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**COVID-19 PANDEMİSİNİN KAFE-BAR, BİSTRO VE GECE KULÜPLERİNE ETKİSİ**  
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**MAKALE BİLGİSİ**

**ÖZ**

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*Amaç – Covid-19 pandemisinin kafe-bar, bistro ve gece kulüpleri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmaktır. Covid-19 pandemisi esnasında işletmelerin aldığı önlemleri, uygulamaları ve işletmelerin planlarını gözler önüne sermeyi amaçlamaktadır.*

*Metot – Çalışma nitel yöntemlerle yapılmış olup, İstanbul’da bulunan 15 işletme sahibi veya yöneticisi ile çevrimiçi görüşme yapılmıştır.*

*Bulgular – Nitel araştırmanın sonucunda altı adet tema belirlenmiştir. Bu temalar genel kaygılar, karantina sürecinin işletmeye etkisi, günlük aktiviteler, işletmede uygulanan önlemler, müşterilerin tutumu, pandemi sonrası geleceğe yönelik beklentilerdir. Görüşmeler Mart ve Nisan 2021 tarihleri aralığında, kısıtlamalar nedeniyle yüz yüze görüşmelerin yapılamadığı dönemde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Çalışmanın en büyük kısıtlılığı mekânların kapalı olmasıdır. Araştırma neticesinde işletmelerin finansman, personel politikaları, pazarlama, ürün politikaları, müşteri beklentilerini karşılama konularında stratejiler geliştirebilmesi gerektiği tespit edilmiştir. Müşterileri ile iletişimini çevrimiçi ya da diğer yöntemlerle sağlayan işletmelerin krizlerle başa çıkabilme olasılığı daha fazladır. Ayrıca işletmelerin çalışanların ücretlerini kesintiye uğratmaması ve çalışanlarını motive etmesi de tavsiye edilir.*

*Araştırmanın özgünlüğü – Bu araştırma, işletmelerin, hükümetlerin, müşterilerin ve diğer paydaşların büyük krizlerde ne gibi önlemler alması gerektiğini, çalışanlara ve işletmelere hangi teşviklerin verilmesi gerektiğini, ne tür finansman, pazarlama, ürün, personel ve müşteri stratejileri geliştirmeleri gerektiğini ortaya koyması açısından özgündür.*

**THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CAFE-BAR, BISTRO AND NIGHT CLUBS**

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**ABSTRACT**

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*Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic,  
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*Purpose - This research aims to understand how to manage Covid-19 impact on café-bars, bistros, and nightclubs. The study tries to reveal the precautions taken and adapted applications and plans after Covid-19 of café-bars, bistros, and nightclubs.*

*Design/methodology - This study conducted qualitative research, with interviews in İstanbul.*

*Approach - Six questions were asked in 15 online interviews. Using content analysis*

*Findings - Findings indicate that there are six themes: general concerns; the effect of the quarantine period on the business; daily activities; precautions implemented in the business; customer’s attitude; and expectations for the future after Pandemic. Interviews were carried out in March and April 2021, since it was impossible to*

*meet face-to-face with the participants. The biggest limitation of the study is that venues were closed during the study. It is recommended to café-bars, bistros and nightclubs that can develop strategies in terms of financing, personnel policies, marketing, product policies, and meeting customer expectations in order to cope with and survive such crises. In addition, that contact their customers via internet or various communication resources. It is also important not to interrupt the wages of employees and to keep them motivated.*

*Originality of the research - This research is unique in that it reveals what actions businesses, governments, customers, and other stakeholders should take in major crises, what incentives should be given to employees and businesses, what kind of financing, marketing, product, personnel, and customer strategies will be implemented before, during and after the pandemic.*

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## Introduction

Nutrition is the most basic need since the existence of mankind. It develops constantly. Roadside inns and caravanserais, which in the past provided food and accommodation for merchants, have now become hotels, café-bars, bistros and restaurants that provide accommodation and dining outside (Taşdağıtıcı & Güçer, 2016). The global food and beverage (F&B) industry includes various food chains, serving guests in cafés-bars, bistros and restaurants, and businesses that serve on to go or online order to delivery. These also include distributor organizations which provide alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and food. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the food and beverage (F&B) industry was growing steadily due to the growing population and changing lifestyles. However, after the pandemic, the food and beverage sector was affected by the closures (Research and Markets, 2020). Socializing in cafés, bars, bistros and nightclubs is one of the urban recreational activities. Café-bars and bistros are most affected by the pandemic. Researchers state that businesses such as hotels, travel agencies, restaurants, cafés-bars and bistros in the service sector are easily affected by natural or man-made disasters (Nhamo et al. 2020; Alonso et al. 2020).

Pandemic outbreaks occurred throughout history s it is an integral part of life. The practice of quarantine, began during the 14th century to protect coastal cities from plague pandemic (CDC, 2020). Patients have been quarantined and isolated. During the pandemic, faith communities tried to find an explanation for local folk. In India, Hindus believed that local gods had been displeased by villagers. Some Muslims living in Hindu-dominated regions of Asia believed that they displeased local jinn and spirits. Christian countries used convincing and effective alternatives to faith-based explanations. Clergy believed that pandemic was the God's punishment and they have isolated or put the patients to confinement (Phillips, 2020). Especially in the plague pandemic, isolation has been the most effective remedy (Alpago & Alpago, 2020). Pandemic caused financial difficulties in food and beverage (F&B) industry. Kim *et al.* (2020) focused on swine flu, bird flu, Salmonella and cattle diseases. Their studies have shown that pandemics negatively affected F&B companies. Pandemic damages the brand image of organizations, the effectiveness of advertisements and service types. F&B companies enabled young workers for their services. They provide economic benefits for young employee and have serious consequences at this situation (Nhamo, et al., 2020). Tourism industry, create economic value by providing growth in employment and sales. F&B companies also have the same effect on economy but in same time they are fragile due to external problems such as terrorism, natural disasters, economic recession and diseases (Kim, et al., 2020). Closing seating areas is the biggest problem for F&B companies. Especially café-bars and bistros mostly effected than restaurants which have delivery system. Delivery system such as "takeaway" or "on to go" still continues but other companies have hard time. There has been increase of sales the packaged ready-to-eat foods and dairy products. People want to keep them at home. However, pandemic has also affected international supply chains. For instance, Coca Cola business had the problem of delay in the raw material procured from China. Although restaurants cannot serve to the table but still were able to serve to home. On the other hand, beverage service companies such as Starbucks, had to close half of their businesses in China. Such beverage companies have greater difficulties (Research and Markets, 2020).

Café-bars and bistros are meeting points for contemporary people. These are recreating areas for urban life which people socialized in. Meeting with friends, eating and drinking together, enjoying free time makes both local and tourist feel good. These companies are an important actors of social development for recreational needs of local people and tourists, contributing to their renewal, socialization, improvement of their psychological well-being. Covid-19 pandemic continues to cause great economic and social devastation by limiting human movements all over the world. SMEs (small and medium size companies) affected by such a largescale pandemic. It is important to determine the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on F&B industry to ensure the continuity of both economic and recreational contribution, thus reduce their losses and shutdowns. There are studies that search about the Covid-19 pandemic's effects on the F&B industry. However, there are relatively fewer studies about café-bars, bistros and nightclubs where people meet and socialized as a recreational activity. In this regard, the purpose of this research is to see how to deal with the impact of Covid-19 on café-bars, bistros, and nightclubs. The study tries to find out the precautions taken and adapted applications and future plans after Covid-19 of café-bars, bistros, and

nightclubs. For this purpose, a qualitative approach was adopted in the research, and the businesses serving as café-bars, bistro and nightclubs were contacted and interviews were conducted.

### **Café-bars, bistros and nightclubs**

Recreational activities, which people do in their spare time are usually known as "integration with nature" but also include socio-economic activities in urban life. People want to get rid of job stress and daily routine. Therefore, some of them prefer to go to entertainment venues such as café-bars, pubs, and nightclubs. They leave behind the daily problems and have a good time listening to music, dancing, and chitchat. Far from the burden of life, having fun without any responsibility is satisfying, and provides pleasure, and psychological well-being. People have freedom, joy, and psychological well-being with recreation activities (Karaşah, 2017).

After the industrial revolution, urbanization has begun. After movement to city from rural areas people changed their leisure time habits. People needed new kinds activities to relax. The eating and drinking habits of people living in big cities have changed, and night entertainment venues have become popular. Since women get into the active business life, people started to prefer entertainment venues in order to get rid of the stress of working life. Places where they eat food, listen to music, escape from daily routine thoughts are among the activities preferred by many people. Especially the young population prefers entertainment venues to socialize.

Since the Republican regime has started daily lifestyles changed in Turkey. Istanbul has become metropolitan, a center of fashion and entertainment, along with its importance at trade, industry and architecture. Contemporary life has brought socialization with music, dance, theater, cinema, shopping, window shopping indoor and outdoor sports activities, games and eating and drinking. Most of the entertainment forms in the Republican era, came out during the invasion of Istanbul. Therefore, it is not continuation of the palace-centered entertainment culture. During the Constitutional monarchy, places such as theaters, cafés, patisseries, and music halls were visited by the administrative personnel who had a close relation with Europe. The center of modern life and entertainment was also located in the city center, called the old city, Galata, Beyoğlu, Bogazici (Bosporus), Beşiktaş, Kadıköy, Üsküdar and the Prince Islands. Vibrant nightlife brings excitement, desire, and leave behind official relationships, as well as having a pleasant time apart from work, education and family. Casual relations can start in nightlife just for fun (Eğribel, 2020). People have fun, feel well and set daily stress aside during the entertainment venues.

European influences in entertainment and vibrant nightlife ceased after World War II. American style entertainment became the new trend. During this period, the state developed projects that provided socialization and cultural improvement in the Marmara valley, which descends from Taksim – Marmara – Harbiye to the Bosporus, built cultural and sports centers around the valley. Atatürk Cultural Center (1969), İnönü Stadium (1947) were built on the site of the stables of the Dolmabahçe Palace, Harbiye Open Air Theater (1947) and Sports Exhibition Palace (1949) have been opening. In addition first five-star hotel Hilton (1955) was opened in the same area. Turkish music was changed in the 1950s. Music halls with meals and drinks were opened where star performer took the stage. Music halls have been replaced by night clubs over the time. Since the 1960s, the youth consisting of students have been carried their own consciousness of leisure and entertainment (Eğribel, 2020). As the activity of university students increased, they began to have fun in places with only young people in. Such as night clubs, cafés, bars, pubs and bistros rather than honky-tonk and music halls.

Istanbul's nightlife and entertainment habits have been spreading in the Aegean and Mediterranean coast such as Bodrum, Marmaris, Çeşme, and Antalya since the 1980s. Istanbul's entertainment life has affected all coastal regions from Silivri to Çanakkale (Dardanelles). The voguish entertainment life in Istanbul continued in places such as Taksim Art House (Taksim sanat evi), Ece Bar, Zihni Bar, Çiçek Bar, Divan Pub, and Bebek Bar. In the 1990s, places where different music styles became popular such as Şamdan, Süleyman Nazif, Çubuklu 29, Hayal Kahvesi, She Bar, Twenty. These nightclubs and bars where the young population spent their free time and had fun while standing rather than sitting. Places such as Airport, Discorium, Andromeda, 2019, Pasha, Laila, Reina, which marked a period, have become places

where people have gone to socialize and have fun by getting rid of the routine of their daily lives. Urban recreational activities diversify nightlife such as open-air concert of Cemil Topuzlu, Rumelihisarı (Rumelia fortress), and Yedikule (Seven-tower) (Eğribel, 2020). Since the opening of the shopping malls, people started to socialize in café-bars, café-restaurants, and bistro-style places in their leisure time in malls. Recreational activities of the city life have shifted to the shopping malls where the F&B companies are located.

Bars and clubs, which are the most obvious examples of urban recreation in Istanbul, are mostly located in Taksim, Beyoğlu, Nevizâde, Asmalı Mescit, Ortaköy, Bebek, Nişantaşı, Etiler, Yeşilköy on the European side; on the Anatolian side, they are located on the Kadıköy, Caddebostan route. The Turkish watering holes, cabarets and taverns, which are the traditional entertainment venues of Turkish nights for tourists, are located in Sulukule, Kumkapı, İstiklal Street and Kadıköy. People can spend their leisure time and nights from one venue to other. There are lots of little bars, cafés, pubs and restaurants in Istanbul. As the favorite places of nightlife in Istanbul, Sortie provides people to have a good time with food and drink and quality music, “360 Istanbul” have world and Turkish cuisine as well as DJ performances with wine and bar menu. Ruby, Klein, Babylon, XLarge with different music options for guests. Nardiss Jazz and Maestro Donizetti Jazz Clubs are among the places preferred by jazz lovers. Lucca bistro bar, Harp, Belfast, U2 Irish Pub are among the places for socializing that are highly known. Istanbul's most famous wine houses present different wine varieties. Some of the best known wine houses of Istanbul's social life are Andon, Wine, Viktor Levi wine houses around Taksim (istanbeautiful.com, 2020).

Since the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, social restrictions and economic stagnation have been experienced all over the world. Because people have close contact in entertainment venues increases the risk of contagion, therefore they have been the top priority areas within the restrictions. People visit less and tend to stay away from venues such as restaurants, café-bars, bistros, and pubs. As of June 2020, a number of mandatory rules have been imposed on F&B businesses, and the companies have begun serving to guests again. Café bars, bistros, and restaurants opened on the condition that guests' fever was measured while entering, social distance must be kept, wearing masks, and disinfectants became a must in these venues. Even though obeying rules, pandemics increased once again, as of November 2020 they have to serve only take-away (Sürme, 2020). While food supplier companies or restaurants continuing their business, service-oriented beverage companies remained in a difficult situation. Beverage companies such as bar-café and bistros where people socialized and have a good time suffered from restrictions. These companies also hire young people to work and they have been unemployed during the restrictions.

In the literature, some of the studies examined the effect of Covid-19 on F&B businesses. Alonso *et al.* (2020) studied with small and medium enterprises and they found that “financial impacts and uncertainty being predominant issues among participants”. Kim *et al.* (2020) conclude that “Consumers who perceive the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic to be high evaluate the private dining restaurant and the private dining table highly”. According to de Freitas & Stedefeldt (2020) “commercial restaurant sector, resilience efforts are primarily intended to protect the health of both those who consume food and those who produce it”. Jain (2020) points out that social distance seating arrangements are necessary. In addition that drinks should be served in bottles instead of cocktails. Gürsoy & Chi (2020) suggest that “customers in general still do not feel comfortable to dine in at a sit down restaurant, travel to a destination and stay at a hotel”. According to Nhamo *et al.* (2020); Alpago & Alpago (2020) service style may change completely under new normal conditions. Online services will be preferred and customers will avoid touching the menu and receipt. Researchers determined that the service sector have a difficult period during the restrictions. Although employees who have the insurance, were able to benefit from the short-time working allowance, some of them have been unpaid time off. Some of service companies had laid off their employee.

## Methodology

This study was designed according to the qualitative approach (Maxwell, 2008), which is frequently preferred in tourism, travel and F&B studies and accepted by researchers (Lee *et al.*, 2016; Uygur *et al.*, 2019; Atsız & Çifçi, 2021; Vatan & Doğan 2021). This study focuses on café-bars bistros and nightclubs which do

not have home delivery service but are preferred by customers to socialize. In this study café-bars, bistro, nightclubs owners, or managers were interviewed about how they coped with pandemic since restrictions began in Turkey. Table 1 shows chronological events since the beginning of Covid-19 Pandemic in Turkey.

**Table 1. Chronology of Covid-19 Pandemic in Turkey**

2019 December	It was shared with the world that the Corona virus epidemic started in Wuhan, China.
2020 March,11	Despite the precautions, the first case was seen
2020 March,12	Coming from abroad were quarantined and flights embarked. The Education has been suspended, Sports competitions were postponed
2020 March 16	It is forbidden to perform the Friday prayer in community. Cinemas, concert halls, wedding halls, cafés, coffee shops, massage parlors and gyms have been closed.
2020 March,19	Examinations have been postponed. Football, volleyball, basketball, handball leagues have been postponed
2020 March,20	All kinds of scientific, cultural, artistic and similar meetings and activities have been postponed until the end of April. Horse races are prohibited
2020 March,21	Barbecues are prohibited in recreation areas, Over the age of 65's has been lockdown Barbers, hairdressers and beauty centers have worked until 6 pm. Restaurants, cafés, etc. would only delivery and take-away services, Customers have not allowed in restaurants, café-bars and bistros, Walking in open areas such as parks and gardens is limited.
2020 March,24	The markets only serve between 9:00 am to 9:00 pm, The number of customers to shop may be as much as one-ten <sup>th</sup> of the total area. Public transportation vehicles can accept passengers at the rate of 50% of their capacity
2020 March,26	Face-to-face education has been suspended in universities
2020 March,27	International flights have been completely terminated Special permission of intercity transportation Places such as picnic areas, forests and ruins were closed at the weekend.
2020 March,29	Children are prohibited from entering markets and markets
2020 April,3	Turkish Airlines suspends domestic flights Lockdown has been imposed under the age of 20 (Born in 2000 and above) Mandatory to wear masks
2020 May,4	It was announced that the new normal life will gradually begin People over the age of 65 were allowed to go out for 4 hours a day. Youth under the age of 20 were allowed to go out for limited hours
2020 May,6	HES (Life fits in the house) application was launched. Covid-19 patients were followed with HES code
2020 May,11	Barbers, hairdressers and shopping re-open
2020 June,1	Cafés, restaurants, gyms, private courses and parks are open until 10 pm
2020 November,17	Education in schools will continue online until the end of the year. Lockdown will be imposed on weekends outside of 10.00 am to-8.00 pm. Restaurants will only provide takeaway service. Shopping malls and markets will close at 8:00 pm.
2021 March,1	Café-bars and bistros can serve at half capacity between 7:00am to 7:00 pm
2021 April,14	Two week partial lock down has been started to be implemented as of 9.00.
2021 April,29	Full lock down declared

Education suspended and exams postponed

It has been announced that intercity public transportation vehicles will operate at 50% capacity.

It has been announced that Chain Markets will be closed on Sunday.

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As seen in Table 1, entertainment and socializing venues such as café-bars, bistros and nightclubs were closed on March 21, 2020 and they were reopened on June 1, 2020. Due to the re-emergence of the pandemic, as of November 2020, it has been prohibited to serve customers in restaurants, cafés, and bistros. In March, it has been announced that entertainment venues serve at half capacity until 7:00 pm. It was difficult to reach all business managers and owners during this period. Therefore, interviews were conducted online. Since time and cost wise, a purposeful sampling method, which is widely used in qualitative research, has been adopted in this study (Palinkas *et al.* 2015). Participants were selected from Istanbul and Izmir in general, as well as Sapanca, Adalar (Prince islands) and the regions preferred in the summer.

The first three questions were taken from a similar study by Alonso *et al.* (2020). In addition, three more questions were asked when the resumption of the second wave pandemic.

- What are your biggest concerns about the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on your business?
- What were the effects of the quarantine period on your business?
- What are the effects of the pandemic on the daily activities of your business?
- Are there any precautions you have taken due to the pandemic?
- How did your customers behave during this period?
- What are your expectations for your business in case the pandemic ends with the start of the Covid-19 vaccine?

After obtaining the approval of the ethics committee for the questions, the interviews were started. Adequate sample size in qualitative research is understood from the saturation point of the answers. The saturation point begins when the same answers are collected and repeated in interviews (Jennings, 2012). In this context, interviews were completed when similar answers were received. At the end of this process, interviews were completed with a total of 15 business owners or managers. In this context, interviews were completed when similar answers were received, and at the end of this process, interviews were completed with a total of 15 business owners or managers. Interviews carried out in March and April 2021, since it was impossible to meet face-to-face with the participants. Participant responses were received in writing by e-mail. Some of the participants answered the questions with a voice recording and sent the answers on Whatsapp. Some of the participants' responses were received directly in written form via Whatsapp. Content analysis was performed on participant responses, coded and interpreted according to their themes. Names of the participants interviewed were not used because of the research ethics. Instead of their names such as "participant 1" were given in our research.

## Findings

Six questions were asked to café-bars, bistro and nightclub managers, or owners. Their concept is different than the food suppliers. People usually get beverages and snacks while socializing in these venues. It is a kind of urban recreational activity. These questions were asked to find out their experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic.

One of the participants was a woman, including fourteen other men, were selected from various regions. Participants are high school and university graduates. Demographics questions were not asked. The biggest limitation of the study is that venues were closed during the study. Table 2 shows the themes of the research questions.

**Table 2. Themes of the research**

Category	Theme
Concerns over the business-related Covid-19 Outbreak	General concerns of business
Effects of the quarantine period on the business	The effect of the quarantine period on the business
The effect of the pandemic on daily activities	Daily activities of the business
Precaution taken due to the pandemic	Precautions implemented in the business
Attitude of customers during the Covid-19 outbreak	Customer's attitude
End of the pandemic after vaccination	Expectations for the future after the Pandemic

The themes of the six questions are shown in Table 2. In Table 3, there is a content analysis of the answers given to the first question in which the participants expressed their concerns about the business.

**Table 3. General concerns of business**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
Concerns over the business-related Covid-19 Outbreak	General concerns of business	Business closed	8
		Being unemployed / going bankrupt	5
		Unable to pay employee wages	8
		Inability to pay rent and other expenses	5
		Uncertainty	7
		Loss of lives	1

The theme of the “What are your biggest concerns about the impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on your business?” is shown at Table 3. Six sub-themes are created. The related sub-themes are business closure, being unemployed-bankrupt, not being able to pay staff salaries, expenses for rent and food supplies, uncertainty and fear of loss of life. The most frequently repeated sub-theme is the closure of the business and the inability to pay the salary of the staff. Some of the participants' statements about the sub-theme are as follows.

• Participant 1: “Our café has been closed since April 2020, last year, because of there is no takeaway service. Our concerns were not being able to pay the rent and staff salaries, which are among my most basic payments. As a matter of fact, due to the difficult situation that rents and salaries, I had to terminate our contract with our owner in March 2021 and close my business.”

• Participant 13: “Since the opening and closing is constant, the food product (vegetables-fruits-meat and milk) which we bought to our business were spoiled. Materials have to be used in a certain process, but when we say “we have closed”, we have great difficulties economically. Second is the staff. We definitely need to be financially supported to keep staff. However, we have difficulty in finding personnel to work due to the cut-offs. They believed it will be close soon and therefore they went back to their villages. So the biggest problem is the protection of food and the lack of personnel.”

• Participant 15: “As entertainment venues, we were the first group that were closed in March 2020. We haven't been able to open our business for 1.5 years. Although other sectors have opened in short intervals, unfortunately we have never been opened. My concern is that we will not be allowed until the end of the year. If permission is not given until the end of the year, there will be no entertainment industry in Turkey anymore.”



Table 4 shows the content analysis of participant responses regarding the effects of the quarantine period on the business.

**Table 4. the effects of the quarantine period on business**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
Effects of the quarantine period on the business	The effect of the quarantine period on the business	Closing Business	6
		Reduction of customers	7
		Reduction of staff	3
		Financial loss due to products and expenses	15
		Loan	4

“What were the effects of the quarantine period on your business?” The theme of the effects of quarantine on the business regarding the question is created as it seen Table 4. There are five sub-themes were identified. The most mentioned sub-theme is financial loss due to products and expenses. The decrease in customers, the closure of the business during the quarantine period, debt and loss of personnel are seen as other sub-themes. They stated that although the expenses of the enterprises remained constant, they were in a difficult situation due to the decrease in their income. Some of the participants' statements about the sub-theme are as follows:

- Participant 9: *“It always brought negative (-) tangible and morally. Expenses are almost the same, incomes are not even 10%. While we used to earn 100, now we don't even earn 10, but the expenses are the same.”*

- Participant 10: *“Some of our personnel were working full-time in our enterprise, and their SSIs were fully paid. Some of them benefited from the short-time working allowance, but most of our personnel were working 2/3 days a week on a daily basis in proportion to the intensity. Their SSI was made on the basis of working days. These friends could not benefit from short-time working allowance. While some of the property owners approached with good intentions, some were not even helpful at all.”*

In Table 5, “What are the effects of the pandemic on the daily activities of your business?” Content analysis for the question is seen.

**Table 5. The effect of the pandemic on daily activities**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
The effect of the pandemic on daily activities	Daily activities of the business	Customer loss	9
		Takeaway and delivery	4
		Material damage	6

The theme related to the effect of the pandemic on the daily activities of the enterprise is seen in Table 5. Customer loss, damage on materials, change of presentation and services were determined. Participants stated that they took additional precautions, served beverages as “come & get”. However, they suffered financial loss due to the decrease in customer. Some of the answers given by the participants are as follows:

- Participant 4: *“Package service applications. Bringing non-alcoholic cocktail recipes to customers with takeaway service.”*

- Participant 10: *“We are a night club. So we do not have self-service or “come & get”. We haven't been open for 1.5 years. We lost our qualified personnel.”*

Content analysis of the question asked to business managers regarding the measures taken by companies due to the pandemic is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Measures taken by the business due to the pandemic**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
Precaution taken due to the pandemic	Precautions implemented in the business	Mask – distance – hygiene	9
		Disinfect	2
		Check for HES code and fever measurement at the entrance	4
		Health check for staff	3

The theme of the measures applied in the enterprise due to the pandemic is seen in Table 6. The determined sub-themes are the mask-distance-hygiene, disinfection processes applied in the enterprise, HES code query and temperature measurement applied at the entrance to the enterprise, and regular health checks for the personnel. The answers of some of the participants to the questions are shown below.

- Participant 2: *"We have strengthened the mask-distance-cleaning rules and we continue to pay attention to 1meter social distance in the venue."*
- Participant 5: *"We were a business that followed the rules too much. Imagine that we had our own sterilizing machine, we had an ozone air cleaner. Not to mention disinfectants, they really cost us a serious extra."*

Business owners have taken various hygiene measures in cafés-bars and bistros, which are among the recreational activities that people go for fun and socialization. The content analysis of the question about the attitudes of the customers about measures which taken during the pandemic is shown in Table 7.

**Table 7. Customer's attitude**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
Attitude of customers during the Covid-19 outbreak	Customer's attitude	Request to sit together without distance	6
		Sympathizer and precautionary	4
		Wish to bend the rules	4
		Prefer to home delivery service	2

As seen in Table 7, some of the customers are cautious, sympathizer and understand the rules. Some of them prefer to home delivery services. However, some of the customers prefer sit on table without social distance and they want to bend the rules. Some of the responses of the participants are shown below:

- Participant 1: *"Customers did not prefer to sit separately. I have received a lot of feedback that it is preferable to sit together outdoors."*
- Participant 6: *"There were people who wanted to sit for consideration money after 7 o'clock"*
- Participant 15: *"Our guests are bored, we receive calls every day to ask when the venue will open, but our hands are tied up until we get permission from the state"*

The answers indicate that customers miss the old days and need to socialize again. In Table 8, content analysis of expectation of companies after vaccination.

**Table 8. Expectations for the future after the Pandemic**

Category	Theme	Sub-theme	N: 15
End of the pandemic after vaccination	Expectations for the future after the Pandemic	Hopeless, indecisive, pessimistic	7
		Meet customer as it was before	5
		More demand than usual	4

As seen in Table 8, sub-themes of expectations for the future are concentrated as hopelessness, pessimism, and indecision. However, there is an expectation that customers will come back and socialize

more. Business owner's expectation that many customers will visit and travel when everything back to normal. Some participant responses are given below:

- Participant 7: *"There will be no difference until the bans are completely over."*
- Participant 11: *"Demand improved with normalization and state aid for debts."*
- Participant 14: *"I believe it will be much better if it is finished. Because people are overwhelmed, they'll be relieved when it's over. I think they will be a little more active because they miss outside activity."*

Although the answers of the participants are pessimistic about the future, it also indicates that participants still have hope to return to the past. Restrictions had more effect on beverage-dominated café-bars and bistros than on take-out catering establishments. Participants in the research were selected from different destinations. Bakırköy, Ataköy, Beşiktaş, Akatlar, Florya, Zeytinburnu, Yeşilköy and Kınalıada where cafés-bars and bistros are abounding in Istanbul. Also, Sapanca where people visit for weekends, and Izmir which is another metropole city. Interviews with participants were conducted using online methods, and structured questions were sent via mail or Whatsapp. Café-bars, bistro, and nightclub owners or managers were preferred. These places where people have fun and socialized as an urban recreational activity. Participant answers were received in written form and by voice messages sent via e-mail or Whatsapp.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Individuals participate in recreational activities in order to renew, socialize, and to be healthier both physically and mentally. Besides these, recreational activities also bring environmental awareness to individuals (Sezer *et al.*, 2021). In addition, according to studies, recreation has a positive effect on the psychological well-being of individuals (Akova *et al.* 2019). Although recreational activities provide benefits to individuals in many ways, recreational enterprises and activities are seriously damaged due to the Covid-19 pandemic today. As an example, F&B companies, which are among the recreational activities and socializing places of the city people, were affected by the restrictions experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Compared to businesses that serve food to homes, businesses focused on socializing and having fun, such as café-bars, bistros and night clubs had more difficulties. Restrictions in F&B businesses where the young workforce is employed in are also affected. While insured employees benefited from the short-time working allowance, young people working part-time lost their earnings. Businesses had to take unpaid time-off or dismissal. All these developments have led many researchers to examine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on accommodation, F&B, and recreation businesses. In this direction, it is possible to come across many studies in the literature on the experiences of F&B businesses during the Covid-19 outbreak. In this study, it has been tried to determine how café-bars and bistros that were operating in Istanbul before the Covid-19 Pandemic, but had to close due to the pandemic and could continue their activities in this process, were affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Within the scope of the research, 15 business owners were reached and a total of six themes were determined. In the study, it was seen that, there were concerns about bankruptcy, not being able to pay salaries, and expenses due to the closure of the business. Businesses that have changed their service patterns have also taken measures for hygiene. Café-bars, bistros and night clubs have different concept than food companies. They do not have delivery services. Here below, their main concerns explained.

### *General concerns*

General concerns of the business theme have six sub-themes. These are business closure, bankruptcy, unable to pay salaries and other expenses, uncertainty and loss of lives. Entertainment and beverage companies that people socialize, cannot serve as "on to go" or take away". Therefore, their main concern is bankruptcy. Some of them couldn't pay their salaries, rent, and other expenses and have bankrupt. The others have not any clue about what future brings on.

### *The effect of the quarantine*

The effect of the quarantine period on the business was challenging. They had various concerns. There are five sub-themes as shut down the business, reduce staff, and lose customers. Financial loss due to products. Loans which they should pay continuously. They could not serve the customers and the main

problem was paying the bills and losing the raw-materials. When customers cannot socialize in these venues that affect companies and their staff both. Employees also lost their job. Usually, young people work in the service business. Some of them work part-time and some full-time. Especially part-time workers couldn't get the short-time working allowance.

*Daily activities*

The daily activities of the business have three sub-themes. One of them is losing customers. The others are material damage and presentation. Café-bars, bistro managers explained that they had to take extra precautions but still suffered financial loss.

*Precautions implemented*

Precautions implemented in the business have four sub-themes. These are mask-distance-hygiene, disinfection processes, HES code query, and health checks for employees. Companies follow the cleaning rules and regular health checks for their staff. People who work in café-bars and bistros have extra caution for hygiene protocols. Customers have a HES code and before they get into the venue, show their HES code and measured temperature.

*Customer's attitude*

Customer's attitude has four sub-themes. Some of them request to sit together without distance. Some customer wishes to bend the rules. On the other hand, some of them sympathize and follow the precautionary rules. Also, some of the customers prefer home delivery services.

*Expectations*

Expectations for the future after the Pandemic has three sub-themes. Café-bars, bistro, and nightclub owners or managers unfortunately pessimistic about the future. However, they want to entertain customers and they still hope that everything going to be as it was in the past. Some of them believe that there will be more demand.

The results obtained from the study were compared with the results of similar studies. Alonso *et al.* (2020) stated that businesses are looking for alternative solutions due to uncertainty and financial problems. They are preparing for new operations after the Covid-19 outbreak. In addition, they stated that they have made changes in the daily activities of the enterprises and they are in expectation for legal change. Their findings partially overlap with the present study. The expectation of legal change has also been determined in the current study, and businesses have made changes in their daily operations to serve in accordance with the pandemic conditions. However, they do not have any applications for alternative income generating jobs. They have no alternative plans for the future, they only wish that everything will be alright. Kim and Lee (2020) stated that customers tend to special food restaurants. They want to get services at private tables and private rooms. Nhamo *et al.* (2020) stated that businesses may change under the new normal conditions, online services will gain popularity, and customers may avoid touching the menu and account receipt. The current study shows that entertainment and beverage companies ready to take more hygiene measurements. They just need allowance to open their enterprises. Jain (2020) stated the necessity of social distancing seating arrangement, low acceptance of customers, and that drinks should be served in bottles rather than cocktail style. Gürsoy and Chi (2020) stated that customers do not feel comfortable in restaurants where they sit down to eat however they are comfortable in places where they are confident in terms of hygiene, and their tendency to takeaway is higher. The current study indicates that, serving bottles or "come & get" services not enough to keep a beverage business alive. Kim *et al.* (2020) in their study, which they examined the financial conditions of restaurants that had to take a break due to pandemics, confirmed that the pandemics had a negative effect on the economy. Their findings are consistent with the current study. Businesses have entered an economically difficult period during the epidemic. Yılmaz & Şahin (2021) studied about F&B in Turkey. They found eight categories which are operational survival activities; challenges encountered; cooperation, support, and incentives; employee problems; social responsibility; precautions and practices control; and customer behaviors. They stated that "firms suspending their activities completely or partially throughout this period may encounter a number of challenges with regard to raw material, suppliers, financial, personnel, sector and customers." Their findings are consistent with the current research. However according to Yılmaz & Şahin (2021) "Customers have a serious concern about the attributes of the firms, such as personnel him/herself, hygiene and cleanliness, package service, and types of firms." These findings are different from the current study.

Findings indicate that some of the customers want to bend the rules and socialized without distance. Café-bars, bistros, and nightclubs have different types of customers than restaurants. Their customer usually young people. This may be the reason for differentiation. During urban socialization, young people don't want any restrictions.

The results of the study showed that the biggest concerns of people are closing their workplaces, being unemployed and not being able to pay salaries. They are concerned about not knowing when companies will open, not being able to predict the course of the pandemic, and not being able to pay rent and other general expenses. They bought F&B materials again during their short-term opening, and the re-entering of the full restriction period with the rise of the pandemic caused the materials to become idle.

F&B businesses had to laid-off their personnel. This situation caused a loss of income among the employees. Despite the support of the state, the young population working part-time could not benefit from the rights given to employees. In addition, since tipping is another source of income for those working in F&B businesses, they have been deprived of both state support and additional income. The fact that there were people returning to their family homes caused a shortage of personnel when the businesses were open.

In addition to general expenses, debts to the government, loan borrowings put enterprises in a difficult situation. Companies did what was necessary to comply with the hygiene rules. However, the fact that the worried customer did not come to the closed places caused a loss of income for the enterprises. Since the customers of businesses such as café-bars and bistros are generally young people, they have also lost due to the lack of schools. With the closure of the places with gardens, businesses have no place to host their customers. There are businesses that serve drinks in the form of take-away. They partially changed the way of presentation and sales. They have adjusted the seating style of the business according to the legal regulations and have given importance to social distance. Businesses that receive customers with a thermometer and HES code have also spent money on extra hygiene practices and disinfecting machines. They took care to send their employees to health check-ups frequently. Customers, on the other hand, preferred to sit outdoors, but they were not satisfied with the seating arrangement suitable for social distance. Businesses, which have customers who do not want to wear masks and who want to stay up late, as well as customers who are understanding and care to follow the rules, have taken care to maintain the balance and obey the rules. As a result of the interviews with the business managers, it was determined that hopelessness was dominant and they were worried. However, it has also been observed that there is an expectation of returning to the past, and the idea that people will come to the places because they will need to socialize more when the business is opened again.

### **Theoretical implications**

This study theoretically contributes to the relevant literature. This study is one of the first to examine the effects of the Covid-19 pandemics on cafés, bistros, bars and nightclubs from the managements' perspective. The uniqueness of this study is that it examines café bars, bistros and nightclubs more specifically, rather than taking over the food and beverage industry as a whole. To better understand how the café-bars, bistros and nightclubs have managed the effect of pandemic this study has not only investigated the effect of Covid-19 on the café-bars, bistros and nightclubs for a certain period of time but also past, present and for the future effects of Covid-19. This study reveals how café-bars, bistros and nightclubs have become fragile due to pandemic and the weaknesses of these businesses. The general concerns such as business closure, bankruptcy, unpaid salaries, uncertainty and other expenses that managements of café-bars, bistros and nightclubs faced during the pandemic. The precautions they have taken to survive, their daily activities, customer's attitudes, effects of the quarantine and expectations for future after the pandemic were analyzed.

Thus, the study provides useful information about what café-bars, bistros and nightclubs may be exposed to when similar disasters occur, what kind of situation they will face when such crises are repeated, and what they can do. For example, café-bars, bistros and nightclubs can develop strategies in terms of financing, personnel policies, marketing, product policies, and meeting customer expectations in order to cope with and survive such crises. In this context, the study provides important findings and contributes to the literature on what happened and what should be done during the current pandemic and what should

be done after pandemic or similar crises to manage the café-bars, bistros and nightclubs. The themes revealed the difficulties that firms have faced and what precautions are taken. This study is unique in that it reveals what actions businesses, governments, customers and other stakeholders should take in major crises, what incentives should be given to employees and businesses, what kind of financing, marketing, product, personnel and costumer strategies will be implemented before, during and after the pandemic.

### **Practical implications**

This study presents a number of practical applications for café-bars, bistros and nightclubs. The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the permanent or temporary closure of many café-bars, bistros and nightclubs loss of customers and revenue, unemployment of staff, and non-payment of debts, rents and workers' salaries. However, in order to survive, businesses had to improve hygiene and sanitation standards and make changes in their product, personnel, customer, financial, promotional and operational strategies. In this way, café-bars, bistros and nightclubs can take different measures to get rid of the negative effects of the pandemic, and they should convey the measures taken to their customers via the internet or various communication resources. During the course of the pandemic, they may need to develop flexible strategies that can adapt to new situations that arise. For example, in a situation where restrictions increase, take-out service can be emphasized. Similarly, when the restrictions are relaxed, hygiene measures, social distance rules, and the perception that the business is safe should be created. Increasing the open spaces for costumers can be beneficial in terms of safety perception. In order to cope with the difficulties experienced in the supply of materials due to the pandemic, changes should be made on the menus when necessary. In addition, it is important not to interrupt the wages of employees and to keep their motivation high in order to increase employee welfare and prevent the loss of qualified personnel.

### *Limitations*

The study started when café-bars and bistros were closed. As of March, the businesses that received the news of the opening could not hold meetings because they started the preparations. With the closure, they could not go to the environment they were in and the study was done online. This situation limited the study.

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There is no conflict of interest between the authors.

Researchers can use the questions in the current study without the need for additional permission, provided that they are cited.

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