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INVESTIGATION OF TOURIST ATTRACTIONS LOCATED IN HATAY BY ONLINE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

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EXTENSIVE SUMMARY

Potential visitors gives the final purchasing decisions by reviewing user comments and evaluations on social media platforms where user reviews are made to obtain information before purchasing any product or service.

The aim of this research is to determine the positive and negative aspects of Hatay as a destination by examining the online visitor experiences. Online visitor experiences and comments for Hatay have been obtained from TripAdvisor, one of the world's largest travel and tourism platforms. In this context, the total comments made about Hatay in the TripAdvisor application until 24.01.2018, constitute a research population. It has been found out that there are 2177 comments on TripAdvisor about Hatay until 24.1.2018. The first 8 tourist attractions that received the highest score by TripAdvisor users among the 50 tourist attractions located in Hatay, were selected as a sample. These 8 places respectively; Hatay Archeology Museum, Habib-i Neccar Mosque, Old City of Antakya, Vespasianus Titus Tunnel, Vakıflı Village, St Pierre Church, Hidirbey Moses Tree, Harbiye Waterfalls.

Comments about these 8 tourist attractions were examined by generating word clouds with MAXQDA 2018 and positive aspects, negative aspects and deficiencies were tried to be determined. As a result of the research, it is observed that the visitors have negative comments about the destinations such as lack of publicity, lack of direction signs, parking problem, and have a positive impression especially on the restoration works carried out in Hatay Archeology Museum.

In recent years, such platforms have become increasingly important in the decisions of visitors. It is seen that more and more people make decisions in the frame of their impressions by reviewing online comments before their travels. Therefore, destinations that want to increase the number of visitors should take into account online visitor experiences located in popular platforms and applications with high number of users such as TripAdvisor. These online platforms are also important to see the deficiencies and to overcome these shortcomings and to increase the satisfaction level of the visitors.