



## **Strategic Management Tools: A Qualitative Research on Hotel Enterprises**

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### **Keywords**

Strategy, strategic management, strategic management tools, executive.

### **Abstract**

Strategic management tools, which are effective in the success of strategic management processes, are also important in the sustainable success of enterprises. In the study, tourism enterprises, which are one of the important sectors of Turkey's economy are examined. In this context, the study population consists of three-star, four-star and five-star hotel enterprises operating in the province of Çanakkale and operating under the Ministry of Tourism. In the study, interview method, which is among the qualitative research methods, has been used and interviews have been conducted with 19 hotel managers in total. Research findings indicate that not all strategic management tools have been implemented in hotel management. In this context, it has been stated that total quality management approach, SWOT analysis, strategic alliances, re-engineering approach and information and communication technologies have been utilized used in hotel management. In addition, it has been observed that mission and vision statements, strategic planning works, benchmarking approach, empowerment approach and outsourcing approach have not been implemented in hotel management. According to the research results, the main reasons for not implementing all of the strategic management tools in hotel management have been expressed as; the fact that tourism enterprises are a component of the service sector and the existence of a specific sector structure and also the deficiencies in the professional management processes.

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## **1. Introduction**

In parallel with the rapid development of competition, differentiating customer preferences have brought about changes in the management processes of the enterprises. It is important that enterprises are able to develop strategies in order to continue their activities in today's competitive conditions. The concept of strategy, which is defined as the path, method followed in order to achieve certain goals in the management literature, provides guidance in achieving the targeted profitability, growth, efficiency and effectiveness criteria of the enterprises. In this context, it is seen that strategic management processes gain importance in the enterprises which have the aim of ensure their continuity in accordance with customer satisfaction and being successful.

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In the literature, the concept of strategy is explained as a whole of integrated and coordinated actions that enable enterprises to implement their core competencies and develop competitive advantages (De Moortel and Crispeels, 2018: 147). While the concept of strategy was seen as planning and identification activities of military activities in the past, the existence of company strategies was brought up in 1962 in line with Alfred Chandler's ideas that the executives in American companies should form a structure so that they are able to connect with long-term targets, allocate resources, implement and support these resources (Mišanková and Kočišová, 2014: 862).

Strategic management is expressed as a management process that focuses on the long term activities and final outcomes of the enterprises (Ülgen and Mirze, 2007: 25). In this context, strategic management accounts for a management mentality which starts with environmental studies, ends with planning, implementation, evaluation and control of strategies (Eren, 2005: 15). Strategic management aims to select a unique location for businesses, to become distinct from their competitors, or to do better works compared to the competitors. In this context, it intends to reduce costs or to better serve the customer needs. This situation, subsequently, gains the enterprises a competitive advantage (Engert et.al., 2016: 2833). The concept of strategic management; emphasizes the importance of gaining a deeper understanding on increasing the organizational cooperation, internationalization, rapid technological development, and the scope and depth of organizational and environmental relations. The elements such as objectives, environment, markets, technical competence and organizational size that are defined as strategic concepts need to be redesigned for organizational problems arising within the framework of technological changes and developments. (Steinthorsson and Söderholm, 2002: 234). Strategic management processes increase the efficiency of enterprises in many areas and play an active role in the success of these enterprises (Amoli and Aghashahi, 2016: 448). Strategic management processes are a broad term that account for how the senior management analyses the environment in which the enterprise operates before creating strategies, and plans to implement and control the strategies that have been identified in this direction. (De Moortel and Crispeels, 2018: 147). The literature states that strategic management processes can be realized with strategic management tools to be implemented within the enterprises.

The tourism industry is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world, contributing to the welfare and economic development of communities by means of employing thousands of people and only in 2017, a total of 1,322 million people have participated in tourism movements all over the world (UNWTO, 2018: 1). The historical, cultural and seasonal characteristics of Çanakkale draw the attention of tourism investors and invest in tourism activities and this situation brings along investments in tourism activities. It is seen that a large number of guests including 64,949 foreign guests and 308,994 local guests preferred the province of Çanakkale in 2016 (investincanakkale.com). In the study, hotels operating in the province of Çanakkale and in the tourism sector which is of fundamental importance in Turkey's economy are examined. In this context, interviews have been conducted with the managers of three-star, four-star and

five-star hotels that are certified by the Ministry of Tourism. In the study, it has been aimed to determine whether strategic management tools are implemented in the said hotel management processes. In this perspective, it has been aimed to determine the applicability of strategic management mentality in hotel management procedures and it has been aimed to perform a due diligence for hotel managements.

## **2. Literature Review**

The increasing competition environment caused by the concept of globalization has raised the emergence of new concepts in management science. In this context, Rigby (2001, 2017) explains the strategic management tools on the axis of basic management approaches such as; mission and vision statements, customer satisfaction measurement, total quality management approach, benchmarking approach, re-engineering approach, strategic alliances, SWOT analysis, strategic planning, core competencies, customer segmentation, outsourcing and empowerment. The existence of studies for measuring all strategic management tools is noteworthy in the management literature. In this context, the studies conducted by Clark (1997), Berisha Quhaja et.al., (2017), Gunn and Williams (2007), Naaranoja et.al., (2007), Şentürk (2012) and Afonina and Chalupsky (2012) aimed to measure strategic management tools implemented in organizations.

The strategic management tools are described below:

**Mission statements:** explains the raison d'être (reason for being) of the organization. The mission of an organization is a manifesto that distinguishes it from other companies, gains its identity and announces the reasons of organization for carrying out its activities to the external environment. The mission holds managers and staff together in order to achieve the identified objectives. In addition to providing organizational motivation, the concept of mission leads employees to understand their responsibilities. The mission assists in finding and using resources in order to achieve the objectives of the organization (Altiok, 2011: 63). The concept of mission states the organizational activities and functions, while, the concept of vision is defined as a general picture of what an organization wants to be and what objectives it wants to achieve ultimately in the broadest sense (Lee et.al., 2013: 22). The enterprises have visions defining their conceptual roadmap or strategic directions in order to reach the desired future situation. Vision statements determined by enterprises are regarded as the driving force because they affect in-house development. A well-thought out statement of vision creates a standard for excellence while building bridges with today's future (Law and Breznik, 2018: 37). The research findings conducted for the airline companies indicate that; mission statements, which are one of the strategic management tools, must be shared clearly by the employees of the organization in order to reach the targets and objectives identified by the enterprises (Law and Breznik, 2018: 42). Also, in the literature, it is stated that mission and vision statements identified by the airline companies are found to be insufficient by the employees who have master's degree of education (Orhan et.al., 2014: 261). In the literature, it has been observed that there are deficiencies in the mission declaration

identified by the Turkish food and beverage companies and on the other hand, the majority of the enterprises can regulate the vision statements as desired (Erden Ayhün and Çavuşgil Köse, 2018: 524).

**Strategic planning:** involves the long-term objectives of the enterprises and taking decisions based on the methods used in order to achieve these predicted targets. In other words, strategic planning is an organized and systematic process in which plans and fundamental decisions are taken within the legal framework (Bagheri, 2016: 433). Strategic planning is a strategic management tool created in the US business world in the 1950s. In this context, strategic planning has been named as a new business model that determines the priorities and actions to be followed by an organization. It stands out that the concept of strategic planning was initially used in non-profit enterprises. It is noteworthy that, in subsequent periods, strategic planning activities are implemented for the purpose of improving organizational competitiveness and adapting to external environmental conditions by profit-oriented enterprises (Barreto and Drummond, 2017: 80).

**SWOT Analysis:** has been defined as identifying the strengths, weaknesses of the enterprises and the relevant opportunities and threats. Strengths; are the resources or capacities that an enterprise can use effectively in order to achieve its targets. Weaknesses; are limitation, error, or defect that prevent the enterprise from achieving its objectives. Opportunities are any positive situation that may occur in the business environment in which the enterprise is operating while threats are the negative conditions that can potentially harm the strategy identified by the enterprise (Jasiulewicz-Kaczmare, 2016: 676). SWOT analysis constitutes one of the strategic planning tools frequently used in management processes (Nazarko et.al., 2017: 483). SWOT analysis helps to better understand the internal and external environmental factors of the enterprises in the context of its strategic planning process (Phadermrod, 2019: 194).

The surveys conducted in the literature show that SWOT analysis is carried out within the scope of strategic planning studies in the tourism sector. In this context, environmental and natural factors have been identified as important for tourism enterprises (Abya et. al., 2015: 299). Strategic planning studies carried out at the national level in the tourism sector should offer a large number of concrete actions that will rapidly increase the competitiveness of the tourism sector (Angeloni, 2013: 118).

**Benchmarking concept:** is the process of continuous measurement of products, services and business practices against the most challenging competitors or companies known as the industry leaders (Attiany, 2014: 42). Benchmarking is described as a process of comparing and evaluating activities involving services in terms of best practices recognized in the field. Today, the benchmarking approach has been adopted as an effective tool for continuous improvement of the corporate performance (Dubey et al., 2017: 64). The benchmarking approach has been increasingly used in many enterprises, both for profit-oriented and for non-profit purposes. The benchmarking approach can be used in many areas regarding any product or service, in many areas without national or commercial limitations (Zlatković, 2016: 283).

**Strategic alliances:** constitute the agreements that are concluded between companies in order to achieve common interest objectives. In the literature, strategic alliances are defined as partnerships where two or more companies combine resources and capabilities in order to create mutual competition (Wang et.al., 2018: 191). The enterprises form strategic alliances in order to enter new markets, reduce their production costs and develop new technologies (Walters et. al., 1994: 5). In this context, practices such as gentlemen's agreements, consortium activities, cartel, trust and joint venture etc. are evaluated within the scope of strategic partnerships in the literature.

The research studies conducted in the literature state that strategic collaborations and benchmarking approaches will be important in maintaining and improving the competitive position of the enterprises (Zlatković, 2016: 292). It is noteworthy that a benchmarking approach is applied in terms of elements such as suppliers, restaurants, tour operators or travel agencies etc. in the profit-oriented tourism enterprises. Tourism enterprises implement national benchmarking, regional comparison and local benchmarking processes in terms of destination benchmarking (Wöber, 2002: 12). Sustainable benchmarking approaches that can be implemented in all sectors are important in overcoming administrative difficulties affecting organizational performance (Dubey et.al., 2017: 63).

**Empowerment approach:** focuses on the skills, capabilities and needs of human resources, and is based on the idea of absorbing, developing and supporting the human resources competencies (Kaaisnen et.al., 2019: 1). Empowerment practices often grant lower-level employees with the power and responsibility to make important decisions about implementation, involve information sharing, and include advanced human resources practices such as autonomy in tasks and team responsibility. The empowerment approach is defined as an essential component of a wide range of participatory management practices and business processes with higher performances (Yin et.al., 2019: 111). Empowerment approach applied in tourism sector offers ideas for providing adherence to mission statements determined by the organization and better customer satisfaction (Timmerman and Lytle, 2007: 273). The training-oriented empowerment approach that is applied in the enterprises leads the employees to inspire each other, to increase their self-confidence and to develop a sense of social equality in the organization (Aghazamani and Hunt, 2017: 334).

**Total quality management approach:** Quality is the whole of the works that are aimed at continuous improvement of product and service processes in order to meet customer needs by means of perceiving customer's expectation from products and service (Peters, 1999: 7). Total quality management approach is a concept indicating that all units are responsible for quality processes in enterprises. In this context, total quality management is a management mentality that focuses on providing customer value and improving systems and processes continuously (Lussier, 2006: 49). Concepts such as customer orientation, continuous training, participatory management, effective leadership, continuous development and improvement constitute the basic principles of total quality management (Saruhan, 2012: 23-24). Construction standards of hotel buildings, equipment standards, business process standards, standards of communication

and business ethics, labour standards of human resources, ecology standards and safety and health standards show the applications of total quality management approach in the hotels (Holjevac, 1996: 78).

**Re-engineering approach:** is constituted by the idea of being able to perform all processes optimally after starting with a clean state. The literature states that the historical beginning of the re-engineering concept extends to the theories of management which were developed in the early 19th century (Weicher et.al., 2014). Re-engineering approaches are applied in order to increase efficiency and improve performance in the enterprises. In the first phase, the emphasis is placed on future restructuring processes within the framework of the mission determined by the enterprise. The team work is highlighted and it is ensured that all employees are involved in all processes in the implementation of the processes (Luthans, 1998: 37). The re-engineering approach brings together the application of more efficient organizations and redefinition of resources and tasks in tourism destinations (Gajdošíková et.al., 2016: 406). The re-engineering approach, which is one of the modern management approaches in hotel management processes, is important for the enterprises so that they can be more successful (Galičić, 1996: 113).

**Outsourcing approach:** is defined as the decisions of some firms to transfer their internal activities and decision-making responsibilities to external suppliers. Economists, management scientists, and organizational theorists acknowledge that the impact arising out of the decision on making or purchasing product components and / or services is of great importance for industrial organizations (Bals and Turkulainen, 2017: 257). Strategic purpose of outsourcing in enterprises; is to secure and implement more than one competitive advantage (e.g. cost reduction, innovation and flexibility) in a market environment where there are many competitors are present (Kang et.al., 2014: 178). Today, outsourcing has become one of the strategic management tools implemented by hotel managements. The necessity for hotels to have distinctive characteristics from their competitors and the diversity of the tasks assumed in the hotels (cleaning, cooking, booking, laundry, etc.) brought along the necessity of outsourcing (Gonzales, 2011: 3).

**Information and communication technologies;** enable the transformation of the information collected in the enterprises to the organizational information for the ones working in the enterprises, establishment of a global and contemporary communication, and distribution of the tasks among the employees according to time, space and areas of specialization (Hasgall and Ahituv, 2018: 35). Information and communication technologies are an important strategic resource for enterprises. In this context, information and communication technologies accelerate the decision-making processes in enterprises Information and communication technologies utilized in the enterprises enable the transactions to be realized at a fast manner and low cost, to facilitate the sharing of information within the enterprise and to evaluate the employees from a rational perspective (Sağır and Türkeri, 2015: 203). Information and communication technologies provide recommendations and criticisms for tour operators and their potential consumers, and in this context, it is possible to evaluate the products and services

within the perspective of social networks and new technologies (Bizirgianni and Dionysopoulou, 2013: 653). Information technologies provide effective cooperation in the management of tourism industry. Information and communication technologies are of great importance in tourism marketing, distribution, promotion and coordination (Buhalis, 1998: 411). Nowadays, tour companies, in particular, are able to target customers around the world thanks to developing technology (Morais et.al., 2016: 1381).

When the various studies conducted in the literature are examined, it is observed that tourism enterprises, which are one of the leading sectors of the country's economy, benefit from various strategic management tools in order to protect and develop their competitive levels. In this context, it is noteworthy that there are various researches conducted in order to measure the contribution provided by each of the strategic management tools in the tourism sector to the enterprises.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The aim of the study is to perform a due diligence related to the level of utilization of strategic management tools by the enterprises operating in the tourism sector, which is the leading sector of national economies. In this context, tourism enterprises which are affected by external environmental conditions at a higher level are analysed in the axis of strategic management tools developed by Rigby (2017).

The study population consists of three-star, four-star and five-star hotel enterprises operating in the province of Çanakkale and operating under the Ministry of Tourism. Since one of these enterprises is only available when there are tourist groups and they are closed at other times, the study has been carried out with a total of 19 hotel establishments, two of which are five-star, four of which are four-star and thirteen of which are three-star run and 95% of the study population has been reached. In this sample, interviews have been conducted with hotel managers and the duration of each interview has been planned to last 30-45 minutes. In the study, semi-structured interview method, which is among qualitative research methods, has been applied and interviews have been conducted made hotel managers who were in senior position between the dates of 05/01/2019 and 15/01/2019.

In the study, semi-structured interview method, which is among the qualitative research methods, has been used. In semi-structured interview method, questions are prepared to be used in all interviews, these questions are asked to the people to be interviewed in the same order, but the interviewees are allowed to answer the questions in a manner they wish during the interview (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2003).

In the study, it has been aimed to determine whether hotels are using strategic management tools in their management processes as a question of research. For this purpose, it has been aimed to determine whether the companies implement the mission and vision statements, strategic planning, benchmarking, empowerment, outsourcing, SWOT, re-engineering, total quality management, strategic alliances and information and communication technologies in their

strategic management processes. In this context, the answers of the hotel managers are expressed as G1,...G19.

In the study, the following findings have been reached in the interviews conducted with the senior hotel managers.

Research question 1: Does your enterprise have declaration on mission, vision and basic values?

- We do not have the mission and vision statements published in our official website (G1, G4, G8, G9, G10, G13, G19).
- Although we do not have a mission and vision statements published in our official site, we use these statements in our hotel management processes (G3, G5, G6, G7, G15, G17).
- We do not have officially published mission and vision statements on the website; these are available as.... hotel group (G2, G18, G12, G16).
- We have a mission and vision statements on our official website (G11, G14).

Research question 2: If your enterprise has declaration on mission, vision and basic values do you measure the effects of these statements on your business performance?

- We measure on the basis of year (G11).
- We can measure partially. We can partially measure the rates of our domestic and foreign customers in our occupancy rates and their shares in the distribution of the countries in question (G14).

Research question 3: Are you doing strategic planning, where do you want to see your institution after 5 years, what are you doing in order to achieve this goal?

- We do strategic planning, but we don't do it in writing (G1, G2, G3, G4, G5, G14, G18).
- We are not doing strategic planning (G6, G7, G8, G9, G13, G17, G19).
- We do strategic planning (G10, G11, G12, G15, G16).

Research question 4: Do you benchmark your enterprise with the hotels that you consider as the most successful in Turkey when managing your hotel? If so, which applications of such hotels do you model as example?

- No, we do not implement a benchmarking approach (G1, G4, G5, G8, G10, G11, G14, G15, G17, G19)
- Yes, we do implement a benchmarking approach (G2, G3, G6, G7, G9, G12, G13, G16, G18).

Research question 5: Do you benefit from outsourcing in your activities such as laundry, restaurant, cleaning, security etc. when managing your hotel or do you provide such services to other enterprises?

- No, we do not benefit from outsourcing in our activities (G1, G2, G7, G9, G10, G11, G13, G14, G15, G16, G17, G18).

- Yes, benefit from outsourcing in our activities (G3, G4, G5, G6, G8, G12, G19).

Research question 6: Are there any innovations you have made to your enterprise in order to improve business performance with the guidance of your customers and employees?

- Yes, we are making innovations in our enterprise with the guidance of our customers and employees (G1, G2, G5, G6, G7, G9, G10, G11, G12, G13, G14, G15, G16, G17, G18).
- No, we are not making innovations in our enterprise with the guidance of our customers and employees (G3, G4, G8, G19).

Research question 7: Do you conduct SWOT analysis in your enterprise?

- Yes, we conduct SWOT analysis in our enterprise (G1, G2, G3, G5, G6, G7, G8, G9, G10, G11, G12, G14, G15, G16, G17, G18, G19).
- No, we do not conduct SWOT analysis in our enterprise (G4, G13).

Research question 8: Do you have strategic alliances concluded with agencies on topics such as restaurant / café recommendations?

- Yes, we have strategic alliances (G1, G2, G3, G7, G8, G9, G10, G11, G12, G13, G14, G16, G17, G18, G19).
- No, we do not have strategic alliances (G4, G5, G6, G15).

Research question 9: Have you changed the procedures and methods of doing business in your enterprise?

- Yes, we have changed the procedures and methods of doing business in our enterprise (G1, G2, G3, G7, G10, G11, G12, G15, G16, G17, G18).
- No, we have not changed the procedures and methods of doing business in our enterprise (G4, G5, G6, G8, G9, G13, G14, G19).

Research question 10: In your organization, are your employees able to use their powers and responsibilities without being bound to senior managers in any case?

- Yes, our employees are able to use their powers and responsibilities without being bound to senior managers in any case (G8, G9, G12, G14, G15, G19).
- Our employees are able to use their powers and responsibilities within the framework of certain limits (G1, G2, G4, G5, G6, G11, G13, G16, G17, G18).
- Among our employees, only our receptionists can use their powers and responsibilities without being bound to senior managers (G3, G7).
- No, our employees are not able to use their powers and responsibilities without being bound to the senior managers in any case (G10).

Research question 11: Are you benefiting from communication technologies such as intranet, internet, radio, WhatsApp and so on with all your employees in order to use time effectively and process rapidly in your enterprise?

- Yes, we are using these communication tools (G1, G2, G3, G4, G5, G6, G7, G9, G10, G11, G12, G13, G14, G15, G16, G17, G18).
- No, we are not using these communication tools (G8, G19).

#### **4. Evaluation of Research Findings**

In this study, it has been aimed to determine whether hotel managers are applying strategic management tools in their management processes in the axis of negotiations conducted with these hotel managers. In the study, it has been observed that total quality management approach, SWOT analysis, strategic alliances, re-engineering approach and information and communication technologies have been frequently applied as strategic management tools in hotel management operations. The reasons for using these strategic management tools are indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Strategic Management Tools Preferred in Hotel Management Operations

Strategic Management Tools	Expressions
<b>Total Quality Management Approach</b>	<p><i>We are making innovations in our enterprise with the guidance of customers and employees. In this context, we are replacing the beds and renewing the TV systems and room designs according to the results of the surveys conducted with the customers and the complaints received from them (G1),</i></p> <p><i>We reward our employees in line with comments received from customers (G2, G16, G18),</i></p> <p><i>We include even those who work at the lowest level in our meetings (G5),</i></p> <p><i>We are listening to the opinions of customers and employees of all levels (G7, G14),</i></p> <p><i>We are taking the recommendations of both employees and customers into account within the technical and financial means (G9, G17),</i></p> <p><i>We have assigned a night room service staff in the direction of the staff orientation (G10),</i></p> <p><i>We are renewing the hotels based on feedback from online booking sites (Booking Expedia, TripAdvisor, etc.) (G12, G15),</i></p> <p><i>We are realizing the creative ideas of employees even though we, as managers, envy their ideas (G13)</i></p>
<b>SWOT Analysis</b>	<p><i>We are making preliminary studies by conducting a meeting of managers on a specific day of the week (G1),</i></p> <p><i>We are maintaining our actions towards customer satisfaction, which is our strengths; we avoid our weaknesses according to customer reviews; we ensure that the customers become permanent customers in restaurant and spa units by means of turning special occasions such as new year's night etc. into opportunity (G2, G16, G18),</i></p> <p><i>We often place more importance to the development of our weaknesses (G7),</i></p> <p><i>We cannot do anything against threats, we cannot work at full capacity during the winter months and elections (G8, G19).</i></p>
<b>Strategic Alliances</b>	<p><i>We offer discounts to guides in accommodations (G1),</i></p> <p><i>We are implementing win-win concept by guiding our customers to local cafes and restaurants (G2, G14, G16, G18),</i></p> <p><i>We are applying special discounts to bed and breakfast customers in some businesses (G3),</i></p> <p><i>We are working with tourism agencies (G7, G13),</i></p> <p><i>We conclude agreements with municipalities, university and online booking sites (G9, G12, G17)</i></p>
<b>Re-engineering</b>	<p><i>We reconfigured our departments (G1, G12),</i></p> <p><i>We renewed the interior and exterior parts of the building (G3),</i></p> <p><i>We have made changes in restaurant layout, food &amp; beverage, floor crew, visual care of rooms and front desk services (G7),</i></p> <p><i>We have updated software programs (G2, G10, G15, G16, G17, G18),</i></p>
<b>Information and Communication Technologies</b>	<p><i>The departments have their relevant groups for radio and WhatsApp communication, we make reports and internal correspondence with the Exchange server through these groups (G1, G16),</i></p> <p><i>All department groups have internal software programs (G2),</i></p> <p><i>We often use telephones, radios and WhatsApp (G3, G4, G7, G9, G10, G11, G12, G13, G15, G17)</i></p>

In the study, it has been seen that mission and vision statements, strategic planning, benchmarking, outsourcing and empowerment approaches have not been frequently applied as strategic management tools in hotel management operations. The reasons for not using these strategic management tools are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Strategic Management Tools That are Not Frequently Preferred in Hotel Management Operations

Strategic Management Tools	Expressions
<b>Strategic planning</b>	<p><i>Since the tourism sector is in very fragile structure against economic and political factors, we often make short-term annual plans. To this end, we aim to exceed the previous year with our monthly occupancy targets (G7, G13),</i></p> <p><i>We are making plans with a year of maturity and we pay attention to participate in market research, field research and fairs in order to achieve these plans (G8, G12, G17, G19).</i></p>
<b>Benchmarking</b>	<p><i>Benchmarking is not correct (G5),</i></p> <p><i>We pay attention to protect our own status (G8, G19),</i></p> <p><i>We take actions according to our own experience (G10, G15),</i></p> <p><i>We are unique in the field, we do not see anyone as our competitor (G11, G17),</i></p> <p><i>We see them as partners but not as competitors (G14).</i></p>
<b>Outsourcing</b>	<p><i>Outsourcing will often result in poor quality (G13, G9, G10, G13, G14, G15).</i></p> <p><i>We often procure laundry services from outsourced companies (G5, G6).</i></p> <p><i>We benefit from outsourcing companies for dry cleaning and security works (G12).</i></p>
<b>Empowerment</b>	<p><i>We apply empowerment approach within the framework of certain limits.</i></p> <p><i>In particular, the front office clerks have an initiative on price policy (G3, G5, G7, G13),</i></p> <p><i>All units are authorized within the framework of their job descriptions (G1, G2, G4, G6, G8, G11, G16, G17, G18, G19).</i></p>
<b>Mission Statements</b>	<p><i>We keep customer satisfaction at the highest level (G2, G16, G18)</i></p> <p><i>We offer the cleanest, most comfortable and best quality breakfast service (G3), We offer exclusive accommodation service (G6),</i></p> <p><i>We ensure the continuity of customer satisfaction (G7),</i></p> <p><i>We are a guest-oriented enterprise (G10),</i></p> <p><i>We offer the most comfortable accommodation, the most problem-free service for our guests and we provide a comfort to our guests within the framework of family environment (G17).</i></p> <p><i>* Examples of enterprises that carry out mission statements in writing or without writing are presented</i></p>
<b>Vision Statements</b>	<p><i>Keeping up with innovations (G2, G18),</i></p> <p><i>Carrying out sustainable tourism (G5),</i></p> <p><i>Being the best among three-star hotels (G7),</i></p> <p><i>Contributing to the region (G15),</i></p> <p><i>Keeping up with innovations (G16),</i></p> <p><i>Being a hotel where guests from abroad are hosted in the lodging industry (G17).</i></p> <p><i>* Examples of enterprises that carry out vision statements in writing or without writing are presented</i></p>

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Strategic management tools that are important in the development of professional management processes have significance in terms of sustainable success, profitability, efficiency, effectiveness and growth criteria. The implementation of these tools in hotel management operations will enable these hotels to grow day by day and to maintain their competitive perspectives, as well as the improvement of star levels granted by the Ministry of Tourism. In this study, it has been aimed to

determine whether strategic management tools are applied in hotel management. In this context, it has been aimed to determine implementation levels of mission, vision and basic values statements, strategic planning processes, benchmarking, outsourcing, total quality management, SWOT analysis, strategic alliances, re-engineering, empowerment and information and communication technologies in these enterprises by means of conducting interview with the hotel managers. In the study, strategic management tools have been found to be important in hotel management operations as stated by Abya (2015), Angeloni (2013), Zlatković (2016), Wöber (2002), Timmerman and Lytle (2007), Holjevac (1996), Gajdošíková et al., (2016), Galičić (1996), Buhalis (1998) and Morais et.al., (2016) in the literature. In addition, the study bears resemblance to the research conducted by Şentürk (2012) in the dimension of total quality management approach and has revealed that this strategic management tool is frequently applied in hotel management operations.

The findings of the research indicate that statements of mission, vision and basic values are not often used in hotel management. In addition, there have been some enterprises that claim to have developed mission and vision statements, although stated not in writing. This situation may adversely affect the present and future sustainable success of the enterprises. In the study, it has been expressed that strategic planning processes are not frequently implemented in hotel management and that they are not kept in writing even if they are implemented. The characteristic of the tourism sector being inclined to be affected by external environmental conditions has been shown as the reason for not applying strategic planning. In this context, hotel managers have often stated that economic and political factors can affect the enterprise therefore they are only able to make short-term plans. In the study, it is emphasized that a benchmarking approach is not frequently applied in hotel management. According to this, the hotel managers have mentioned that they take action according to their own experiences instead of comparing them and see their competitors as their partners. Also, it is stated that the approach of outsourcing is not frequently applied in management processes, and that the concept of poor quality may come to the forefront in the axis of this approach. In the study, it is stated that total quality management perspective could be applied frequently in the axis of participation mentality and it is also noted that the concept of guest was used instead of the customer. The hotel managers who state that they are applying SWOT analysis studies have expressed that they are insufficient to prevent the threats and the occupancy rates are affected negatively especially in the winter seasons. In addition to this, it is observed that online bookings, tourism agencies, local cafe and restaurant recommendations are frequently used in hotel managements and strategic alliances are given importance in this context. The institutions that do not apply strategic alliances share the opinion that their hotels could be affected negatively from this situation despite the poor quality problems of collaborating institution. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the re-engineering approach is frequently applied in hotel management operations in order to ensure the continuity of competitive structures. A small number of enterprises not implementing the re-engineering approach state that they have not needed a re-engineering approach since they have been newly established. In this study, it is stated that

empowerment approach is applied within certain limits, and it is also explained that powers and responsibilities are frequently held by senior executives. It is also observed that information and communication technologies are important in terms of using time effectively and are frequently applied in hotel management. The research findings show that total quality management approach, SWOT analysis, strategic alliances, re-engineering approach and information and communication technologies are utilized in hotel management operations. In addition, it has been observed that mission and vision statements, strategic planning works, benchmarking approach, empowerment approach and outsourcing approach have not been implemented in hotel management operations. The fact that the hotel enterprises operating in Çanakkale often have three-star status and they lack professional management processes bring forward that these hotel enterprises do not apply all strategic management tools. In addition, the fact that tourism enterprises are an element of the tertiary sector and the existence of a unique sector structure cause that all strategic management tools are not applied in the hotel enterprises. In terms of the success of strategic management processes, it is recommended to ensure that all of these management tools are applicable in hotel management operations and that the approaches expressed to have been applied should be continuously improved in the context of innovative perspectives. In this context, it is recommended that hotel managements should grow their businesses with incentives, grants and loans, switch to professional management processes and raise their star levels.

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