

MEASURES TAKEN IN RESTAURANT ENTERPRISES IN THE COVID 19 PROCESS AND THE CASE OF TURKEY

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***Abstract:** Hospitality and restaurant enterprises within the tourism industry are enterprises that contribute greatly to economies on a national and global basis. Like all tourism enterprises, restaurant enterprises which have fragile structure are affected very quickly by unexpected natural disasters, economic crises, health-related crises and political negativity, etc. Because of the covid-19 pandemic, restaurant enterprises faced a major crisis. The crisis is about health. In order to survive, customers must shop at restaurants. It is possible to regain customers who are afraid of health problems with measures to be taken. For this reason, the decisions that restaurant companies will make and the practices that they will make are vital in order to continue their activities during the crisis. Despite this, there has been no decrease in fixed expenses of enterprises whose cash flow rate has decreased. This has reduced the sustainability of enterprises, and many enterprises have unfortunately closed. For this reason, the measures applied in restaurant enterprises in Turkey were tried to be explained.*

***Keywords:** Covid-19, pandemic, restaurant, food & beverage, Covid 19 process, tourism.*

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19, which originated in Wuhan, Hubei province, China in late 2019, spread worldwide in as little as five months and turned into a pandemic. It has been declared a “pandemic” by the “World Health Organization” on March 11, 2020, spreading to 215 countries around the world. As of November 27, 2020, approximately 61 million people worldwide have been infected, and the number of people who have died is close to 1.5 million. Covid-19, one of the largest epidemics of the century, significantly damaged human health and life, but also caused serious social and economic damage to the current order of the world. While studies have been conducted on how the pandemic will follow the process, how the process will be circumvented with minimal loss of life, its economic effects have also been another item on the agenda (Tursaba,2020: 2, Tursabb, 2020:6).

The pandemic of Covid-19 (The Novel Coronavirus), which has spread all over the world, has also significantly negatively affected the tourism industry, which is one of the cornerstones of the global economy. The Covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on many sectors of social life and the economy. Among the sectors affected by this process is the food and beverage sector, where the socialization environment is intense. Food and beverage enterprises appear to be affected by restrictions imposed by governments in many countries, such as “curfew” and “social distance” bans. Significant revenue and job losses have occurred in the food and beverage sector because of the reasons such as the decision to close some food and beverage enterprises in order to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, the fact that individuals do not want to eat outside to comply with the social distance rule, and concerns about whether food safety rules are being followed (Okat, et al., 2020: 202). As a result of health concerns and measures taken, people have turned to eating at home. In order to protect citizens from the negative effects of the epidemic in Turkey and to prevent the spread of the pandemic, the activities of food and beverage enterprises have started to be implemented only in the form of take away or home delivery. (İflazoğlu & Aksoy, 2020:3362-3363). The formation of a health-based crisis has made consumers' assessments of food and beverage enterprises and their expectations about health (safety) measures more important. Decisions and practices that food and beverage companies will make in the Covid-19 period are vital for maintaining enterprise activities. For this reason, the measures applied in food and beverage enterprises are important and the study aims to provide information about the measures applied in Turkey. As a result, it was concluded that more technology should be used to reduce the risk of transmission and human relationships in restaurant enterprises.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE SECTOR

The hospitality industry is one of the important sectors of the tourism industry due to the fact that it provides income to the country's economies and employs millions of people. Due to the popularity of quality dining and fast food outlets, it contributes hundreds of billions of dollars to the global economy. The hospitality and food and beverage sector is vulnerable to the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters and pandemics. international travel bans applied in the period of Covid-19 and affecting more than 90 per cent of the world's population, and the extensive restrictions on public meetings and community mobility (Gössling et al.,

2021:12), social distance applications, the Prohibition of eating at the table and the closure of restaurants and restrictions on pandemic has created fears among people and the restaurant industry has been one of the worst affected sectors from the period. Most restaurants have been dragged into a liquidity crisis and permanent closure after a ban on eating at tables was imposed in the UK, Australia and US states between March 19 and 25, 2020 (Dube et al., 2020:1).

in a study conducted by Yenişehirlioğlu & Salha, (2020:364) on the subject, the majority of participants do not consider it appropriate to eat outside during the process. It is common belief that all restaurants, including chain enterprises, are unsafe. Participants who express that they disinfect even the products they buy from the grocery stores before entering the house express that they are afraid to even order home delivery services and similar applications. In short, people's eating out habits are gradually falling due to fear and anxiety.

It is estimated that restaurants operating after Covid-19 in the United States will close by 5% to 30% (about 20,000 to 110,000). Restaurant enterprises are going through some changes to survive the crisis. Due to Covid-19 reasons like not sitting at the table, home delivery, take-away applications in the restaurant enterprises, restaurants have started to adapt to these applications and some structural changes have occurred in their normal life practices. These changes are market share growth opportunities and accelerating digital transformation. The use of online platforms, called third-party apps in the industry, has also increased thanks to increased mobile apps. (www.morganstanley.com, 2020). Along with the threat of an pandemic, new technologies, including robots, have begun to be used in restaurants. In some restaurants, food is distributed with delivery robots, robots are used as auxiliary staff for actions such as cooking, cleaning (Özgüneş et al., 2020). In addition, with Bring your own device applications in restaurants, guests can look at menus with their smartphones and order and pay by credit card information. In some restaurants in the Netherlands, robots greet guests, measure their fever, report sick guests to management, and take guest orders. In some cafes, drinks can be ordered by mobile phone. (Riccio, 2020). Day by day, in food preparation, robot use and automation in terms of Hygiene and human health have become more widespread. A robot named “Flippy”, owned by Miso Robotics, acts as a kitchen assistant, can turn hamburger bread, chicken and hamburger meat on the grill with the help of a camera and a lever mounted on the front of the grill and fryer and put it in the fryer and take it out. “Pazzi ” (the company formerly known as EKIM) has created an autonomous kitchen that

can cook pizza with three robotic arms. One of the arms moves the dough to the next station, while the others pour the sauce during the movement and slice it after cooking. Thus, with the help of the touch screen in front of the kitchen, it is possible to order the desired pizza and serve it by offering personalized food (Özgüneş et al., 2020:1132).

COVID 19 PANDEMIC AND APPLICATIONS IN RESTAURANT ENTERPRISES: THE CASE OF TURKEY

Although the measures taken during the crisis are not a complete solution to the crises, the image of trust that will be created is effective in gaining some of the lost customers (Kim et al 2021:430, Seo et al. 2014:116-121) It is therefore very important for the restaurant industry to strategize and determine the practices it will do on how to reduce and minimize the risks associated with pandemics. (Kim et al., 2020: 32). Applications made in restaurant enterprises during the Covid-19 period are generally staff-oriented, product-oriented and operations-oriented, and many of the restaurant enterprises in the Covid-19 process implement some applications to create a perception of trust in their guests. According to the research conducted by Yilmaz & Şahin, (2021:19-20), the measures taken in restaurant enterprises in Turkey are similar to the measures in different parts of the world and are as follows: Development of home delivery and take-away sales techniques (Gössling et al., 2021:12), strengthening the digital presence and keeping relationships with customers alive, booking through the website or smartphones, promotional applications, contactless on-line and digital menu applications, contactless food delivery and contactless payment options (Riccio, 2020, Dube et al., 2020: 2-3), measurement of customers' fires at restaurant entrances using thermal control systems, supply of masks, arrangement of hand washing and disinfectant points, designing restaurants according to social distance rules, having limited seating capacity Soon, et al., (2021:2-4), disinfecting restaurants in different systems such as ultraviolet rays (IFR,2020), restaurants' having adequate ventilation (Covaci, 2020:5-7), placing transparent curtains between tables in order to reduce contact, using disposable products and equipment, hanging informative documents related to compliance with the rules at the entrance and on the walls. employees' regularly washing their hands, sterilize them, wear masks, use gloves in restaurants, measuring the body temperature of employees, implementing certification practices in terms of creating a perception of trust in guests (Deloitte, 2020:4-5)

In order to carry out tourism activities in a safe way, a circular on “controlled normalization process in food and drink facilities” was published on 20.05.2020 and mandatory rules for implementation in food and drink facilities were determined by Ministry of Culture and tourism in Turkey " General Directorate of Investments and Enterprises Chairman of the Board of Auditors” (www.ktb.gov.tr). These rules are as follows;

General principles and statement: Facility operators are obliged to take social distance measures throughout the facility. A social distance plan is prepared for general areas of use and session layout, the guest capacity of the facility is determined according to the social distance plan, an appropriate number of guests are accepted to this capacity, and the capacity information is hung in a visible place at the entrance of the facility. In addition, in the entrance hall or exterior of the facility and in general areas of use that are easily visible to guests and staff, boards are organized with covid-19 measures and rules that are applied and must be followed in the facility. Kitchen cleaning and food safety protocol, insect and pest control protocol are prepared for COVID-19 measures. Compliance with the protocol is ensured by the responsible staff.

Guest admission: Thermal camera or non-contact fever measurement is applied to guests upon entrance to the facility. At fever measurements higher than 38 degrees, the guest is not admitted to the business and is warned to contact a medical facility. Hand antiseptic is kept at the entrance of the facility and guests are allowed to enter after cleaning their hands with antiseptic. In case the guest does not have one, masks are kept to be given. Guests are obliged to wear masks outside of eating and drinking activities. As far as possible, contactless payment is received. If the contact post device is used, the device is cleaned and disinfected after each use. In payment areas, a plexiglas or similar barrier is arranged between the safe and the guest at eye level, or staff receiving payment at the safe use a face protective mask. Valet service staff cleans their hands with appropriate antiseptic before and after each vehicle pickup and departure service, do not wear gloves and use vehicles masked.

Dining Hall and General Areas of Use: Social distance landmarks are made inside the elevators with a decal of 1 meter, its capacity is determined and written/visual information is made, provided that it does not exceed one-third of its total capacity. The entire property, including dining halls, entrance area and Hall, general use of space such as additional halls and open spaces, is organized in accordance with the social distance plan. Social distance markings are made with a decal of 1 meter wherever there may be queues inside or outside the facility. Social distance and seating

rules do not apply to guests who are from the same family or come as a group. The distance between the tables where food is served is 1.5 meters, and between the chairs side by side is 60 cm. Service staff takes care to maintain distance rules and avoid contact during service. Hand antiseptic or cologne is kept on each table. In case of open buffet application, plexiglas or similar barrier is made to prevent guest access to the guest side of the open buffet, and service is offered by the kitchen staff. Tools such as tea/coffee machine, water dispensers and beverage machine are removed or the guest is provided to receive service through the service staff. Materials such as dining tables and chairs, serving materials, sugar, salt, spices, napkins, menus are properly cleaned and disinfected after each guest use. If possible, disposable sugar, salt, spices, napkins are used. Hand antiseptic is kept at the entrances of general usage areas and general customer toilets, in different places of large halls. If possible, the entrance doors of general toilets are arranged as an automatic door system, and if they cannot be arranged, frequent disinfection of the handles of the entrance doors is provided. Game rooms reserved for children are not opened in the facility.

About Staff: Regular health check of Staff is carried out; periodic information is taken from staff so that the people they live with can be monitored in terms of COVID-19. All staffs are provided with special training in pandemic and hygiene. At the entrance of the staff, a thermal camera or non-contact fever measurement is performed, a hand antiseptic is kept. Staffs are provided with personal protective equipment (such as a mask, medical mask, gloves, face protector) suitable for contact with guests and the environment at the place of work and their use is monitored. Daily cleaning and hygiene of staff clothes is provided. It is cared that the same staff are employed as much as possible in the same shift. Dressing-shower-toilet and communal dining, rest areas of the staff are organized in accordance with social distance conditions, if necessary, arrangements such as landmarks, lanes, barriers are made in this regard, cleaning and disinfection of these areas in accordance with the rules are provided regularly. Rules for keeping the contact of persons temporarily admitted to the facility for the supply of goods or other reasons (repair, maintenance, etc.) at a minimum level are determined and their implementation is monitored. In addition, these people are allowed to perform their operations by maintaining the social distance rule and using protective equipment. If symptoms of the disease are detected in the staff, they are provided to contact the nearest medical facility.

General Cleaning and Maintenance: Cleaning of all areas is carried out with the appropriate frequency using the product in accordance

with the standards according to the nature of the surface, traceability records of these applications are kept. Hand contact surfaces such as door handles, handrails, elevator buttons, electric buttons, post device, television control, telephone, computer keyboard, menu, table tops, salt shaker/pepper shaker are frequently cleaned with water and detergent throughout the facility, disinfection is provided with 1/100 diluted bleach, 70% alcohol-based products are used on surfaces such as post devices, phones, computer keyboards which might be damaged by chlorine compounds, and traceability records are kept. Floors of toilets, toilets, urinals are cleaned frequently with 1/10 diluted bleach; sinks, faucets and battery heads, door handles are disinfected with 1/100 diluted bleach, and traceability records are kept. Hand drying fans are closed in toilets and put out of use, disposable paper towels are used. Liquid soap, toilet paper and paper towels are kept at all times. Cleaning staff use personal protective equipment (gloves and masks), dispose of their post-processing equipment in workplace garbage and ensure hand cleaning and hygiene for at least 20 seconds with water and soap. Periodic maintenance of the ventilation and air conditioning system, tools, equipment, materials and equipment such as washing machines, dishwashers, and sterilization of the necessary ones are provided. The filters of air conditioning and ventilation systems are periodically replaced in time. Air conditioners are operated to receive 100% fresh air from outside. Fans should not be used. The ventilation of the facilities with central ventilation systems is arranged in such a way as to provide fresh air circulation and natural ventilation is often performed. All of the closed areas in the facility are frequently opened doors and windows, providing natural ventilation.

Kitchen and Service Areas: Food safety and kitchen hygiene practices are carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations. Hygiene barriers, sterilization devices for the shipment of raw materials and products to the food production area and in the kitchen area, necessary tools and equipment for hand and body hygiene are kept. Non-commissioned staff cannot enter kitchen areas. All foods are stored in closed cabinets or covered. In order to prevent cross contamination, foods prepared with untreated foodstuffs are stored in separate places in the kitchen. In addition, no food items come into contact with the ground. Cleaning and hygiene of the kitchen and associated areas, all kinds of hardware and equipment used in the kitchen, countertops and storage areas are regularly provided. Surfaces that come into frequent contact with hands are regularly wiped with 1/100 diluted bleach. Service materials (such as plates, forks, spoons, knives, cups) are washed in the dishwasher. Kitchen staff use work clothes and personal protective equipment during work, wash

their hands regularly and clean them with antiseptic. In the kitchen, visual/written information about the rules and good hygiene practices that the staff must follow is provided.

Business Vehicles: Hand antiseptic or cologne is kept in the vehicles. Business vehicles are boarded with hand antiseptic and hand cleaning is provided and a mask is constantly worn inside the vehicle. If possible, the vehicles are always used by the same staff. Hand contact surfaces of the vehicle (door handles, glass controls, steering wheel, gear, radio, etc.) are disinfected with a product containing 70% alcohol after each use.

CONCLUSION

The tourism sector and the enterprises in this sector are very quickly affected by negative situations such as war, terror, epidemics that occur in the region or around the world.

With the declaration of Covid-19 disease as a pandemic and its rapid spread in countries, the cessation of international flights, the implementation of curfews within countries and different restrictions, restaurant enterprises have entered into a huge bottleneck. Regaining at least some of the customers will be possible by following the pandemic rules (distance, hygiene and mask) of these enterprises. The Republic of Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Interior, Foreign Affairs and related non-governmental organizations have met and conducted research around the world and published a circular on "eating and drinking facilities". In these difficult conditions, countries determine the general rules, while restaurant enterprises develop some applications according to the pandemic rules in order to survive (home delivery, takeaway service, taking orders by phone, , etc.). In this process, the courier sector has improved and employment has increased. The use of technologies in these applications is of great importance in preventing inter-human relations. It is recommended that restaurant businesses use assistive technologies and robotic elements more widely during food production and service.

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