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A Research on Determination of Food Logistics and Supply Chain Management Processes of Accommodation Businesses

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Abstract

The supply chain management process extends from the procurement of goods and services to meeting guest demand. The aim of this study is to identify the factors affecting the supply chain management process of accommodation businesses operating in Muğla. A qualitative research approach was adopted, and data were collected using in-depth interview techniques. An 11-question interview form prepared by the researchers was administered to thirteen individuals working in the supply chain departments of accommodation businesses. To diversify the data, three different suppliers were included in the study. Purposive sampling was chosen to interview individuals who were considered likely to answer the questions, resulting in interviews with a total of sixteen people. The data were eval-

uated using descriptive analysis in line with a phenomenological approach. The study results indicate that businesses consider using supply chain management advantageous, that headquarters plays a significant role in supplier selection, that businesses utilize information technologies, that local products are available due to the positive impact of cooperatives in Muğla, and that businesses face difficulties in obtaining vegan and allergen-free products. Based on the findings, recommendations have been made for those working in supply chain departments of hospitality businesses and for researchers in this field.

Keywords: accommodation businesses, food logistics, supply chain management, muğla

1. INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector has become one of the leading sources of economic income for countries in the rapidly developing and growing world. Accommodation businesses, a vital part of the tourism sector, need to implement strategic moves that enhance their competitiveness in all their management processes. The supply chain management process encompasses the entire process, from the procurement of goods and services to meeting guest demand. Ensuring customer satisfaction and responding quickly to the demands of different customer types without compromising quality or increasing costs depends on efficient supply chain management. The proper management of the supply chain also plays a significant role in reducing food costs for accommodation businesses. Supplier selection, menu planning, waste management, product quality, utilizing local producers and products, and cost control are all directly linked to the efficient management of the food supply chain. Consequently, food waste decreases, guest satisfaction increases, costs are reduced, and the business image gains value.

Muğla, the province with the longest coastline in Türkiye, hosts a large number of domestic and foreign tourists every year with its historical texture, rich cultural values, and natural beauties [1]. Looking at the numerical data regarding accommodation facilities with investment and operating licenses in Muğla province, it is seen that there are a total of 518 accommodation establishments with investment and operating licenses, 57,502 rooms, and a total bed capacity of 124,810 [2].

The main problem of this research is to evaluate the problems experienced in supply chain management in cities with high tourist volumes like Muğla, from the perspective of employees in the supply management departments of accommodation establishments and employees of supplier companies. The high volume of tourism activities in Muğla province and the resulting large demand for food support the need for a strong supply chain structure in the region. Therefore, it is believed that evaluating the supply-related difficulties in cities with high tourist numbers like Muğla, from the perspective of businesses and suppliers, will fill gaps in the literature and practice.

Negative aspects of the supply chain management process reduce the service quality and efficiency of accommodation businesses. The aim of this study is to identify the factors affecting the supply chain management process of accommodation businesses operating in Muğla. Presenting the advantages and disadvantages of the supply chain management implemented by accommodation businesses, and offering solutions for negative factors, demonstrates the importance of this study. First, the study addresses supply chain management within a theoretical framework, highlighting the importance of food logistics in accommodation businesses and analyzing the findings. In the conclusion section, a general evaluation is made based on the findings, and it is believed that the recommendations developed for both academia and the industry will contribute to the field.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Turkish Language Association defines the word "supply" as "researching, finding, providing, obtaining" [3]. In this context, for businesses, supply involves researching resources to meet their needs, selecting the best supplier, and securing those resources [4]. Lee and Billington [5] defined the supply chain as the organization of the production and distribution network that provides raw materials, transforms them into intermediate and final products, and delivers the final products to customers. When supply chain organization is not well managed, problems arise and valuable resources are wasted [6]. Supply chain management, while creating value/money for the market, also protects this value for businesses and stakeholders. Thus, businesses achieve a more holistic vision than a disorganized business optimization [7]. Supply chain management should also ensure that businesses are more environmentally conscious, have a sustainability mindset, and that their suppliers adopt this understanding [8]. Leading companies in the supply chain develop by moving beyond traditional approaches and considering the supply chain as a whole, thereby increasing competition among other supply chains as a single unit [9].

The objectives of supply chain management can be listed as increasing customer satisfaction, shortening the time allocated for operations, reducing storage and production costs, and keeping product-related defects at the lowest level [10]. On the other hand, the successful coordination and healthy execution of supply chain processes are important for maintaining efficiency and gaining an advantage in the business world in operational terms [11]. Supply chain activities are more complex and frequent in hospitality businesses due to seasonal intensity compared to food and beverage businesses. At the same time, food and beverage service constitutes a large part of the service offered. With accurate forecasting, supply chain activities become more systematic [12]. The intensive and collective effort spent on preparing, producing, and delivering the right products to meet customer needs cannot be carried out alone by businesses. Therefore, businesses need to specialize in their activities and act together with other businesses in the chain [13]. The food sector, with its large production and distribution capacity, currently faces challenges such as food security, climate change, rising costs, and the underutilization of local markets. A developing and sustainable food supply chain structure will be created when sector stakeholders look beyond their organizational boundaries [14]. In their study, Validi et al. [15] presented strategic routes for creating a low-cost and environmentally friendly supply chain structure for the complex distribution of dairy products,

which hold a significant place in the food sector.

Research on supplier selection criteria within the scope of supply chain management in accommodation businesses [16] shows that accommodation businesses value the following factors when considering perishable and semi-perishable products: payment terms, after-sales support services, packaging quality, quality systems used, distribution efficiency, responsiveness to change, communication effectiveness, production technology, and technical capacity. A collaborative approach within the supply chain ensures benefits for both the buyer and the supplier [17]. In a study by Bilgiçli and Cantimer [18] on meeting the logistics (food and agricultural products) needs of accommodation businesses, it was stated that the majority of hotels preferred businesses in Sakarya province for purchasing, but hotels in Sapanca district met their needs from Kocaeli due to reasons such as product variety, distance, and ease of payment. A study conducted by Acar et al. [19] revealed that supply chain practices (such as delivery, technology use, and logistics support) positively impact the performance of hotel businesses. On the other hand, Cesur [20], in his research, stated that disruptions in supply chain management can be resolved through a robust organization and collaboration created by managers, and that this requires training encompassing all personnel. In Karakaş's [21] study, which measured the relationship between green supply chain management practices and green supply chain management performance in the tourism sector, participants indicated that they supported collaboration between customers and suppliers but gave low participation responses regarding auditing, suggesting that the lack of full adoption of practices might be due to the limited number of personnel responsible, and that participation in the recycling of materials was low.

3. METHOD

As a research method, a qualitative research approach was adopted, and the in-depth interview technique was used as a data collection tool. Using the qualitative research process, defined by Van Maanen [22] as "a whole set of processes encompassing techniques that attempt to define, solve, interpret, and arrive at terms related to meaning," it is believed that the opinions and thoughts of personnel working in the supply process regarding the subject can be examined in detail, and detailed data can be obtained for evaluating the strategies of accommodation businesses and supplier businesses. With this perspective, a literature review was first conducted. Subsequently, in-depth interviews were used, a data collection method that aims to reveal the experiences, thoughts, perceptions, and lives of individuals in detail, providing the researcher with the opportunity to gain in-depth information on the subject [23].

Merriam [24] suggests that in semi-structured interviews, flexible questions should be prepared to allow participants to express their own thoughts on the topic, and that the topic should be explored through different questions to provide opportunities for new ideas to emerge. To ensure the content and validity of the data collection instrument, after document analysis, the questionnaire prepared for the research was reviewed by three academics who are experts in the field and have previously conducted research on this topic. Based on expert evaluations, necessary adjustments were made to the question wording, and the interview form was finalized. Initially, preliminary interviews were conducted with four individuals using the revised questionnaire, after which interviews with the target group commenced.

The study group consisted of personnel working in supply chain management processes at 4-5 star accommodation establishments operating in Fethiye, Marmaris, Ortaca, and Köyceğiz, as well as personnel working at supplier companies. A total of 16 people representing accommodation establishments and suppliers were interviewed. To evaluate the factors affecting food logistics and supply chain management in accommodation establishments operating in Muğla, the opinions and assessments of purchasing managers, kitchen chefs, warehouse managers, and accounting managers of accommodation establishments, as well as warehouse managers and regional managers from supplier companies, were examined. Purposive sampling was chosen because the aim was to interview individuals who were thought to be able to answer the research questions. Based on the data obtained from the Muğla Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, employees of the selected establishments were contacted by telephone, and interviews were conducted face-to-face after appointments were made with those who agreed to participate. In structured interviews, presenting the same set of questions in the same order and format to all participants increases the comparability of the data and contributes to the reliability of the research [25].

The data collection process was conducted between October 2024 and February 2025. During the interviews, participants' responses to the questions were meticulously recorded and then systematically transcribed. The data collection process was terminated when the collected information began to repeat itself and data saturation was reached. To enhance the validity and reliability of the research, care was taken to preserve the semantic integrity of the participants' statements during the transcription process, and original expressions were retained as much as possible in direct transcripts. In accordance with ethical principles, participants' identities were kept confidential, and each participant was assigned a code during the analysis process. The data obtained from the interviews were evaluated using descriptive analysis methods within the framework of the phenomenological approach, and the findings were interpreted in line with the research objective. One of the most important indicators in ensuring the validity and reliability of the research results is the detailed and in-depth examination of the data [26]. Both expert opinion and preliminary work play a significant role in ensuring the validity and reliability of the research. A table was created for the responses to the demographic information questions

in the first part of the research questions. Other data were analyzed by presenting the most prominent answers under each question heading.

Interview Questions:

1. What criteria do you use to select suppliers in supply chain management?
2. How does your menu planning affect the supply chain management process?
3. Are there any negative situations caused by personnel in supply chain management, and if so, what are they?
4. Are there any products that cannot be obtained in the supply chain management process? If so, what are they?
5. How does your product supply chain management process affect costs?
6. How does your guest profile affect the supply process?
7. Is there any product waste in the supply chain management process? How do you manage waste?
8. To what extent can you utilize local producers/local products in the supply chain management process?
9. What are your supplier evaluation criteria?
10. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of supply chain management?
11. How and to what extent do you utilize information technologies in supply chain management?

4. FINDINGS

This section of the study examined data obtained from demographic information and findings from 11 interview questions posed to hotel employees and suppliers.

Table 1. Demographic findings regarding participants

	Number of People	Percentage
Age		
18-24	-	-
25-34	-	-
35-44	4	%25
45-54	12	%75
55-64	-	-
Gender		
Female	1	%6
Male	15	%94
Educational Status		
Primary School	-	-
Middle School	-	-
High School	13	%81
Associate Degree	1	%6
Bachelor's Degree	2	%13
Postgraduate Degree	-	-
Participant		
Hotel Employee (P)	13	%81
Supplier (S)	3	%19

While the demographic data of the participants in the study is insufficient for generalization, an examination of age, gender, and educational status suggests that recent graduates do not work in supply-related departments. It is thought that high school and university graduates could be directed towards this field during their education. The research, conducted with hotel employees and suppliers, examined the functioning of the supply chain management process in hospitality businesses, particularly how food procurement is affected by the process, rising input prices, technology usage levels, and sustainability approaches.

1. Participants' responses to the question, "What criteria do you use to determine supplier selection in supply chain management?":

When examining the responses to the first question of the study, the majority of participants stated that supplier selection is determined by the headquarters, that quality and price are important criteria in supplier selection, and that they work with businesses that meet the criteria determined by the quality unit. Based on this, it can be said that the headquarters directly intervenes in the procurement process of certain products, especially to maintain and standardize service quality. It is also thought that the headquarters gains a price advantage by obtaining bulk prices, particularly for purchases from multiple hotel businesses. Furthermore, it is believed that the inability of local suppliers to meet the demand also plays a significant role in this.

P1: "We choose in two ways. We look at the companies that come to us, and if they can meet our requirements, our

quality control team evaluates the company on-site. If the conditions are suitable, we work with them.”

P4: “Quality is our priority. The expiration dates of the products are important; we don’t accept products with only three months left.”

P5: “We determine based on quality and price. We form a commission and report our opinion to the headquarters.

P9: “The selection is made according to the brand, quality, and price of the product.”

P12: “We look at the product quality. We do a price analysis and we want trouble-free logistics.”

2. Here are the participants' responses to the question, "How does your menu planning affect the supply chain management process?"

When examining the responses to the question about how menu planning is affected, it was noted that businesses operating seasonally complete their menu planning before the season begins, and that international cuisines are planned according to the customer profile. In Muğla in general, since businesses operate during the summer months, menu planning and demo trials are completed in March-April, and it can be assumed that the businesses to work with during the season are also determined during this period. It can also be said that previous years' guest experiences and expectations guide the product sourcing process.

P1: “There’s a different theme every day, Turkish, Asian, etc., and we make our purchases accordingly. We have a section for Aegean herbs, which came about from a project we did with the Elele Women’s Cooperative in Ortaca. The herbs were cooked daily, and our female employees purchased them from the cooperative.”

P4: “If there’s red meat in the heat, we make sure there’s turkey in the cold. We make our purchases accordingly. We buy all the vegetables fresh, so there’s less waste.”

P6: “We experience problems with gluten-free and vegan buffets. Even if there isn’t a special sensitivity for guests, they might try the food out of curiosity and consume more than they need.”

3. The participants' responses to the question, "Are there any negative situations caused by personnel in supply chain management, and if so, what are they?" were as follows:

When examining the general responses to the question regarding personnel-related problems in supply chain management, it was noted that there were no problems related to personnel in general, but adaptation problems were mentioned for newly hired personnel. One of the biggest difficulties related to personnel is that graduates from food and beverage departments who work in the sector are not employed in the purchasing departments of hotel businesses, making it difficult for employees to control the requested and received products. It is thought that the demanding working conditions of warehouse personnel lead to a high employee turnover rate in businesses, as they may not want to work in this field in the future.

P2: “Our warehouse staff, the porters, complain a lot about the workload. We work with only 4 staff members in that department at a 1200-person hotel, and we struggle to get through the season. At least two of them say they won’t be working with us next season and don’t want to do this job.”

P4: “Staff are constantly using their phones; now the program is installed on all their phones, we track everything digitally, so there are no problems.”

P8: “Especially this year, there is a very serious staffing problem. Sometimes we learn a day in advance that a product won’t arrive, and we can’t respond quickly to changes due to a shortage of qualified personnel.”

P11: “It can be a problem if the staff doesn’t know the product or the labels.”

S2: “It doesn’t happen much in the winter season, but we are affected by the population increase in Muğla in the summer. We work seasonally with staff, so this can be a problem; that’s the way it is. Staff learn the job on the job, with an experienced assistant.”

S3: “We are having problems with Generation Z; there are communication problems. We have to ask them to do the work themselves, because they want to earn a lot of money.”

4. The participants' responses to the question, "Are there any products that cannot be obtained in the supply chain management process? If so, what are they?" were as follows:

In response to questions about product supply issues, the general consensus was that products were largely available, but occasional problems could arise. These problems typically involved imported products, products for gluten sensitivity, and vegan products. It was observed that hotel businesses sometimes struggled to meet guest requests and needs with their suppliers, while suppliers couldn’t always meet the brand demands of hotel businesses for every product or brand. The wide range of products makes the difficulty in meeting demand understandable. Furthermore, it is thought that exchange rate-related pricing, especially for imported products, could directly affect hotel purchasing behavior. This, in turn, could potentially reduce guest satisfaction, particularly for those with specific requests and needs.

P4: “We have problems with products for our guests with celiac disease. We prepare separate meals for our guests with peanut allergies.”

P6: “There are difficulties in supplying gluten and vegan products throughout Turkey. Companies don’t send the quantities we request; they always send less. White meat supply is a bit problematic; since the product comes from Antalya,

sometimes the vehicle temperature isn't at the desired level. In that case, we check the product temperature and take only the amount needed for that day, not the rest. We also prevent further shipments by recording the batch number."

P8: *"After the pandemic, we started seeing products with altered expiration dates."*

S2: *"Sometimes we experience problems due to brands. We may send a different brand of product instead of the brand requested by businesses. Then we consult with our marketing department to find out how and when the problem will be resolved."*

S3: *"It can be due to production or raw materials, or technical malfunctions, but they are resolved immediately. We can work with stock based on foresight."*

5. Participants' responses to the question, "How is your product supply chain management process affected by costs?":

An analysis of the responses from both business and supplier employees regarding how costs are affected by the supply chain management process reveals that while seasonal budgets are considered when selecting suppliers before the season begins, interim price increases due to inflation cannot be avoided. They also indicate that the biggest impact on product price changes stems from increased costs related to distribution methods. Hotel businesses may secure themselves against economic fluctuations by signing contracts at the beginning of the season, but the ever-increasing transportation costs of suppliers are reflected in product prices.

P2: *"With inflation, prices are no longer stable. Unlike before, there's no single price throughout the season; products get at least two price increases. If there's a significant price increase on a menu item, we warn the chef, and we remove that item without compromising quality."*

P4: *"The number of staff can also be reduced."*

P9: *"There are no problems with products that are under contract, but for products that aren't under contract, we adhere to market prices."*

P13: *"Now, prices at the beginning and end of the season are very different. That's why we work with more stock; we fill our freezers at the beginning of the season. We are less affected by costs."*

S1: *"There are very exorbitant prices these days. Cherries that we bought for 50 TL a week ago are 120 TL this week."*

S2: *"Since pricing is corporate, everyone knows what they will pay. There are fluctuating vegetable and fruit prices; other products are not affected much. Companies can offer discounts, and we present those to our customers."*

S3: *"We were most affected by fuel, vehicle repair and maintenance costs, insurance, comprehensive insurance, and motor vehicle tax. All vehicles are commercial, and operational profitability decreased on a product basis."*

6. Participants' responses to the question, "How does your guest profile affect the supply process?":

An analysis of the responses to the question about how the supply process is affected by guests reveals that the nationalities of the guests and the budgets of the businesses are the most important factors. While hotel businesses try to manage the supply process by anticipating guest expectations, supplier companies are developing new strategies to meet the demands coming from hotel businesses.

P8: *"The supply of allergen-free products is a problem sometimes; we have so many customers with allergies that we don't know what to feed them. Guests with allergies to nuts and peanuts are particularly challenging."*

P12: *"We have a high volume of British, German, and Russian guests. We use foods and spices that they can eat. That's how we source them. We offer dishes from world cuisines. Guests are happy to see dishes from their own countries."*

S1: *"Lately, products like fresh cilantro and artichoke vinegar are in high demand, so we always keep them in stock."*

S2: *"Customer capacity and location affect us. The variety of products increases or decreases. The number of shipments is also affected."*

7. Participants' responses to the question, "Is there any product loss in the supply chain management process? How do you manage waste?":

An analysis of the responses to the question regarding the extent of waste in the supply process revealed that, in particular, there was spoilage due to leftover products at the buffet and heat-related losses. It was stated that food and packaging waste is largely recycled through the municipality or contracted companies. The limited waste generated in hotel businesses from the production process and the waiting time of products served at the buffet is generally converted into compost or similar forms and/or collected by the municipality for animal shelters. Supplier companies indicated that expired or nearly expired products are destroyed or recycled.

P3: *"There is waste with vegetables, wet waste is generated and collected through an agreement with the municipality. We separate other waste, and it is collected by the relevant companies."*

P4: *"The waste rate is very low. It only occurs with plates left over from guests. We separate that with our AI waste bin."*

P8: *"Waste is very rare. Sometimes a product is spoiled, and we return it to the company with a non-conformity report."*

P11: *"Packaging waste is separated and collected by the municipality. We have made a proposal to the management*

to make baby food from other waste.”

S2: “There isn’t much waste, but sometimes expiration dates can pass. If we can return it, we do; otherwise, products like fruits and vegetables are destroyed. Sometimes there can be breakage or spillage due to staff errors.”

S3: “It can be due to personal errors; it is either destroyed or recycled. Care is taken to avoid waste.”

8. Participants' responses to the question, "To what extent are you able to utilize local producers/local products in the supply chain management process?":

An examination of the overall responses to the question regarding the use of local products and working with local producers reveals that while local products may be insufficient to meet all business demands, they are utilized to the maximum extent possible. Furthermore, it is noted that local cooperatives are used for procurement. The high level of cooperative organization in Muğla facilitates product procurement for supplier companies and hotel businesses. Supplier companies stated that they inform cooperatives in advance of their product range needs and that production is guaranteed to be purchased. In this respect, it can be said that rural and regional development is strengthened alongside tourism.

P1: “We buy pomegranate molasses and watermelon from the Dalaman cooperative. The Elele Women's Cooperative made a new ice cream, it was very good, but we will buy it depending on whether they can meet the conditions because they need to maintain the cold chain. If it passes the quality test, we will buy it.”

P5: “Our company has a project to support local businesses. We buy olive oil, honey, and citrus fruits.”

P8: “We would like to buy from local businesses. But local businesses have invoicing problems, and they lack various documents that should be on the products.”

P10: “We use olives and olive oil from Milas. We have Aegean herbs in our open buffet. We also grow them in our own garden. We use them in ravioli, pastries, and mezes.”

S2: “We buy many local products from Datça. You may have heard of Muğla's Turkish coffee, the Şeref Kuden brand, we buy that. We buy dairy products from Gökova.”

9. Participants' responses to the question, "What are your supplier evaluation criteria?":

An analysis of the responses from staff involved in supply chain management at hospitality establishments regarding their supplier selection criteria revealed that their businesses have an evaluation system in place for supplier selection, that quality and hygiene are particularly important, and that delivery is the most crucial factor.

P2: “The quality department has a list of 30 questions, and we evaluate based on that. The criteria are strict. Many things need to be checked. From how the pallets should be to the cold chain, products are evaluated and purchased by a three-person commission. Time can be a problem; the product must not exceed half its shelf life.”

P9: “We purchase from local companies and companies with continuity. Product quality, storage conditions, and timely delivery are important issues for us.”

P10: “On-site inspections are carried out; our quality department inspects them. There is a scoring system. Products are sent for analysis.”

P12: “We inspect the cold storage facilities on-site. We check their cleanliness. We record the vehicle temperatures. We check them repeatedly.”

10. "What are the advantages and disadvantages of supply chain management as you see them?" These were the participants' responses to this question.

In response to the question regarding the advantages and disadvantages of supply chain management, the general consensus was that the system has many positive aspects for both hospitality businesses and suppliers. The perceived disadvantage is that the process is more detailed and time-consuming. Suppliers who struggle to meet the immediate demands of hospitality businesses are seen as suffering from this situation. Especially in chain hospitality businesses, supply chain management is crucial because the entire flow can be monitored from a single center. It can be said that it minimizes the error rate for both hospitality businesses and their employees, thus preventing major problems.

P1: “As a disadvantage, in my personal opinion, it takes time due to the details, it progresses slowly. Also, there is the audit by the agencies, they audit us before sending guests, there are details.”

P2: “As a disadvantage, the supplier doesn't want to work with you, the details are tiring, even the beard grooming of your staff is important. It's difficult to meet the requirements.”

P4: “The advantages are that we don't waste time, we don't experience return problems, the products we receive are guaranteed. Everything is digital, all personnel have the application, we know which product was withdrawn from the warehouse at what time. There are no disadvantages.”

P11: “As an advantage, all kinds of documents for the products are now checked, they can be tracked in detail, such as security certificates. Guests do not experience any product-related problems.”

S1: “Our payments are more balanced. Sometimes we can have problems with products we get from our local producers.”

S2: “Since everything is tracked systematically, it is very advantageous, it can only be a little tiring for the staff. We have given our customers a trust, which is very important.”

S3: *"We save time, errors are minimized, and the management process is controlled. The disadvantage is that technology arrives a little late."*

11. Participants' responses to the question, "How and to what extent do you utilize information technologies in supply chain management?":

An analysis of the responses to the question about how and to what extent developing technology is used in supply chain management reveals that a large percentage of businesses use a supply-related program, while a small portion of those interviewed indicated the use of email or internet-based messaging applications. It is evident that information technologies, while making human life easier, are also used extensively in commerce. It is stated that information technologies are used throughout the entire supply chain management process, and while older personnel find it difficult to adapt, it is seen as a job facilitator for younger employees.

K9: *"The fact that we know and can track every stage of a product's journey from production to consumption is thanks to technology; we use inventory management programs."*

S2: *"We track everything digitally. Our staff have handheld terminals, and every task is controlled through them. Nothing is done manually. New representatives receive training."*

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Research conducted on accommodation units within tourism businesses reveals that, in terms of the universality and rationality of supplier selection practices, Dickson (1996)[27] listed 23 criteria used in supplier selection, with quality ranking first in terms of importance [27]. According to the research results, accommodation businesses prioritize product quality and price in supplier selection. From the perspective of supplier firms, quality also takes center stage. Maintaining the importance of quality in supplier selection will positively influence customer preferences for hotel businesses. High costs are challenging both accommodation businesses and suppliers in today's conditions. It has been observed that businesses achieve savings without compromising quality by changing the brands of the products they use. Yarlıkaş and Can [28] also determined in their study that the most important factor affecting supply chain management is cost.

Measures taken to reduce food waste in businesses should be increased. Significant waste has been identified from product temperatures, leftover items on the buffet, and vegetables. Pılanya's [29] study, which found that food loss is most prevalent during the transportation of fruits and vegetables, supports this finding. From the supplier's perspective, the majority of waste appears to be packaging waste. Proper storage and preservation methods, along with employee training and incentives, will significantly reduce these problems. Guests' nationalities, their perspectives on gastronomy (such as offering gourmet plates), and their immune systems influence product supply in terms of variety and quantity. From the supplier's perspective, customer capacity and location affect the process.

Since seasonal accommodation businesses generally plan their menus in advance of the season, the supply chain management process is not negatively affected; however, because the consumption of vegan and gluten-free products cannot be fully predicted, some businesses experience overconsumption. It has been stated that supply cannot be achieved at the desired level. It is recommended that efforts be made to include these products in local production. It has been noted that there are seasonal problems in the supply of imported products, and in the supply of white meat, problems arise due to vehicle temperature issues. Minimizing food losses and ensuring safe food throughout the supply chain should be the main goal of the food sector through laws, regulations, inspections, and adaptation to developing technology. It has been observed that some businesses purchase small quantities from local producers, while hotels with high guest numbers utilize businesses in Antalya in the supply process because the producers do not have the required certifications, cannot issue invoices, and cannot meet the demand. Suppliers participating in the research in Muğla stated that they offer well-known local products. In Muğla specifically, it is considered that farmer training, the cooperative formation and support of local producers, and the use of local products are important aspects for regional development.

In supply chain management, advantages include fixed prices, eliminating the need to search for products, and guaranteed products without return issues; however, dealing with a detailed procedure to ensure product standards and managing this process is not easy. Bedük's [30] study, which found that businesses' supply chain management practices significantly contribute to the financial performance of the business in terms of quality, price, time, and flexibility, supports this aspect of the research. From the supplier's perspective, balanced payments and mutual trust are seen as advantages.

According to the research results, businesses are having difficulty finding personnel for carrier positions due to the demanding working conditions. From the supplier's perspective, the population increase in Muğla during the summer season necessitates the hiring of seasonal personnel. Improving working conditions and reducing the workload for personnel in this position is of great importance.

It is observed that employees and suppliers in the purchasing departments of accommodation establishments make extensive use of information technologies in line with business capabilities. Bedük's [30] study supports this, stating that developing the software used by businesses in supply chain management and effectively using ready-made reporting systems facilitates business direction. Knowing the stages food goes through before being served to guests, its storage

conditions, and the inspections it undergoes is an advantage for managers, and tracking these processes is closely related to the use of information technologies [31]. Accommodation establishments should be able to take advantage of all the opportunities of technology in supply chain management and also be aware of the practices of competing firms. In the hotel establishments where the research was conducted, a system integrated with artificial intelligence was observed in only one hotel; investments should be made in this area for its widespread adoption.

Overall, the research shows that accommodation businesses and supplier companies heavily utilize automation programs. It was noted that both accommodation businesses and supplier companies experience difficulties in staffing during the summer months, with the heavy workload being the primary factor. Supply chain management was found to be beneficial in terms of traceability for businesses, employees, and hotel guests (the end consumers). While the high volume of supplier selection from headquarters is considered positive in terms of price competition, the lack of initiative given to managers in the purchasing department is seen as a negative aspect, particularly in terms of sourcing products from local producers.

This study, conducted with personnel working in supply-related roles within accommodation establishments and with personnel from supplier businesses in Muğla province, revealed that there is a lack of extensive research on this topic in the literature. Specifically, researching and identifying suppliers serving accommodation and food and beverage businesses, thoroughly examining the advantages and disadvantages of the supplier selection process being determined by top management/headquarters, measuring the level of knowledge of local producers regarding certification and trade, conducting an analysis of food supply and demand specific to Muğla, and examining the activities of municipalities and private businesses to prevent food waste are considered important for diversifying academic studies on this subject.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

In the course of preparing this manuscript, the authors employed ChatGPT to improve the linguistic quality and readability of the content. After utilizing this AI tool, the authors conducted comprehensive review and necessary revisions to ensure the accuracy, integrity, and scientific rigor of the manuscript. All authors bear full responsibility for the final content of the published work, including any errors or inconsistencies that may arise.

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