is the new product development.

Companies develop many new products every year. However, many of these products do not provide competitive advantage and cause financial losses for companies (Cooper, 2001). One of the main reasons for this failure is the neglect of some steps in the new product development process. Therefore, the development and launch of successful new products is considered to be one of the most critical and challenging tasks faced by managers (Tzokas *et al.*, 2004). New product development efforts in tourism are very risky. Although a successful product development practice is quite satisfactory, its failure is extremely costly and distressing (Karakuş, 2017). Managers in the hospitality and tourism sectors need to be careful in the new product development process.

In the tourism and hospitality literature, there are several researches about innovation: innovation activity in the hotel industry (Orfila-Sintes *et al.*, 2005), innovative product development in hotel operations (Frehse, 2005), internet innovation for external relations in the hotel industry (Garau-Vadell & Orfila-Sintes, 2008), innovation behavior in

the hotel industry (Orfila-Sintes & Mattsson, 2009), innovation in tourism (Peters & Pikkemaat, 2006), measurement of innovation in the small and medium sized hotel industry (Peters, 2012), management innovation in the hotel industry (Nieves & Segarra-Ciprés, 2015), marketing innovation in the hotel industry (Nieves & Diaz-Meneses, 2016); eco-innovation and organizational culture in the hotel industry (del Rosario *et al.*, 2017). It is also possible to come across studies related to new product development in tourism and accommodation literature; new product development in the Turkish tourism market (Koç, 2006), tourism new product development and customer relationship management (Liao *et al.*, 2010), hotel renovation within the context of new product development (Hassanien, 2005).

In the literature, the relationship between innovation and tourism has been examined with different dimensions, but the studies interviewed with food and beverage managers' are not sufficient. Furthermore, there are limited studies investigating the views of food and beverage managers in the process of new product development. In this context, the aim of this research is to determine view of food and beverage managers working in the hotels on the concepts of new product development and innovation. Thus, it is aimed to contribute to literature.

INNOVATION AND TOURISM

The term "innovation" is not a new term. Probably it is as old as mankind and civilization (Fagerberg, 2003; Fagerberg, 2013). It originates from the Latin "innovatio" which means "the creation of something new" (Weiermair, 2004; Korres, 2008). A review of the literature on innovation yields multiple definitions that try to distinguish a matchless elements (Malian & Nevin, 2005). The basic definition of innovation is "doing something different". Innovation is a word that often is used in the business world. It can also be explained as a "new idea, product or device" (Stenberg, 2017). Despite the fact that innovation involves risks and its success is not guaranteed, it has been considered as the way of adapting companies to changing business world. Generally, research on innovation have focused on its technological aspects. However, the field of innovation deals with other aspects (Nieves & Segarra-Ciprés, 2015).

Throughout history, tourism has been a phenomenon characterized by enormous innovativeness. Researches have drawn attention to especially distinctive individuals and enterprises. Their achievements, victories and efforts have been analyzed by scientists (Hjalager, 2010). When asked to name the most important innovations in tourism, special brands come to mind directly, which individual entrepreneurs such as Thomas Cook (Hall & Williams, 2008). Thomas Cook broke away from the tradition of his time and realized the potential in the transport sector. Thus, by using his creativity, he created a package tour that combines travel and entertainment and addresses a new customer segment (Hjalager, 2010). Similarly, when it comes to innovation, certain destinations such as Las Vegas, Orlando, Florida come to mind (Hall & Williams, 2008). As an example of successful innovations in destinations in the village of Santa Claus in Lapland, tourists visit the world to see the house of Santa Claus (Iordache, 2015).

Tourism innovation is not limited to famous people or famous destinations (Hall & Williams, 2008). It is possible to see successful examples in hotel management. For example, the Ice Hotel in Sweden offers a different concept and the cold weather conditions, which are a disadvantage for Swedish tourism, have been turned into an advantage. In this way, Swedish tourism has achieved a serious tourism income (Iordache, 2015). In terms of innovation, the

activities of only large destinations or large enterprises should not come to mind. An example of innovation in tourism is the fact that a small hotel makes a unique website or a small restaurant offers new dishes to attract new customers (Hall & Williams, 2008).

In the literature, it is possible to encounter innovation classifications made in various ways. One of them is the dual classification called radical innovation and incremental innovation (Rowley, Baregheh & Sambrook, 2011). The description of these types of innovation is as follows;

Radical innovation: It is the type of innovation that affects the whole industry and causes the formation of new markets. For example, major innovations in the means of transport have revolutionized tourism so that no one can predict. The development of trains, airplanes and cars has significantly reduced travel times and transportation costs. These innovations increased the number of visits to tourism destinations and directly influenced and shaped the whole sector (Iordache, 2015).

Incremental innovation: It is the organization, simplification and improvement of existing products, services, processes, production and distribution activities (Iordache, 2015). It is a step by step development and improvement without completely changing the basic structure of the previous product (Rowley *et al.*, 2011). Incremental innovations are more suitable for small tourism businesses as opposed to radical innovation to meet market needs. For example, by increasing the comfort level of a hotel from 2 to 3 stars, increasing service quality or placing energy saving sensors in hotels can be shown as examples of incremental innovations (Iordache, 2015).

Another classification in the literature is product innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation and organizational innovation (Jacob, Aguiló, Bravo, & Mulet, 2003). The description of these types of innovation is as follows;

Product innovation: Includes a completely new product or service that has been significantly improved (Jacop *et al.*, 2003). For example, introduction of certain fish in a diving center, trips in safari (Iordache, 2015).

Process innovation: Development and improvement of production technology or methods (Iordache, 2015). It also includes improvements in distribution and delivery processes (Jacop *et al.*, 2003). Process of producing less costly services by using solar panels or wind turbines in hotels as an example of innovation (Iordache, 2015).

Marketing innovation: It includes significant changes in the design, packaging, pricing policy, distribution and promotion of the existing product. The aim of marketing innovation is to meet customer expectations and needs in the best way (Iordache, 2015).

Organizational innovation: A new form of company or management is the adoption (Jacop *et al.*, 2003). It includes the implementation of a new organizational method in internal and external communication or commercial applications of an organization (Iordache, 2015).

Mowery and Rosenberg (1979), Dosi (1982), Coombs, Saviotti, and Walsh (1987), recognise technology as driving forces for innovation. Innovation in tourism has emerged as a result of technology in recent years (Hjalager, 2010). Therefore, accommodation enterprises, restaurants and other tourism enterprises are also oriented towards

technological innovations. For instance, interactive table attracted the attention of customers in Inamo restaurant in London (Figure 1) (Cankül, Doğan, & Sönmez, 2018). Hotels can also gain competitive advantage over competitors with different designs (Figure 2).



Figure 1: Inamo Restaurant, Interactive Table Application (Cankül, Doğan, & Sönmez, 2018, p. 583; Inamo, 2018, www.inamorerestaurant.com)

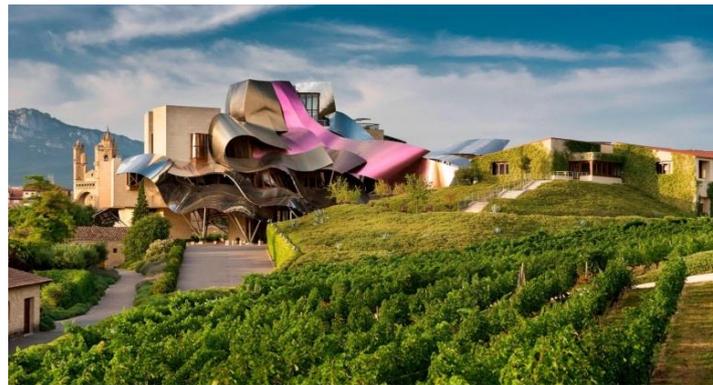


Figure 2: Hotel Marques de Riscal, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Elciego (Marriott, 2019).

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

The new product is a product that has not been sold in the market before or has been designed by the company for the first time. Product life cycles are getting shorter with changing customer expectations and experiences. This increases the importance of new product development (Koyuncu, 2011). The creation of successful new products is basically a multidisciplinary process (Olson *et al.*, 2001).

Many firms produce new product ideas based on information collected from existing or potential customers (Lien *et al.*, 2002). The new product development in the tourism sector starts by noticing the needs, demands and problems of the consumers (Kozak, 2014) and noticing the gaps in the sector. Because the tourism sector is human oriented, customer needs and expectations are important for the enterprises.

In the literature it is possible to find classifications of various new product development processes. However, traditionally, the new product development process consists of eight stages (Figure 3) (Owens, 2004; Amue & Adiele, 2012).

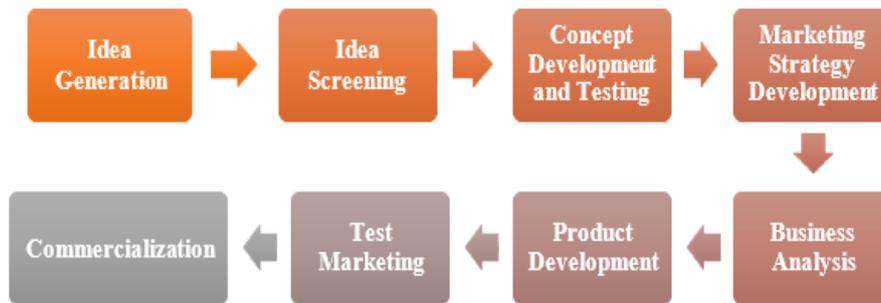


Figure 3: New Product Development Process (I. Borza & C. Borza, 2014, s. 246)

These processes can be explained briefly as follows (Claessens, 2015);

Idea Generation: The new product development process starts with the idea generation process. Many new ideas are produced at this stage.

Idea screening: The next step in the new product development process is the idea scan. Good ideas are chosen from among other ideas. While the idea is to produce a number of ideas that can be made in the process of producing ideas, at this stage it is the separation of good and profitable ideas from the bad.

Concept Development and Testing: At this stage, attractive ideas are developed as a product concept. The developed concept is tested.

Marketing Strategy Development: The next step in the new product development process is the development of marketing strategy. After developing and testing the promising concept, the most appropriate marketing strategy is determined.

Business analysis: Management evaluates the commercial appeal of the proposed new product. The fifth step in the new product development process involves a review of the sales, costs and profit projections for the new product to find out whether these factors satisfy the company's objectives. If they do, the product can be moved on to the product development stage.

Product development: Up to this process the properties of the product on paper or a rough prototype is analyzed. At this stage, however, the product is now physically moving into production.

Test marketing: The final stage before commercialization in the new product development process is the market test. At this stage of the new product development process, the product and the proposed marketing program are tested in realistic market environments.

Commercialization: After the market test, the management makes the final decision whether or not the product

is placed on the market. At this stage, enterprises face high costs. Advertising, promotion and other marketing efforts cause the company to spend serious money.

The process of developing new products in tourism involves similar steps. Teare *et al.*, (1994) examined the tourism product development process in five stages (Figure 4). The process, which starts with the idea generation phase, continues with the idea screening, the concept development phase, test marketing and commercialization (Karakuş, 2017).



Figure 4: The process of developing new products in tourism (Karakuş, 2007, p. 41).

As seen in the figure above, the process of product development in tourism and hospitality industry starts with idea generation. It ends with commercialization (Karakuş, 2017)

METHODOLOGY

In this part of the research, the model of the study, participants and sampling, data collection tools and data analysis are included.

Research Model

This research, which aims to integrate the views of food and beverage managers in the process of innovation and new product development in hotels, is designed according to the phenomenology model of qualitative research methods. Phenomenology tries to explain the common meaning of one or several people's experiences about a phenomenon or concept (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenology focuses on how people perceive, describe, feel, judge, remember, understand and talk about phenomena (Patton, 2014). Phenomenological studies focus on individual perceptions and narratives and try to explore the experience from the point of view (Tanyaş, 2014). In this study, researchers described the experiences of food and beverage managers in innovation and new product development as phenomena. Afterwards, data were collected through in-depth interviews and a holistic description was defined the essence of the perceptions of the working group on the innovation and new product development process (Creswell, 2013).

Participants and Sampling

The study group consists of 13 food and beverage managers working in the hotel in the Antalya region. In the selection of the study group, convenience sampling method was utilized. When the gender of the participants are examined, 11 of them are male and 2 are female. When the education levels are examined, it is seen that most of them have bachelor's degree (8). When the age range of the participants is examined, it is seen that the majority of

them are in the 36-45 age range. In addition, four of the enterprises are 4-star, and the remaining nine are 5-star hotels (Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive Profile of Informants

Demographic features			
Gender	N	Age	N
Male	11	30-35	3
Female	2	36-45	6
Education	N	46 +	4
High school	3	Hotel Type	N
Associate degree	1	4 star hotel	4
Bachelor's degree	8	5-star hotel	9
Master's degree	1		

Data Collection Tools

Phenomenological research is the most basic data collection tool interviews. In order to understand the experience and the essence of the facts in depth, it is necessary to benefit from the flexibility and interaction that the interview offers to the researchers (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). For this reason, semi-structured interview form has been developed by researchers in order to reveal the opinions of food and beverage managers on innovation and new product development process. The prepared interview form was reviewed by three faculty members in the field of tourism marketing and one language expert. In order to test the clarity of the questions, a pilot study was conducted with a food and beverage manager not included in the study group. In this process, it was revealed that the questions in the form were generally clear and understandable, and the interviews lasted about 20-25 minutes. As a result of the pilot test, the questions in the interview form were finalized. An appointment was made to each food and beverage manager in the study group. These managers were interviewed at different times and interviews were recorded. Approvals of food and beverage managers were taken before recording.

Data Analysis

In order to make the data ready for analysis, the voice recordings were transferred to the word processing program. The data obtained through interviews were subjected to phenomenological analysis. Phenomenological analysis aims to understand and clarify the meaning, nature and structure of the experiences experienced by individuals or groups in a case (Patton, 2014). In the first stage of the phenomenological analysis, researchers leave aside their own thought patterns and prejudices and accept the data as it is. This situation is called detachment from prejudices. Thus, the experience and subjective viewpoints of the participants related to the phenomenon are more clearly understood by readers (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2014). The comments of the food and beverage managers have been read through several times and divided into units and coded under phenomenological analysis. The concepts spoken by the food and beverage managers were used during coding. In cases where the concepts expressed by the food and beverage managers are insufficient in coding, the codes that best meet the phenomenon was used by the researchers. Those

who are similar to codes and are close to each other was evaluated in the same category. In the next stage, these categories were compared with each other and related themes were reached.

The themes in the phenomenological analysis include the interpretation of the experience of the participants by the researchers and the first framework of the analysis (Tanyaş, 2014). The analysis was carried out by the researchers at different times and the cases with consensus and disagreement were determined and necessary discussions were held. Miles and Huberman (1994) proposed reliability formula $[p = \text{consensus} / (\text{Consensus} + \text{dispute})]$ was calculated. As a result, 95% was obtained. In order to ensure the credibility of the research, direct quotations were made from the views of the food and beverage managers. In terms of research ethics, the real names of food and beverage managers were not used and nicknames (P1, P2) were given to food and beverage managers.

FINDINGS

Experiences of Food and Beverage Managers for New Product Development Process

The experiences of food and beverage managers for new product development process are shown in Figure 3.

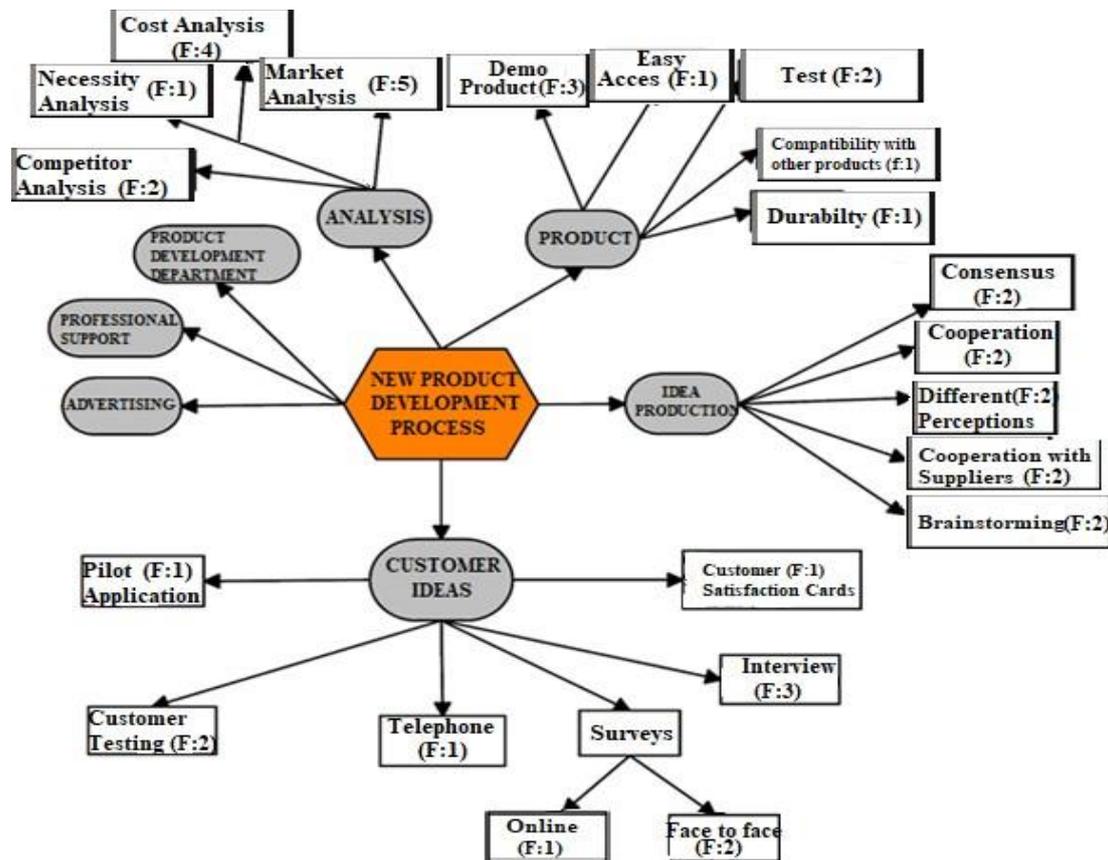


Figure 5: Experiences of Food and Beverage Managers for New Product Development Process

As can be seen in Figure 5, the opinions of food and beverage managers on the new product development process are gathered under 7 different themes.

Analysis

Under the theme of analysis, the participants stated that they are doing cost analysis in the new product development process and stated that they are trying to maintain the balance of profit and loss. An example citation is given below, representing the views of the participants in the cost analysis category: *“Everything in the hotel industry is calculated on cost and unfortunately the authorities prefer the cheapest products” (P13)*. As can be seen from the above excerpt, the cost is very important in the new product development process. Accurate cost analysis will contribute to whether or not a new product development is necessary.

P6-coded participant in the necessity analysis category under the theme of analysis stated that they have taken steps to improve the current conditions of the enterprise by performing a necessity analysis in the new product development process: *“Before the new product development, the need for this product, the cost of this product and the ability to produce this product are handled by the relevant departments of our hotel” (P6)*. As can be seen from the citation above, the necessity analysis is carried out in the decision-making process of a new product and the extent to which the product is required is discussed by the relevant stakeholders.

Participants in the market analysis category stated that they focused on the characteristics of the audience they address in the new product development process and the customer preferences in the market. The following is a sample citation for representing the views of the participants in the market analysis category: *“First, we determine which type of customers will be offered the new product. Then we investigate the perspective of those people on the new product” (P9)*. The above citation shows that the customer portfolio is taken into consideration during the new product development process in the accommodation establishments. Good detection of the target group is considered important in this respect.

Participants in the category of competitor analysis stated that they are examining the successful products of their competitors in the market. Here is an example citation: *“One of the first and most important steps is market analysis. Is there any other hotel that produces a similar product? If so, what is the impact of this product on the market? We are looking for answers to these questions before developing new products” (P5)*. The above citation shows that the effects of other products in the market on customers are examined in a new product development process. In this case, it is seen that the experiences of other enterprises have been utilized. It is important that good practices are taken as an example for good analysis of the market and for the company to renew itself.

Product

Participants in the demo product and test categories under the product theme said that they first tested and developed a trial product. They stated that they increased the production according to the positive responses from the customers. The following excerpts this summary: *“The demo products are produced first. Then these products are tested. If good results are achieved, the product is offered to our customers” (P3)*. As seen in the above citation, a new product development process is progressively progressing.

Participant P12 emphasized that the new product, should be compatible with the old products of the enterprise, easy to access and have a long life. *“While doing new product work; The contents used in the products in the current*

menu must be compatible with the new products. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the income level of the customer group addressed, the wishes of the customers and the durability of the new product” (P12).

Product Development Departments

Some hotels have stated that they have established product development departments and that they follow the latest innovations in the market. The establishment of such units within the organization can be considered as the most concrete evidence that the enterprise gives importance to the new product development process. An example of this is given below: *“Since our hotel is a group company, we have a new product development department (P3)”*. As can be seen from the above citation, the new product development process in cooperation with professional staff is essential for keeping the accommodation establishments up-to-date.

Professional Support

P2 stated that there are no new product development departments in their hotel. However, he expressed the importance of developing new products with the following words: *“Our hotel receives professional support for innovation and applications. Some hotels have a new product development department. Since we do not have such a department, we get professional support from our externally agreed experts” (P2)*. As it can be seen from the above citation, the lack of new product development departments is not an obstacle for the company to renew itself and develop new products.

Advertising

The participants in the advertising category stated that when they developed a new product, they promoted the product so that customers could be aware of this situation. An example of this is given below: *“First, we determine which customer group will be addressed. We are investigating that customer group's perspective on the product. Then we introduce the product by keeping the taste and quality in the foreground” (P10)*. It can be concluded that it is important for the companies to introduce their products to the new products developed from the citation above. In this way, innovations will spread to large masses and thus positive or negative feedback will be provided by the stakeholders.

Idea Production

When the categories under idea production theme were examined, it was observed that the employees, personnel, managers and suppliers of the company exchanged ideas during the new product development process. It is emphasized that all the units of the company cooperate on the consensus issues. The following are exemplary citations to represent the views that represent the idea production theme: *“In this process, all department chiefs work jointly. The manager of each department indicates his / her ideas about the new product. This new idea goes to the new product development department at our headquarters” (P3)*.

“Before the new product development, the need for this product, the cost of this product and the ability to produce this product are handled by the relevant departments of our company. If a consensus is reached between department managers, a demo product is produced and tested first. We continuously make improvements to the product until it

reaches the ideal taste for the product" (P6). It can be seen from the quotations above that the product development process is carried out as a team work.

Businesses who are aware of the emergence of new ideas in a democratic environment give more importance to the opinions of their employees. Here are some exemplary citations: *"Our employees opinions are very important. They are the first to test the product. They give us feedback on the continuity of the product. In this direction, the product, which is blended in many indices such as quality, price, way of presentation and operating opportunities, is presented with a nominal denominator. At this point, employees have a priority such as the first experimentation of the product"* (P6).

"The recommendations of our employees are very important; because employees are a one-to-one contact with customers. For this reason, customer requests and suggestions can follow more closely. This situation makes the recommendations of the employees important." (P5). As it can be seen from the quotations above, the importance of company employees in new product development process is very high. The importance of the employees in the new product development process is increasing due to the fact that they observe the customer experience themselves and collect data first hand.

Another important issue in the new product development process is the cooperation with suppliers. Suppliers who can better analyze market conditions can put forward firm predictions about the durability of a new product. An example of this is given below: *"Our product development department closely follows sectoral innovations. When developing a new product, proposals are evaluated at different times in cooperation with suppliers"*. (P4). As can be seen from the above excerpt, it is necessary to cooperate with the supplier company in terms of the value of the new product developed in the market conditions and the fact that it is always available. In this way, any material (raw material) for the new product developed will not be troubles.

Customer Ideas

In the process of new product development, businesses attach great importance to customer opinions. P4 coded participant in the pilot application category stated that the new product developed was presented to the customer's appraisal at the location chosen as the pilot branch and that they spread the application to the other branches according to the responses: *"We always attach importance to suggestions from our employees and customers. We apply the preferred bid in a pilot branch. We provide continuity according to the results"*(P4). *"First of all, we get the opinions of our employees and customers. We take our customers' thoughts with satisfaction cards. In this way, we identify our shortcomings and take our steps accordingly."* (P1). As can be seen from the above citation, the necessary changes are made as a result of the feedback received from the customers. Customers' reporting their views anonymously is important to achieve more realistic results.

Another way to get customer feedback is to determine the expectations of the customers with one-to-one interviews. In this way, close dialogue with customers and an intimate environment are provided and customers who see that their opinions are cared up are increasing their confidence in the accommodation establishments. Here are some exemplary citations: *"Ideas are important to us because we appeal to people. In particular, we are in constant*

dialogue with customers”(P8). “We urge our customers to make an objective review and comment. We also benefit from these sources in terms of presentation and pricing of the product” (P10). As can be seen from the quotations above, communication with the customer has an important role in providing feedback.

In addition, some hotels have taken advantage of this data in the new product development process by taking the opinions of their customers through written and online survey methods. An example citation is given below: “As a business, we always attach importance to the ideas of our employees. We also have a close relationship with our customers. We receive feedback from face-to-face interviews and surveys. Sometimes we use online surveys. Customers can also join the WhatsApp hotel group. They can also give their opinions from there. We never reject our customers opinions” (P3). As can be seen from the citation above, with a customer-focused service approach, the new product needs of the enterprise can be clearly identified.

When a new product is developed, customers are appointed as arbitrators and their opinions are consulted. At this point, the opinions of the participant P6 are as follows: “The first produced products are always served to our permanent customers as catering and returns are received. At this point, the deficiencies are determined and eliminated by both the customer and the company” (P6). As can be seen from the citation above, it is seen that the companies have personally tested the product and used the feedbacks during the new product development process.

According to Participants Innovative Features of Their Hotels

The areas that the participants see themselves differently from other enterprises in terms of innovation are given in Figure 6.

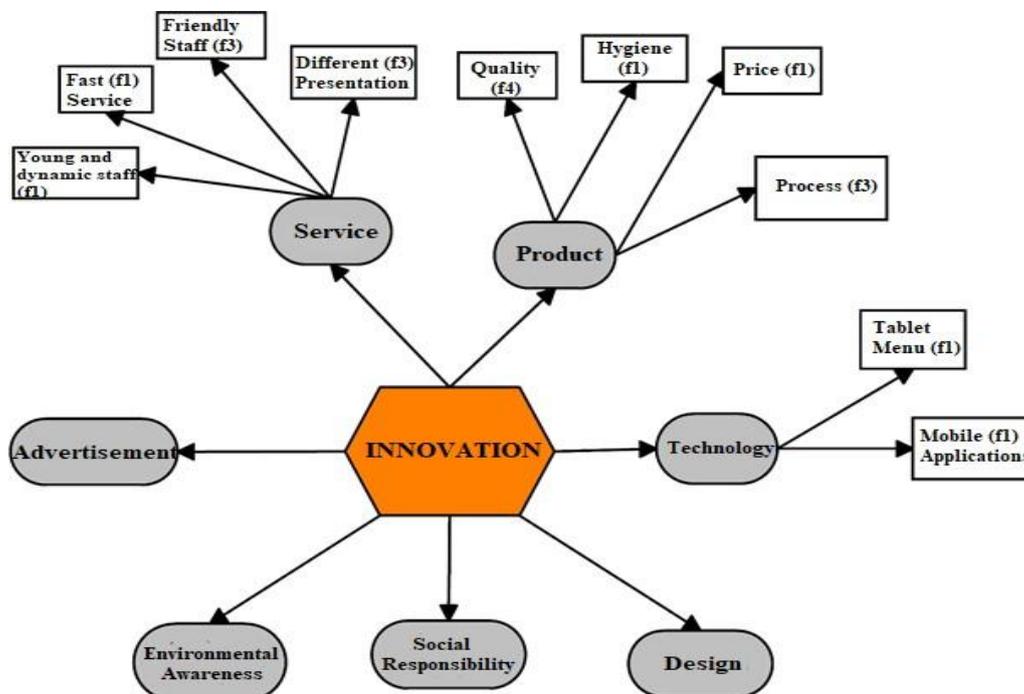


Figure 6: According to Participants Innovative Features of Their Hotels

When Figure 6 is examined, it is seen that the areas where the participants perceive their hotels as different from other hotels are gathered under 7 main themes.

Service

When the categories under service main theme are examined, it is seen that young, dynamic and friendly staff and fast service categories are included. An example citation is given below: *“The most important feature that separates us from our competitors; quick service, young staff and friendly staff. In addition, we are constantly trying to increase our quality without increasing our prices”* (P1). In the above excerpt, the participant's innovative approach showed that the staff worked faster, smiling and dynamic. Another example in the different presentation category is the combination of different cultures' foods. An example citation is given below; *“We combine the flavors of different cultures on a plate. In this way, our customers have the opportunity to taste many different national flavors”* (P5). In the above citation it is seen that there is a difference in approach rather than technology. Innovative product development is dealt with in terms of presentation and service.

Product

Participants under the product theme see their companies as superior and different from other businesses in terms of quality, hygiene and the suitability of prices. The following excerpt from this case is exemplary: *“We are adding Anatolia flavors and world delicacies to our food and beverages. We're blending in”*(P9). The above quotation shows that the participant tried innovative tastes and tried to offer the best to their customers in terms of flavor. The participant places his business in a separate place from other businesses in terms of product development. The P7 coded participant, on the other hand, stated that it is an innovative approach to make promotions at regular intervals.

Technology

It was mentioned by the participant P3 that the use of the tablet menu during the service was an innovative approach. The participant P2 stated that they have developed a mobile application specific to customers. *“Our hotel has a very advanced mobile application. Guests can do all day programs from there easily. For example, a la carte reservations and many more transactions can be made from this application”* (P2). As can be seen from the citation above, it is seen that the company uses technology for its customers to get more comfortable service.

Design and Advertising

Considering the categories under the main theme of design, it was mentioned by the participant P3 that they designed the hotel lobby differently. Under the advertising theme, the P7 coded participant stated that it is an innovative approach to promote on a regular basis.

Environmental Awareness

P8-coded participant in the environmental awareness theme mentioned different aspects of other enterprises as using environmentally friendly products. The following is an excerpt from this topic: *“We use environmentally friendly equipment. We are one of the leading companies in the sector using nature-friendly production systems”*

(P8). As can be seen from the above excerpt, it can be said that the company has a structure different from other enterprises in terms of environment- friendly production systems.

Social Responsibility

Following are the citations of the participants in the theme of social responsibility: “*The residues from the foodstuffs used in our plant are used for fertilizer production. In this way, we reduce the waste and provide benefits for the community*” (P6). “*On behalf of our guests, we donate to charities and we plant a seedling in their name*” (P4). As can be seen from the citation above, there are hotels that provide positive contributions in terms of social responsibility projects compared to other hotels. In this case, hotels need to update and develop themselves in every area by following the conditions of the era.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

New product development is a requirement for satisfying tourists' changing demands and insuring the long-term profitability of the industry and hotel businesses (Smith, 1994). For long years, tourism has been a phenomenon characterized by intense innovativeness (Hjalager, 2010). Numerous studies have been carried out both in new product development and innovation in tourism. However, there is a lack of studies reflecting the views of F&B managers in accommodation establishments. In this study, the perspective of F&B managers in hospitality enterprises towards innovation and new product development examined and this study designed according to phenomenology model. Semi-structured interview form was applied to the participants and a holistic description reflecting the opinions of the participants was presented.

The answers of the participants were examined under two main themes. The first of these is “the experiences of the hospitality businesses in the process of new product development”. The first main theme was collected into seven sub-themes. These were product, idea production, customer ideas, advertising, professional support, analysis and product development department.

The sub-themes of **ideas and customer ideas** can be examined under the **idea generation** step in the new product development process. As it is known, the first step of the new product development process starts with the idea generation (Verhage, Waalewijn and van Weele , 1981; Booz *et al.*, 1982; Owens, 2004; Kohn, 2005; Amue & Adiele, 2012; I. Borza & C. Borza, 2014; Claessens, 2015). In our current study, it is seen that hotel managers attach importance to idea generation in new product development process in accordance with the literature. Before developing a new product, the ideas of both staff, suppliers and customers are utilized.

In the responses under the **product** theme, it was seen that the participants cared about the stages such as testing or developing demo products. This result can be examined under the **concept development and testing step** in the new product development process. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that concept development and testing step is taken into consideration before developing a new product (Handfield *et al.*, 1990; Owens, 2004; Amue & Adiele, 2012; I. Borza & C. Borza, 2014)

The sub-theme of **analysis** can be examined under the **business analysis** step in the new product development process. In the literature, business analysis is one of the new product development steps (Owens, 2004; Amue & Adiele, 2012; I. Borza & C. Borza, 2014). In our study, similar results were obtained in the current literature. Before product development, managers analyze and decide whether to develop the product.

The **product development department** and **professional support**, as a result of interviews with managers, is an important step in the new product development process in hotels. This step can be examined under the **product development** step in the literature (Owens, 2004; Amue & Adiele, 2012; I. Borza & C. Borza, 2014). In addition, **advertising** in the new product development process, another theme obtained as a result of interviews is sub-theme. This sub-theme can be examined under the **commercialization step** in the literature (Claessens, 2015).

The second main theme is the innovative features of their hotels according to the participants. This theme was divided into 7 sub-themes. These were product, service, technology, design, social responsibility, environmental awareness and advertisement.

Product innovation is one of the methods used by many accommodation establishments (Zmud 1982; Tushman ve Nadler, 1986; Güleş ve Bülbül, 2004). As a result of the interviews conducted with hotel managers in our current study, it is seen that product innovation is given importance in the accommodation establishments in Antalya.

Another theme is **service**. Tourism product is the abstract product consumed in the place where it is produced. It is based on satisfaction (Kozak, 2014). Therefore, the presentation and service of a tourism product is one of the most important criteria affecting customer satisfaction.

Another theme is **technology**. Technological innovation is another type of innovation preferred by accommodation establishments (Orfila-Sintes *et al*, 2005). Nowadays technology is important for businesses. For years, studies on innovation have focused on its technological aspects (Nieves and Segarra-Cipres, 2015). In our study, hotel managers have benefited from technological innovations. Tablet menus and mobile applications stand out in the responses of the participants.

Another theme is **design**. In various studies, the design of products is examined in the innovation (Berkowitz, 1987; Hsu, 2011; Ganzer, *et al.*, 2017). The tangible assets in tourism affect customers' perceptions. Concrete assets such as the appearance of a furniture, the design of the room, the exterior, the ambiance in the lobby, and the layout of the table in the restaurant affect their customers and play a role in their satisfaction. As a result of our current research, it is concluded that hotel managers use the design as a marketing innovation.

Other themes are **social responsibility, environmental awareness and advertisement**. These themes are also considered as marketing innovation. Accommodation businesses attaching importance to the concept of social responsibility try to increase the beneficial effects of the enterprise to the society and reduce the negative effects of the enterprise (Türker ve Uçar, 2013). Today, the trend towards environmentally friendly applications is increasing all over the world. In this respect, the number of environmentally friendly accommodation enterprises is increasing day by day especially in line with the preferences of more educated, middle and high income tourists (Güneş, 2011).

Hotel businesses strengthen their image with features such as environmental awareness and social responsibility. Thus, they have an advantage over their competitors.

SUGGESTIONS

With the data obtained from the study, suggestions were made for both researchers and accommodation establishments.

Suggestions for researchers

The subject of innovation has been examined in many aspects of tourism. But there are still shortcomings. Studies can be conducted on the opinions and perceptions of innovation of tourism stakeholders.

The innovation process is an important element that increases the success of a product or service in the market. Although there are studies on innovation processes, they need to be increased. Necessary studies can be done about this.

This study was conducted in four and five star accommodation establishments in Antalya. Opinions of F&B managers in a different province and district can be taken.

Information and communication technologies and global competition have led and will continue to lead to changes in the tourism sector. It is inevitable that accommodation establishments will keep up with this change. What awaits accommodation establishments in the future can be examined.

Suggestions for accommodation establishments

In order to survive in a competitive environment and achieve sustainable success, accommodation establishments must keep up with the changes in the sector and renew themselves. This can make a difference.

Tourism is a sector with high substitution opportunities. Economic, social and psychological factors may affect tourism demand. Changes in tourism demand should be closely monitored. Thus, accommodation establishments can determine the price and marketing policy according to the change in demand.

Producing the product or service in accordance with the wishes and expectations of the customers attracts the attention of the target market. Accommodation establishments should also pay attention to what the market says when designing a product or service. Thus, accommodation establishments can increase their market share.

Team compliance in new products and development increases the likelihood of success. Accommodation establishments have to take into account the views of suppliers, managers, customers and employees in the process of developing and designing a new product or service and to carry out the process with consensus. In this way, the compliance of the new product or service to the expectations of the market can be increased and more influence can be gained in the market.

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