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Bibliometric Analysis of Post-Graduate Thesis on Worklife Quality in Tourism Establishments

Turizm İşletmelerinde İş Yaşam Kalitesi ile İlgili Lisansüstü Tezlerin Bibliyometrik Analizi

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ÖZ

İş yaşam kalitesi, çalışılan ortam ve bireysel ihtiyaçlar arasındaki ilişkiyi ele almaktadır. İş görenlerinin kişisel ihtiyaçlarını tatmin edebilen iş ortamlarının, olumlu bir etkileşim meydana getirdiği ve bunun da zamanla yüksek nitelikte iş yaşam kalitesi oluşumu sağlayacağına inanılmaktadır. İş yaşam kalitesi, çalışanların birtakım beklentileri ve ihtiyaçlarının karşılanarak yaşam kalitesinin artırılması açısından önemlidir. Nitekim hizmet sektörünün en önemli yapıtaşı olan çalışanların beklentilerinin ve ihtiyaçlarının karşılanması, iş yaşam kalitesi ile hangi değişkenlerin ilişki olduğunu belirlebilmesi hizmet kalitesi açısından da oldukça önemlidir. Çalışmanın amacı, iş yaşam kalitesi kavramına ilişkin 2002-2023 yılları arasında yayımlanan 101 lisansüstü tezi bibliyometrik açıdan inceleyerek son 21 yılda alanda gerçekleşen eğilimleri ortaya koymaktır. Bu kapsamda, Yüksek Öğrenim Kurumu Başkanlığı Tez Merkezi veri tabanında "iş yaşam kalitesi" konu başlığında tarama gerçekleştirilmiş ve çalışmalara ait bibliyometrik verilere ulaşılmıştır. Çalışmalar; yıllara göre yayın sayıları, tezin türü, yayımlandığı anabilim dalı, kavram-konu yönelimleri parametreler ile araştırılmıştır. Ayrıca turizm alanındaki lisansüstü tezlerin incelenen destinasyonlara göre dağılımı ile örneklem grupları da analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre toplamda 101 adet lisansüstü tez incelenmiş ancak turizm alanı özelinde 11 lisansüstü tezte iş yaşam kalitesi kavramının çalışıldığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca turizm alanında özellikle belli başlı destinasyonlara yoğunlaştığı, belirli örneklem gruplarının ele alındığı ve kavramın birlikte incelendiği değişkenlerin de sınırlı olduğu saptanmıştır.

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ABSTRACT

Worklife quality deals with the relationship between work environment and individual needs. It is believed that work environments that can satisfy the personal needs of their employees create a positive interaction and so will provide a high quality of work life over time. The quality of worklife is important in terms of increasing the quality of life by meeting the expectations and needs of the employees. As a matter of fact, meeting the expectations and needs of the employees, the most important characteristics of the service sector, and determining the variables which are related to the quality of worklife are also very important considering service quality. The aim of the study is to examine the 101 post-graduate theses published between 2002-2023 on the quality of worklife through a bibliometric perspective and to reveal the trends in the last 21 years. In this context, the database of the Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education was searched under the title of 'quality of worklife' and bibliometric data of the studies were obtained. Studies were investigated using the parameters such as the number of publications by years, the type of the thesis, the department in which it was published and concept-subject relations. Besides, the distribution of post-graduate theses in tourism according to the destinations and sample groups were also analyzed. According to the results obtained, a total of 101 post-graduate theses were examined, but it was determined that quality of worklife was studied in 11 theses in tourism. In addition, it has been determined that in tourism, there is a limited focus on certain destinations, certain sample groups are discussed, and the variables in which the concept is examined together are also limited.

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Introduction

The dynamic structure of the tourism industry is very important in terms of creating both income and employment sources, especially for developing countries. However, the working conditions of the industry, long working hours and intense working conditions including weekends cause the balance between the work life and daily life of the employees to deteriorate. Herein, despite the importance of the industry in creating employment, some researches show that the working conditions are not very good. As a matter of fact, some of the challenges of tourism industry are low wages (Türker, Uçar and Ateş, 2016), unqualified labor force (Gökmen, 2011, 2018), high employee turnover rates (Hinkin and Tracey, 2000), high absenteeism rates, the lack of career opportunities for newcomers due to ossification (Tükeltürk and Perçin, 2008), bad working conditions (Duman, Tepeci and Kamil, 2006), long and continuous working hours (İçöz, 1991), limited workforce due to lack of employment rate and increase in workload (Çavuş, 2015), low job satisfaction due to the inability to meet their expectations and needs, and the prevalence of seasonality.

One of the important measures of work-life balance is the time spent at work. Non-regular working hours, inconvenient working hours and working during holidays cause stress for people and ultimately disrupt the work-life balance. Quality of worklife is defined as meeting the needs of people in a safe environment, making employees feel that they make contribution to the workplace, making them aware of their talents and creating a suitable environment for employees to develop their capacities (Özkalp and Kirel, 2001). Thus, ensuring the quality of worklife in tourism, which is one of the important pillars of the service industry, is important to increase the service quality and to create a positive perception for the consumer. Therefore, it is very important to determine the factors affecting the quality of worklife of the employees and to reveal the results of the quality of worklife in terms of both the development of the tourism industry and the ensurance of total quality management. The aim of the current study is to determine the post-graduate theses on quality of worklife and to examine which concepts are associated with tourism and other service sectors. Thereby, it is aimed to guide further studies on the quality of worklife in tourism.

Literature

People spend most of their lives as an 'employee' and aim to reach their life satisfaction through work life. Therefore, the importance of work life cannot be ignored (Keser, 2005). Cherns (1975), who defines the concept of quality of work life as the humanization of work, points out to the psychological and social needs of an employee. Schilesinger (1982), on the other hand, defined the concept as a whole in which the interaction and communication between the organization and the employee is high, the organization creates environments that will increase motivation for the employees, and shows efforts and endeavors to be open to development, apart from psychological and social developments. Factors such as relationships with colleagues, job security, managerial support, motivation, working conditions, and wages directly or indirectly affect the quality of worklife (Avcı, 2017). In this sense, the main aim is not to work more, but to work effectively by increasing job satisfaction (Nadler and Edward, 1983). So, to retain employees and to ensure their efficiency, it is important for organizations to make the work life feel important, attractive and valuable for their employees (Wahlberg, Ramalho and Brochado, 2017). Serbest (2000) attributes the main reason why organizations attach importance to the quality of work life, as well as the realization that 'people and their expectations', which are often overlooked, are the most important phenomenon that increases competition and productivity, in addition to the understanding of production and profit. Hackman and Oldham (1980) discuss the quality of work life in relation to the interaction between the working environment and individual needs. It is believed that work environments that can satisfy the personal needs of employees create a positive interaction effect and this will lead to a very good quality of work life over time.

Ataman (2009) revealed the awareness that employees who are aware of their rights need to be managed with new principles and principles, and a new movement defined as 'human relations approach' within the neo-classical management approach. Therefore, these needs of the employees determine the quality of work life. Satisfying the needs of employees regarding business life ensures satisfaction in other parts of their lives (Kawada et al., 2011). At the beginning of these needs are the need for health and safety, the needs for economic satisfaction and family needs. Meeting these needs directly affects the work-life balance of the employee. Chen and Farh (2000) address the four dimensions of quality of work life. As a matter of fact, work-life balance is one of the four dimensions of work-life quality. On the other hand, the employee has some needs to be appreciated, supported and to create solutions for their problems. Meeting these needs also meets the managerial needs of the employee. This includes the second dimension of the quality of work life. Considering the needs, it is suggested that the employee needs to see his work as sufficient by himself. He likes to think that he is rewarded for the work he has, both at his workplace and when compared to other jobs. It needs a high level of well-being, which is important for it to benefit. In this respect, the reward/benefit dimension of the quality of work life emerges. Finally, the employee needs to be motivated by the work he has, to add creativity and meaning to the work he does, and to be at a level to take his initiatives and responsibilities. These needs, on the other hand, deal with the characteristics of the work quality of work life (Yıldız, 2013).

In literature, some of the related concepts to worklife quality are the intention of employees to stay at work and absenteeism (Demir, 2011), work stress (Dülgeroğlu and Başol, 2017), organizational justice (Turunç et al., 2010), job satisfaction (Tatlı et al., 2021), turnover intention (Demir, 2009; Turunç, Tabak, Şeşen and Türkyılmaz, 2010; Sezici, 2014), job satisfaction and job commitment (Türkay, 2015), emotional intelligence (Demir, 2009), organizational deviation (Sezici, 2014), new technologies (Güvenli, 2006), job performance (Yabacı and Perçin, 2020), occupational health and job satisfaction (Tatlı, Eytmiş and Zümrüt, 2021), employees' brand perception (Dursun and Eriş, 2018), psychological well-being (Bilgin, 2018), burnout (Acar, 2016), flexible working hours (Özaktaş, 2015), social responsibility standard (Tütüncü, 2008), corporate social responsibility perception and work dedication (Öksüz and Erkılıç, 2022), organizational commitment (Bilgin, 2018; Kaya, 2012) and life satisfaction (Sağlam, 2017).

Studies in tourism literature are about hotel employees (Acar, 2016; Dursun and Eriş, 2018; Yabacı and Perçin, 2020; Demir, 2009, Tuncer, 2013; Bulgan, İşler and Çınar, 2021; Yabacı and Perçin, 2020; Doğan, Bayır and Cinnioğlu, 2022; Kaya, 2012; Öksüz and Erkılıç, 2022), tourism establishment employees (Işkın, 2021), travel agency employees (Türkay, 2015), airport employees (Demir, 2011), employees having tourism education (İnan and Ayazlar, 2021) and food and beverage establishment employees (Açıkgöz, 2020).

The aim of the current study is to make a bibliometric analysis of the quality of worklife for post-graduate theses published in tourism. Tourism is a phenomenon that has significant social, cultural, economic, political and environmental effects. The social effects of tourism also increase the interest in tourism. The increase in researchers and scientific publications necessitates the interpretation and summarization of the information confusion. So this reveals the need for bibliometric research in tourism (Güzeller and Çeliker, 2017). Bibliometric studies, as they evaluate the quality of research and examine the development of the sector, have attracted great interest in tourism as well (Hall, 2011).

Methodology

The aim of the study is to make a bibliometric analysis of post-graduate theses on the quality of work life in Turkey published between 2002-2023. Thus, it is aimed to provide insight to further studies regarding the quality of worklife in tourism. The research data were obtained from the qualitative research samples, based on the keywords determined by the criterion sample (Chandra and Shang 2019).

Bibliometric analysis provides to reveal the scientific communication process in accordance with the bibliometric data obtained by quantitative analysis of certain features of scientific publications such as the author, the subject studied, the journal in which it was published, the year of publication, and the cited sources (Al and Tonta, 2004). Within the scope of the study, the database of the Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education was examined and the concept was searched in Turkish and English. Accordingly, the terms of the concept were determined as 'quality of worklife' and 'worklife quality' and analyzed in the database.

Theses written on worklife quality were accessed through the website of the Higher Education Council Thesis Center on 09.04.2023. Parameters such as 'years of publication', 'type of thesis', 'department' and 'variables of the thesis', 'sample group used in the thesis', 'distribution of the thesis by destination' were subjected to bibliometric analysis. In the research, (1) the distribution of post-graduate theses by years, (2) the distribution of post-graduate theses according to departments, (3) the distribution of post-graduate theses according to variables in tourism, (4) the distribution of post-graduate theses according to the sample group in tourism, (5) the distribution of post-graduate theses according to destinations in tourism were analyzed.

A total of 105 theses were identified as a result of the scanning of the post-graduate theses published between 2002-2023 on worklife quality. However, 4 of them could not be evaluated due to publication restrictions, so a total of 101 post-graduate theses were examined. On the other hand, only 11 of these are related to tourism. As with any study, the present study has some limitations. The study is limited to post-graduate theses on quality of worklife in a limited number of national thesis center. Post-graduate theses in international databases were excluded. Within the scope of the research, although the types of all post-graduate theses examining the concept in general, their distribution according to years and to institutes were determined and shown in tables, the focus was basically on tourism.

Results

The distribution of post-graduate theses on quality of worklife is shown in Table 1. It was determined that 83.2% of the post-graduate theses consisted of master's theses and 16.8% were doctoral theses (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses by Types

| Type of Thesis | n | % |
|------------------|------------|------------|
| Masters Degree | 84 | 83,2 |
| Doctorate Degree | 17 | 16.8 |
| Total | 101 | 100 |

The findings regarding the chronological distribution of theses by years are shown in Table 2. It is seen that the concept was first used in graduate theses in 2002. The years in which the concept was studied the least were determined as 2002, 2004 and 2013, and it was studied at a rate of 0.9%. However the most prominent year is 2019. As a matter of fact, the concept has been examined in 24 theses (23.8%). 22 of these theses are master's theses (91.6%) and two of them are doctoral dissertation (8.4%) (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses by Years

| Years | n | % |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| 2002 | 1 | 0,9 |
| 2004 | 1 | 0,9 |
| 2009 | 2 | 2 |
| 2010 | 3 | 3 |
| 2011 | 2 | 2 |
| 2012 | 2 | 2 |
| 2013 | 1 | 0,9 |
| 2014 | 4 | 4 |
| 2015 | 3 | 3 |
| 2016 | 9 | 8,9 |
| 2017 | 7 | 6,9 |
| 2018 | 9 | 8,9 |
| 2019 | 24 | 23,8 |
| 2020 | 6 | 5,9 |
| 2021 | 14 | 13,9 |
| 2022 | 11 | 10,9 |
| 2023 | 2 | 2 |
| Total | 101 | 100 |

When theses are examined considering the departments, it is seen that the concept is mostly studied in business administration department (23.76%). On the other hand, it is followed by the nursing department (14.85%) and the department of health management (11.88%) (Table 3).

Table 3: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses by Departments

| Departments | n | % |
|--|------------|------------|
| Forensic Medicine | 1 | 0,99 |
| Family Counselling | 1 | 0,99 |
| Family and Consumer Sciences | 1 | 0,99 |
| Physical Education and Sports | 1 | 0,99 |
| Nutrition and Dietetics | 1 | 0,99 |
| Labor Economics and Industrial Relations | 2 | 1,98 |
| Educational Sciences | 9 | 8,91 |
| Education Management and Planning | 4 | 3,96 |
| Industrial Engineering | 1 | 0,99 |
| Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation | 1 | 0,99 |
| Public Health | 1 | 0,99 |
| Public Health Nursing | 3 | 2,97 |
| Nursing | 15 | 14,85 |
| Business Management | 24 | 23,76 |
| Special Education | 2 | 1,98 |
| Mental Health Nursing | 1 | 0,99 |
| Recreation | 1 | 0,99 |
| Health Business Management | 2 | 1,98 |
| Health Management | 12 | 11,88 |
| Social Services | 1 | 0,99 |
| Sociology | 2 | 1,98 |
| Sports Management | 2 | 1,98 |
| Strategy | 1 | 0,99 |
| Tourism Management | 9 | 8,91 |
| Education of Tourism Management | 1 | 0,99 |
| Tourism Guidance | 1 | 0,99 |
| Management and Organization | 1 | 0,99 |
| Total | 101 | 100 |

When the distribution of theses written in tourism according to their types is examined, it has been determined that it is mostly in the master's theses. It is seen that four of them are doctoral dissertations (36.4%) and seven are master's theses (63.6%) (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of Theses in Tourism by Type

| Types of Thesis | n | % |
|------------------|-----------|------------|
| Masters Degree | 7 | 63,6 |
| Doctorate Degree | 4 | 36,4 |
| Total | 11 | 100 |

When the post-graduate theses in tourism are examined, the most preferred variables are; intention to leave (9.5%), organizational support (9.5%) and job performance (9.5%). It is seen that the concept is related to 18 different variables. Other associated concepts are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses in Tourism by Variables

| Variables | n | % |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Intention to Leave | 2 | 9,5 |
| Organizational Support | 2 | 9,5 |
| Job Performance | 2 | 9,5 |
| Leadership | 1 | 4,8 |
| Organizational Commitment | 1 | 4,8 |
| Social Responsibility | 1 | 4,8 |
| Work Dedication | 1 | 4,8 |
| Work Alienation | 1 | 4,8 |
| Emotional Labour | 1 | 4,8 |
| Life Satisfaction | 1 | 4,8 |
| Psychological Capital | 1 | 4,8 |
| Organizational Identification | 1 | 4,8 |
| Supervisor Support | 1 | 4,8 |
| Organizational trust | 1 | 4,8 |
| Generations | 1 | 4,8 |
| Employer Brand Perception | 1 | 4,8 |
| Stress | 1 | 4,8 |
| Burnout syndrome | 1 | 4,8 |
| Total | 21 | 100 |

When the sample group of post-graduate theses in tourism is examined, it can be seen that they are gathered in two different groups. These are hotel management employees and active tourist guides. It is seen that the most application area is on hotel employees (81.8%) (Table 6).

Table 6: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses in Tourism by Sample Group

| Sample Group | n | % |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Hotel Management Employees | 9 | 81,8 |
| Active Tourist Guides | 2 | 18,2 |
| Total | 11 | 100 |

Considering the destinations the post-graduate theses in tourism are applied are examined, four destinations are in the first rank. The two of these destinations is not specific and the whole of Turkey is discussed (16.7%), as the sample group in these theses are active tourist guides. On the other hand, hotels located in Afyonkarahisar (16.7%), Antalya (16.7%) and Istanbul (16.7) were preferred relatively more. Other destinations are listed in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of Post-Graduate Theses in Tourism by Destination

| Destinations | n | % |
|----------------|------------|------------|
| Antalya | 2 | 16,7 |
| İstanbul | 2 | 16,7 |
| Afyonkarahisar | 2 | 16,7 |
| Turkey | 2 | 16,7 |
| Trabzon | 1 | 8,3 |
| Nevşehir | 1 | 8,3 |
| Eskişehir | 1 | 8,3 |
| Ankara | 1 | 8,3 |
| Total | 12* | 100 |

*Since one of the theses includes Ankara-Antalya destinations together, the destinations were evaluated separately.

When the post-graduate theses in tourism are examined; in studies on hotel employees in Afyonkarahisar, it is seen that the quality of worklife is explained by trust in the supervisor, intention to leave, psychological capital and organizational identification. In the studies on hotel employees in Antalya, leadership, organizational commitment and turnover intention are examined. Organizational support, stress, job performance and burnout were studied in the studies on hotel employees in Istanbul (Table 8).

Table 8: List of Post-Graduate Theses in Tourism Related to Destination, Sample Group and Variables

| Destination | Sample Group | Variables |
|----------------|-------------------|--|
| Afyonkarahisar | Hotel employees | Organizational Trust / Intention to Leave Psychological Capital / Organizational Identification |
| Antalya | Hotel employees | Leadership / Organizational Commitment Intention to Leave* |
| İstanbul | Hotel employees | Organizational Support / Stress / Job Performance Burnout Syndrome Work Alienation |
| Turkey | Turist rehberleri | Emotional Labour / Life Satisfaction / Burnout Syndrome / Organizational Support |
| Trabzon | Hotel employees | Corporate Social Responsibility / Work Dedication |
| Nevşehir | Hotel employees | Job Performance / Supervisor Support |
| Eskişehir | Hotel employees | Generations / Employer Brand Perception |
| Ankara | Hotel employees | Intention to Leave* |

*This variable is for the same study, but hotel employees in two different destinations were examined in the study.

Intention to leave is the concept that was most frequently preferred by hotel employees. On the other hand, burnout syndrome and organizational support are the two common concepts considering hotel employees and tourist guides.

Conclusion

The aim of the study is to reveal the trends in the last 21 years by examining 101 post-graduate theses on quality of worklife published between 2002-2023. According to the findings, it has been determined that the studies do not focus on the relations with certain concepts, however they focus in destinations where tourism is one of the main industry and for a certain employee sample.

Worklife is widely researched considering organizational behavior. There are 101 postgraduate theses, and most of them are masters degree level. Since worklife was first studied, it has been studied in its natural flow at increasing rates, especially in 2016 and later in 2019. Specifically in 2019, studies are concentrated especially in the health sector and education sector. Although it has been studied in health literature, it is basically on the employees. As a

matter of fact, when it is examined in general, it has been widely studied in the department of business administration.

Worklife quality aims meeting the social and psychological needs of employees at work. Despite being studied in different fields, studies in the tourism have been associated with similar concepts with studies in other sectors. Especially in the health sector, which is directly based on service, such as the tourism sector, the concept has been studied with organizational commitment, stress, intention to leave, job performance, organizational support and burnout. However, concepts such as boredom, organizational conflict, job satisfaction, empathy, attractiveness, motivation, compassion fatigue, job security and participation in decisions were also examined in the health sector. In this sense, the quality of worklife can be examined with similar concepts in the tourism. As a matter of fact, the working conditions of both sectors show similarities with each other. Because both are included in the service industry and in this context, it contains a labor-intensive structure. On the other hand, the two sectors do not provide services at certain time intervals, on the contrary, they provide 24/7 customer service. Therefore, the variables that have been examined in the health sector may also be applicable for tourism.

The tourism industry has four components. These are accommodation, travel agency, food and beverage business and recreation activities. However, accommodation businesses do not only consist of hotels and tourist guides are not included under travel agencies either. In this sense, it is seen that studies on food and beverage businesses with similar working conditions and employees in recreation are scarce. As a matter of fact, considering that there are approximately 70 thousand restaurants in Turkey according to the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute, it is important to examine the quality of work life in this area as well.

On the other hand, exhibitions have become one of the leading areas of Turkish tourism. As a matter of fact, 398 exhibitions are planned to be held between 05.01.2023 and 24.12.2023 according to the 2023 calendar of the Fairs Divison affiliated to the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey. Considering that there are employees in this field, it will be important to examine this sample group as well.

Studies mostly focus on Antalya, Istanbul and Afyonkarahisar destinations. Antalya and Istanbul destinations are the two most popular destinations that attract most of the tourists in Turkey. Afyonkarahisar is the leading destination of Turkey in thermal tourism. Apart from this, post-graduate theses are on employees in Trabzon, Nevşehir, Eskişehir and Ankara. Although it is thought that post-graduate theses are for the leading touristic destinations of Turkey, it is seen that there are no studies on resort tourism destinations such as Muğla and İzmir. On the other hand, it is recommended to conduct studies on gastronomy and cultural tourism destinations such as Gaziantep, Hatay, Adana and Şanlıurfa. However, considering the earthquake disaster happened on February 04, 2023 in which more than 45 thousand people lost their lives in two of these destinations, it is thought that it will not be possible to study on these cities in the near future, but it is important to include these destinations for further studies.

This study has an interesting finding. Post-graduate theses on employees working in Istanbul have been related to stress, burnout and job performance. The fact that the city includes a busy lifestyle and the accompanying stress and burnout reflects the overlap of the subjects with the destination. On the other hand, it is thought that the high capacity of the hotel in the Antalya destination constitutes the basis of leadership among the employees and the organizational commitment and intention to leave due to the seasonality of the sector. Due to the seasonality of the sector, the studies in the Aegean region can be associated with organizational commitment and turnover intention, and with life satisfaction as these destinations are less populated than Antalya and Istanbul. The fact that the businesses are

smaller compared to other destinations requires less personnel, and job satisfaction can be suggested as this will provide the opportunity to meet the needs of the employees more easily.

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