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Buyer-Supplier Relationship in Tourism Supply Chains: A Research in Cappadocia Region in Turkey

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Abstract: Supply chain management provides some benefits to businesses like high speed, high quality, low costs and short cycle times. Because of this advantages it is discussed and researched intensively day by day. Most of this researchs are about manufacturing sector. The studies about tourism which is a part of the service sector, is very limited. The aim of this study is to investigate hotels' buyer-supplier relationships within the tourism supply chain management. The population of the study is determined as hotels with a business document in the Cappadocia Region in Turkey. Research data are collected by face-to-face interviews from top managers of businesses and/or from the managers responsible for purchasing. Within this research, exploratory factor analysis was used in determining the dimensions of the buyer-supplier relationship and difference analysis was used for determining differences in terms of business properties. According to research findings, buyer-supplier relationship has a five dimensional structure which consists of information sharing, strategic cooperation, communication, information flows quality and confidence. In addition, it is determined that only communication and confidence dimensions is different in terms of business properties.

Key words: Tourism supply chain management, buyer-supplier relationship, cappadocia region

INTRODUCTION

Today's changing global environment make impossible that the firms compete stand-alone. The firms come barely to compete through improvements of the entire production chain. This issue of fact brings out the network competition where the case is supply chain competition and enhances its importance, not the firms. For the last two decades, together with this importance, the supply chain in the field of production management particularly became a subject widely studied.

Despite the general popularity of the approach of supply chain within production management, the studies within tourism have not been performed with the same frequency (Gengeswari *et al.*, 2011; Rusko *et al.*, 2009). The successes of all members of the chain in their activities are also important within the production field. But in the service sector the concurrency of production and consumption of the service makes the compensation of faults impossible while the possible diverse defects and faults during the production of the goods can be cured before reaching the consumers. Also for the tourism as a typical service sector, it is substantially important that all members of the supply chain execute their duties strictly, accurately and punctually.

Within tourism supply chain, the buyer-supplier relationships which are composing the first stage of the

supply chain is critically important in success of the chain. In order to generate an effective supply chain and create a competitive advantage, the examination of the importance and the structure of buyer-supplier relationship is required (Gules *et al.*, 2009).

The aim of this study is to investigate hotels' buyer-supplier relationships within the tourism supply chain management. In this context the matters which is forming the buyer-supplier relationships and how those became different in according to the divers features of the hotels, have been studied. The research on tourism supply chain studies are about mostly upstream of the chain (Kozak *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2009; Gengeswari *et al.*, 2011; Tigu and Calaretu, 2013) and to measure performance of the whole chain (Yilmaz and Bititci, 2006; Tigu and Calaretu, 2013). A small part of the tourism supply chain studies were made on the buyer-supplier relationship (Tektas and Kavak, 2010; Tao *et al.*, 2009; Yildiz *et al.*, 2010; Cakici and Cetinsoz, 2010). Therefore, there is a gap in the literature about this issue. However, suppliers' role and influences on the chain must be discussed seriously.

This study is expected to contribute to the literature in terms of identifying tourism firms' approaches to the buyer-supplier relationships and also contribute to the practitioners in terms of planning their buyer-supplier relationships. In the rest of this study, the tourism supply

chain literature is firstly reviewed and then the results of the research about buyer-supplier relationships among the tourism firms in Cappadocia Region are included.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism supply chain: The tourism supply chain is an entire set of activities that conducts the resource sharing, cost reduction and constitution of customer value within the whole tourism activities including the product, money and information flow which affect the tourism products and tourist experiences (Chen and Yi, 2010). The definitions of tourism supply chain available in literature from different authors are also presented in the Table 1. (Tapper and Font, 2004; Zhang *et al.*, 2009) have made definitions that are based on the distribution of the part of tourism supply chain presentation to the consumers. From a wider perspective Piboonrungraj and Disney (2009) and Chen and Yi (2010) have highlighted the existence of numerous enterprises and the cooperation between them.

A simple structure of the tourism supply chain is presented in the Fig. 1. The main members of the tourism supply chain are accommodation companies, transportation companies, food and beverage companies, recreation companies, shopping companies, travel agencies and tour operators (Zhang *et al.*, 2009; Tigu and Calaretu, 2013). According to this, second layer suppliers which generate the first ring of the chain are the manufacturers of food, furniture, equipment, water and energy etc., to the first dimension suppliers servicing for accommodation, food, transportation, shopping and tour. The tour operators provide these services through travel agencies or directly to the consumers. The tour operators firms that arrange, schedule and offer the tour package for sale directly or through sub dealers, in other words they assume the role of tourism service distribution. The accommodation companies are the tourism firms that mainly give supporting services such as accommodation, food and recreation services to the persons that are away from permanent residence. As also presented in the Fig. 1 while the service flow is to the consumers from the

second dimension suppliers, the information flow is to second dimension suppliers from the consumers.

The Table 1, tourism supply chain approach has grown up in the 2000's. Therefore, the studies regarding tourism supply chain are limited in literature. Among these studies, Zhang *et al.* (2009) have reviewed the existing researches about the tourism supply chain. They have described the concepts within the tourism supply chain management and defined the main problems and the marks of tourism products. Gengeswari *et al.* (2011) have researched the barriers against the tourism supply chain implementations. They have defined these barriers as: (i) the approaches of chain members (lack of trust between chain members, inflexibility born by the paucity of coordination, unwillingness for integration between chain members), (ii) company structure (size, security matters about document exchange, conflict between organizational structures), (iii) employees (employees' lack of knowledge) and (iv) as a product, the structure of "tourism". Hong and Zailani (2011) have mentioned the tourism supply chain components, explained tourism supply chain structure and its elements. They have defined the implementations of service-supply chain in six activities and adapt them to the tourism supply chain. Da Costa and Carvalho (2011) have reviewed the sustainability of tourism supply chain. They examine the tourism supply chain by evolving out of the value chain approach have defined accordingly the tourism activities and products and have stated the tourism supply chain structure. Other studies about the tourism supply chain management are mainly about marketing side of the chain (Kozak *et al.*, 2008; Zhang *et al.*, 2009; Adriana, 2009; Gengeswari *et al.*, 2011; Tigu and Calaretu, 2013) and to measure of performance within the chain (Yilmaz and Bititci, 2006; Tigu and Calaretu, 2013). On the other hand, the number of studies that are including the buyer-supplier relationships within the tourism supply chain is quite few.

The buyer-supplier relationships of the tourism supply chain management: In literature, the relationships between tourism supply chain members split generally

Table 1: The definitions of tourism supply chain

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Tapper and Font (2008) | Tourism supply chain is a chain which involve all goods or services's suppliers for the distribution of tourism products to the tourists |
| Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2009) | A tourism supply chain is defined as a network of tourism organizations engaged in different activities ranging form the supply of different compenents of tourism products/services such as flights and accommodation to the distribution and marketing of the final tourism product at a specific tourism destination and involves a wide range of participations in both the private and public sectors |
| Piboonrungraj and Disney (2009) | Tourism supply chains is considered as relationships between service providers such as passenger transports and lodgings or caterings and their intermediaries namely tour agencies and tour operators |
| Chen and Yi (2010) | Tourism supply chain is to connect organically all tourist activities, include products for tourists and their experiences that are influenced with the flow of information, materials, funds etc. To realize the purpose of sharing resources, reducing costs and completing customer value |

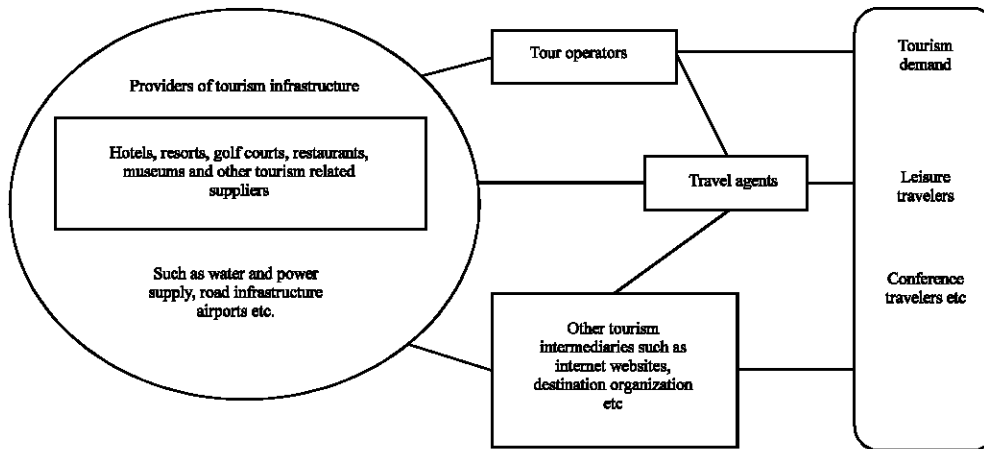


Fig. 1: Tourism supply chain management (Sigala, 2008)

into two: (i) competitive-oriented (price-oriented) and (ii) cooperation-oriented (trust-oriented) relationships (Cusumano and Takeishi, 1991). The similar split is valid also for buyer-supplier relationships. It is considered that the Western’ relationships are mostly close to a competitive model but the relationships in Japan to a cooperative model and it is indicated that the relationships turn increasingly into a cooperative structure (Gules and Burgess, 1996).

In competitive-oriented relationship, communication and cooperation between the supply chain members are shaped in accordance with the requirements and the information sharing is largely restrained and limited. In this relationship the members of the same chain can act as competitor. There is a number of suppliers and only product features, quantity and price information are provided to the suppliers. Because of there is no influence by the suppliers on the product design, the design features on how to produce and physical features of the products are elaborated by the buyer when ordering to the suppliers (Shapiro, 1985).

In cooperation-oriented relationship, win-win approach has been adopted between the chain members. So that chain members acting as business partners. Consequently, through the correct information flow and trust the consumer needs are supplied quickly and on time. Within the cooperation-oriented relationship the earning can be increased along the chain. The number of supplier is quite less than the competitive-oriented approach, the long-term relationship is accepted along with acting more selective. During the supplier selection, the buyer firms specify the criteria to be used. Buyer firms evaluate and classify the supplier firms and consequently set the type of upcoming relationships to be different based with the supplier features. Through this, the cooperation-oriented relationship eliminates the stressed

atmosphere born by competition-oriented conventional relationship and lead to new relationships between the parties that are based on trust and partnership. According to Spekman *et al.* (1998), in order to build the cooperation-oriented buyer-supplier relationships there must be moderate power relations between the parties and a stability to build long-term relationships. In cooperation-oriented relationship, the main purpose of the firms is to realize the zero-defect production with the total minimum production cost (Shapiro, 1985).

The studies based on buyer-supplier relationships within the tourism supply chain are very few in literature (Tektas and Kavak, 2010; Yildiz *et al.*, 2010; Cakici and Cetinsoz, 2010). Among these, Tektas and Kavak (2010) have researched the influences of the relationship quality during supply process between the suppliers and the hotel managers operating in the tourism sector in Turkey on the value about that supplier. At the end of the study, in according to the relationship quality they have arrived at the positive and expressive influence of the perceived value by the hotel managers born by the trust, the loyalty, the information sharing and the communication. Similarly, Yildiz *et al.* (2010) have made a research to identify the considered factors by the accommodation companies in improving their relationships with the suppliers. They have determined that the hotels consider the innovation, the competition, the contribution to institutional development, the power of relationship, the speed and flexibility and customer relationships factors in improving their relationships with their suppliers. Cakici and Cetinsoz (2010) have researched the influences of “all inclusive” system to the purchasing policies. They have found that the reputation, the after sales services, talent and popularity, price policy and the confidence are considered within the buying activities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample and data collection: The study has been performed in the Cappadocia Region that is among the important tourism areas in Turkey. The tourism business certificated hotels in the Cappadocia Region are determined as the population of the study. All of the total 62 hotels are participated the study. 47 of them have accepted to participate voluntarily and the participation rate has reached to 75,8% within the study.

The data were collected by face to face interviews with the top managers or the purchasing managers of the hotels through a standard questionnaire. Since improving the questionnaire, the empirical studies based on buyer-supplier relationship are not found from the detailed review within the tourism supply chain literature. By this reason, the various studies (Doney and Cannon, 1997; Krause, 1999; Li *et al.*, 2005) which are examined buyer-supplier relationships are used. The items were adapted to the tourism supply chain management. Additionally, the interviews with the hotel top managers or purchasing managers have been made and the views of academics in related fields have been asked. By this way, the content validity of the questionnaire has been ensured.

In the questionnaire, the questions related the general structure of the hotels and the purchasing activities are included. Other items about the management support have been adapted from Krause (1999). The items related to buyer-supplier relationships and barriers which developing this relationship have been adapted from Doney and Cannon (1997), Selnes and Sallis (2003), Wisner (2003), Li *et al.* (2005), Panayides and Lun (2009) and Gengeswari *et al.* (2011).

Data analysis: Within the obtained data, Cronbach's alpha that is presenting the internal consistency reliability of the scales was firstly examined. Then, the descriptive statistics of data have been presented. Additionally, the exploratory factor analysis has been used to determine the considered measurements by the hotels in improving buyer-supplier relationships. Moreover, by using the difference analysis-two independent samples t-test and variance analysis- it is tested whether the dimensions of buyer-supplier relationships are different in according to various features of the hotels. SPSS 17.0 package program has been used for the statistic analysis.

Research hypothesis: The hypotheses of the study are based on the differentiation of the buyer-supplier relationship dimensions in according to the various features of the hotels. The hypotheses are as follows:

- H1:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the number of employees
- H2:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the capital structure
- H3:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the existence of a specific purchasing department
- H4:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the frequency of visits by the hotels to their suppliers
- H5:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the way of using performance rating methods by the hotels
- H6:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the type of the hotel
- H7:** The dimensions of hotel-supplier relationships vary in according to the point of view of the hotels about their suppliers

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics: Table 2, show the hotels participating in the study ranges widely with star hotels, boutique hotels and thermal hotels. It can be said that the hotels in the study are medium-scaled and established with domestic capital.

Factor analysis: In this study, the exploratory factor analysis has been used to determine the dimensions considered by the hotels in building buyer-supplier relationship. Before analysis, in order to evaluate the coherence of the data set for the exploratory factor analysis the Bartlett Test value and to evaluate the efficiency of sample KMO test value was both examined. Because of the Bartlett test result is statistically significant, the data collected a re fit for factor analysis

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the participating hotels

| Variants | No. of hotel | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Type of hotel | | |
| 2 stars | 2 | 4.3 |
| 3 stars | 8 | 17.0 |
| 4 stars | 16 | 34.0 |
| 5 stars | 4 | 8.5 |
| Boutique | 13 | 27.7 |
| Thermal | 4 | 8.5 |
| Total | 47 | 100.0 |
| No. of employee | | |
| 11-49 | 25 | 53.2 |
| 50-250 | 18 | 38.3 |
| Total | 43 | 91.5 |
| Capital structure | | |
| Domestic | 45 | 95.7 |
| Foreign | 2 | 4.3 |
| Foreign partnership | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 47 | 100.0 |

(Table 3). According to the KMO test result with 0.69, sample size is enough for the study (Chong and Rundus, 2004).

According to factor analysis, one of the 22 variables in the questionnaire has been removed from the analysis because it became separately under one factor. Remaining 21 variables are collected under five factors (Table 3). The total extracted variance of the scale is approximately 70%. So it can be said that the five factors explain a big part of the variance.

The factors have been named in according to the variables coming under themselves and the literature. First factor has been named as “information sharing” because it is related to (i) having no problem to information sharing between the firms, (ii) to being open for sharing and (iii) information sharing for cooperation. Because of variables under the second factor are related to the hotels’ strategic decisions such as investment, resource sharing, capacity increasing, switching new technologies etc, it has been named as “strategic cooperation”. Because of variables under the third factor are related to the communication, it has been directly named as “communication”. Because of variables under the fourth factor are related to the information sharing on time and properly between the firms. By the reason that the firms’ aim is based on the information flow quality improvement by information

sharing without fail and appropriately, it has been named as “information flow quality”. Finally, the variables under the fifth factor are related to the longterm relationship about buyer-supplier confidence basis and it has been named as “confidence”.

Hypothesis testing

Buyer-supplier relationships according to the various features of the hotels: It has been tested through two independent samples t-test whether the buyer-supplier relationship dimensions are different depending on the hotels’ number of employees, the capital structure, the existence of a specific purchasing department (H1, H2 and H3 hypothesis). The hotels were evaluated in two groups -small scale (1-50 employees) and medium scale (51 to 250 employees)- depending on their size. The hotels’ capital structure was examined in two groups as “domestic capital” and “foreign partnership”. Within the tests results, it has been determined that any dimension was statistically significant difference in according to the number of employees and capital structure (Table 4). By this reason, H1 hypothesis arguing there is a difference between small and medium scale hotels depending on the buyer-supplier relationships and H2 arguing there is a difference between the hotels with domestic capitals and the hotels with foreign partnership have been rejected.

Table 3: Factor analysis of buyer-supplier relationships

| Buyer-supplier relationships | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| Item No. | Factors | Factor loadings |
| Information sharing ($\alpha = 0.83$, VE = 15.471%) | | |
| IS1 | We include our suppliers to our company improvement plannings, we aim to be developed together | 0.624 |
| IS2 | We include also our suppliers to our company plannings and setting goal activities | 0.697 |
| IS3 | Our suppliers support us and provide their opinions within our service quality improvement | 0.763 |
| IS4 | We have no objection to share internal informations such as demand forecasting with our suppliers | 0.520 |
| IS5 | We share our experiences with success or fail with our suppliers | 0.698 |
| IS6 | We share with our suppliers the matters regarding our company such as acquisition, sales, merge etc | 0.680 |
| Strategic cooperation ($\alpha = 0.80$, VE = 14.401%) | | |
| SC1 | We inform our suppliers in advance regarding any change of our needs | 0.669 |
| SC2 | In order to supply our needs our suppliers may make a longterm investment such as switching to a new technology or increasing capacity if necessary | 0.807 |
| SC3 | Our suppliers share their resources with us to satisfy our needs | 0.588 |
| SC4 | Our company may be involved into the suppliers’ purchasing decisions | 0.771 |
| Communication ($\alpha = 0.82$, VE = 13.884%) | | |
| CO1 | We try to fix by communicating our suppliers any dissatisfaction born by the products supplied by our suppliers | 0.705 |
| CO2 | We provide suggestions regarding our suppliers’ way of doing business | 0.701 |
| CO3 | Our suppliers keep their promises done to our company | 0.873 |
| CO4 | Our suppliers also think of our company’s profitability as much as they think of their profitability while making important decisions | 0.705 |
| Information flow quality ($\alpha = 0.83$, VE = 13.168%) | | |
| IQ1 | The information flow with our suppliers is promptly done | 0.795 |
| IQ2 | The information flow with our suppliers is properly done | 0.873 |
| IQ3 | The information flow with our suppliers is perfectly done | 0.689 |
| IQ4 | Our suppliers inform our company on time and properly regarding the changed circumstances about themselves | 0.579 |
| Confidence ($\alpha = 0.72$, VE = 13.044%) | | |
| TR1 | We try to build longterm relationships with our suppliers | 0.775 |
| TR2 | Our suppliers stick by our company | 0.785 |
| TR3 | There is a confidence-based relationship between our suppliers and our company | 0.701 |
| N = 46, KMO = 0.69 | | |
| Bartlett’s Sph. $\chi^2 = 560.258$, p = 0.000 | | |
| Total extracted variance = 69.967 % | | |

Table 4: Results of t-test

| Features | No. of employee | | | | Capital structure | | | | The existence of a specific purchasing department | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------|---------|--------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------|---|-------------|---------|--------------|
| | 1-50 | 51-250 | t-value | Significance | Domestic | Foreign partner ship | t-value | Significance | Exist | Don't exist | t-value | Significance |
| Dimensions | 1-50 | 51-250 | t-value | Significance | Domestic | Foreign partner ship | t-value | Significance | Exist | Don't exist | t-value | Significance |
| Information Sharing (IS) | 3.2533 | 2.9259 | -1.403 | 0.168 | 3.1370 | 3.6667 | -0.9550 | 0.3450 | 3.1524 | 3.1806 | -0.1620 | 0.8720 |
| Strategic Cooperation (SC) | 3.0900 | 3.1111 | 0.082 | 0.935 | 3.1389 | 3.8750 | -1.2380 | 0.2220 | 3.1929 | 3.1042 | 0.3170 | 0.7530 |
| Communication (CM) | 3.3800 | 3.6528 | 1.147 | 0.261 | 3.5167 | 4.3750 | -1.6240 | 0.1110 | 3.6714 | 3.2083 | 1.9130 | 0.0620 |
| Information Flow Quality (IQ) | 4.0200 | 3.9444 | -0.383 | 0.704 | 3.9889 | 4.1250 | -0.2990 | 0.7670 | 3.9429 | 4.1458 | -0.8080 | 0.4320 |
| Confidence (CF) | 4.2533 | 4.1481 | -0.512 | 0.611 | 4.2000 | 3.6667 | 1.1050 | 0.2750 | 4.0571 | 4.5278 | -2.1850 | 0.0340 |
| Test result | H1 rejected | | | | H2 rejected | | | | H3 partially supported | | | |
| Visits to their suppliers of the hotels | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dimensions | Visit | Don't visit | t-value | Significance | Using | Not using | t-value | Significance | Using | Not using | t-value | Significance |
| Information Sharing (IS) | 3.2083 | 3.0556 | 0.6320 | 0.5300 | 3.5000 | 3.1364 | 0.7910 | 0.4330 | 3.5000 | 3.1364 | 0.7910 | 0.4330 |
| Strategic Cooperation (SC) | 3.2969 | 2.9000 | 1.5560 | 0.1270 | 4.0000 | 3.1136 | 0.8410 | 0.0720 | 4.0000 | 3.1136 | 0.8410 | 0.0720 |
| Communication (CM) | 3.7031 | 3.2333 | 2.0890 | 0.0420 | 4.6667 | 3.4773 | 2.8820 | 0.0060 | 4.6667 | 3.4773 | 2.8820 | 0.0060 |
| Information Flow Quality (IQ) | 4.0078 | 3.9667 | 0.2080 | 0.8360 | 4.5833 | 3.9545 | 1.7230 | 0.0920 | 4.5833 | 3.9545 | 1.7230 | 0.0920 |
| Confidence (CF) | 4.1354 | 4.2667 | -0.6220 | 0.5370 | 4.4444 | 4.1591 | 0.7100 | 0.4810 | 4.4444 | 4.1591 | 0.7100 | 0.4810 |
| Test result | H4 partially supported | | | | H5 partially supported | | | | H5 partially supported | | | |

The absence of any statistically significant difference in any dimension shows that the hotels' buyer-supplier relationships are not affected significantly by the number of employees and capital structure.

H3 hypothesis arguing there is a difference in terms of the buyer-supplier relationship between the hotels with a specific purchasing department and the ones with no specific department, has been confirmed only in terms of confidence but rejected in other dimensions. This dimension has been evaluated as higher by the hotels with no specific purchasing department than the ones with specific department.

Buyer-supplier relationships according to the hotels' state with their suppliers: It has been tested through two independent samples t-test whether the buyer-supplier relationships are different depending on the visits by the hotels to their suppliers and the performance rating methods for their suppliers (H4 and H5 hypothesis). In t-test, with the purpose of keeping close the relationship with their suppliers the face to face meetings or the on-site visits by the hotels and usage of the performance rating methods by the hotels were examined in two groups as "yes" and "no".

Within the test result, H4 hypothesis has been confirmed only in terms of communication but rejected in other dimensions. Accordingly, the perception of the hotels that make face to face meetings and on-site visits has been higher in trying to solve, through communicating them, any dissatisfaction about the products provided by suppliers. H5 hypothesis, arguing there is a difference in terms of the buyer-supplier relationships between the hotels using various methods in supplier performance rating and the ones not using, has been confirmed only in terms of communication dimension but rejected in other dimensions. For communication dimension, where the difference has been statistically significant, the average value of the hotels using the performance rating methods has been higher than the ones not using them.

State of buyer-supplier relationships according to the type of the hotels and their point of view to the suppliers: H6 and H7 hypothesis are composed in order to test whether the relationship between the hotels and their suppliers shows any difference depending on the hotel type and their point of view to the suppliers, have been tested through variance analysis in according to six different hotel types (2 stars, 3 stars, 4 stars, 5 stars, boutique and thermal) and to four different viewpoint (input provider, important in terms of service integrity, strategic partner, his/her problem is our problem). Before starting the variance analysis, as a primary condition the homogeneity of the variances has been examined. It has

Table 5: Results of variance analysis

| Dimensions | Type of hotel | | | Meaning of suppliers | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-------|---------------|----------------------|-------|---------------|
| | Homogenite | | ANOVA | Homogenite | | ANOVA |
| | Singnificance | F | Singnificance | Singnificance | F | Singnificance |
| Information Sharing (IS) | 0.118 | 0.930 | 0.14 | 0.150 | 0.335 | 0.800 |
| Strategic Cooperation (SC) | 0.930 | 0.445 | 0.814 | 0.052 | 0.974 | 0.414 |
| Communication (CM) | 0.063 | 1.739 | 0.147 | 0.047 | 0.694 | 0.561 |
| Information Flow Quality (IQ) | 0.174 | 1.210 | 0.321 | 0.033 | 2.206 | 0.101 |
| Confidence (CF) | 0.095 | 0.756 | 0.586 | 0.578 | 1.187 | 0.326 |
| Test result | H6 rejected | | | H7 rejected | | |

been seen that according to the hotel type the homogeneity for any dimension has not been obtained and in according to viewpoint to the suppliers the homogeneity has been obtained in two dimensions (communication and information flow quality) (Table 5).

According to the variance analysis conducted only for these two dimensions, no significant difference were found statistically in the buyer-supplier relationship dimensions in according to viewpoint of the hotels to their suppliers, consequently H6 and H7 hypothesis were rejected (Table 5). Accordingly, the buyer-supplier relationships improved by the hotels are not related to the hotel type and viewpoint of the hotels to their suppliers. The parallel result has been appeared within H1 hypothesis composed by the arguement of “the relationship dimensions between the hotels and their suppliers show difference in according to the number of employees” and the H1 hypothesis has been rejected. In terms of these findings, it can be said that the buyer-supplier relationships do not differentiate in according to the criteria that are presenting the size such as the hotel type and number of employees.

CONCLUSIONS

In today’s competition environment, the firms are able to achieve parallel success to the involving supply chain success. It is not enough for them to be successful and adequate only in their own activities. Starting from their relations with the suppliers, the relations with distribution channel members and lastly the relations with their customers have separately importance. For firms “supply” is an important issue at the point of competitive prices and qualified inputs. In terms of competition, it is necessary to take advantages such as working together with the suppliers through improving powerful relationships, consequently being able to increase the quality of input obtained from the suppliers and to decrease the cost.

In this study the hotels’ buyer-supplier relationships and the dimensions that have been forming this relationship were examined. In terms of the study the examined hotels’ buyer-supplier relationship, located in

the Cappadocia Region were extracted into 5 dimensions as following: sharing information”, “strategic cooperation”, “communication”, “information flow quality” and “confidence”. These five dimensions that are fair enough with 70% to explain the firms’ buyer-supplier relationships have the same ability each one with approximately similar rate. But “sharing information” dimension is comparatively more powerful in explaining the buyer-supplier relationship.

On the other hand, in the study it has been examined whether the buyer-supplier relationships differentiate in according to various features of the hotels. It has been determined that the buyer-supplier relationships improved by the hotels do not differentiate in according to the number of employees and capital structure. Accordingly, it can be reached to the result that the size of the hotels does not create any difference in terms of buyer-supplier relationships. It was found that the hotels buyer-supplier relationships create a difference only in “confidence” dimension in terms of the existence of a specific purchasing department.

It has been also researched whether any difference appears between hotels in terms of buyer-supplier relationships according to the position of the hotels with the usage of various methods in performance rating and the visits to their suppliers. In accordance with the usage of various methods in performance rating and the visits to their suppliers of the hotels the difference in “communication” dimension has been detected. Thus, it has been determined that the “communication” dimension value of the hotels using performance rating methods is higher than the ones not using it. Moreover, the perception of the hotels that make face to face meetings and on-site visits is higher in trying to solve, through communicating them, any dissatisfaction about the products provided by suppliers.

It is important that the hotels evaluate precisely the matter of sharing information within buyer-supplier relationships. Hotels must give information such as planning and setting goal activities, demand forecasting to their suppliers and must share their experiences with success and fail. In terms of this, it can be said that the

hotels located in the Cappadocia Region must increase also the allocation of strategic matters in order to being more competitive and able to create an effective supply chain. Thus, it can be said that hotels must hold the cooperation-oriented approach within buyer-supplier relationship rather conventional approach. But this cooperation must be improved in order to render it more effective in strategic matters. According to the results obtained from the study, "communication" must create the focus of this development. It can be suggested the firms within the same supply chain to provide further acquaintance for each others, to communicate more often, therefore to increase their on-site visits and frequency of meeting intervals in order to develop the communication between the members.

Together with the results obtained from the researching part of the study, during the review of literature it has been seen that the domestic and foreign researches within the tourism supply chain management are quite limited. By this reason, the possibility of comparison between the conducted research and previous researches has stayed limited. The concentration of further studies about tourism supply chain will contribute to information increasing and deepening of the related field in an important way. The information flow in the tourism supply chain is quite important as is the case with the conventional supply chain. Because the service production is issued and the information sharing promptly and correctly is critically a success factor in terms of the tourism supply chain because of the synchronism between the production and consumption during the service production process. Consequently, in further studies the matters such as the contribution of information flow between the tourism supply chain members to the supply chain performance can be researched.

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