

Research Article

## The Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention: A Meta-Analysis

### İş Tatmini ile İşten Ayrılma Niyeti arasındaki İlişki: Meta-Analiz

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#### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to determine the effect size and direction of the association between hospitality employees' job satisfaction and turnover intention through a meta-analysis. Relevant studies were systematically searched in the Web of Science (WoS), EBSCOhost Hospitality & Tourism Complete, and Google Scholar databases. Ultimately, 32 studies examining the connection between job satisfaction and turnover intention, with reported correlation coefficients and sample sizes, were included in the research. The analyses were conducted using the CMA 3.0 program. To assess publication bias, a funnel plot, Begg & Mazumdar rank correlations, and Classic Fail-safe N tests were applied. Utilizing a random effects model, the study identified a moderate and negative association between job satisfaction and turnover intention ( $r = -0.434$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ). Additionally, the moderating role of the sampling region in the relationship between these variables was confirmed. Based on the findings, practical recommendations are provided for hospitality managers.

#### MAKALE BİLGİSİ

##### Anahtar Kelimeler:

İş Tatmini, İşten Ayrılma Niyeti, Konaklama Endüstrisi, Meta-Analiz, Konaklama Çalışanları.

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#### ÖZ

Bu çalışma, konaklama çalışanlarının iş tatmini ile işten ayrılma niyetleri arasındaki ilişkinin etki büyüklüğünü ve yönünü meta-analiz yöntemiyle belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. İlgili çalışmalar Web of Science (WoS), EBSCOhost Hospitality & Tourism Complete ve Google Scholar veri tabanlarında sistematik olarak taranmıştır. Sonuç olarak, iş tatmini ile işten ayrılma niyeti arasındaki ilişkiyi korelasyon katsayıları ve örneklem sayılarıyla inceleyen 32 çalışma araştırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Analizler CMA 3.0 programı kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Yayın yanlılığını incelemek için Huni Grafiği, Begg & Mazumdar sıralama korelasyonları ve Classic Fail-safe N testleri uygulanmıştır. Rastgele etkiler modelinin benimsendiği bu çalışmada, iş tatmini ile işten ayrılma niyeti arasında orta düzeyde, negatif bir ilişki tespit edilmiştir ( $r = -0,434$ ,  $p < 0,005$ ). Ayrıca örneklem bölgesinin ilgili değişkenler arasındaki ilişki üzerinde düzenleyici rolü doğrulanmıştır. Bulgulara dayanarak, konaklama yöneticilerine yönelik pratik öneriler sunulmuştur.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As one of the fastest-growing industries, tourism and hospitality provide substantial support to the country's economic growth (Gom, Lew, Jiony, Tanakinjal, & Sondoh, 2021). In parallel with this growth, recruiting and managing resources that provide a competitive advantage to hospitality organizations has become increasingly important. In this context, human resources play a critical role in influencing the success of the hospitality industry (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010). However, employee turnover intention remains a major issue in the hospitality industry (Ferreira, Martinez, Lamelas, & Rodrigues, 2017). Factors such as long working hours, heavy workload, low wages, and seasonality affect employee turnover in this industry (Abdou, Khalil, & Elsaied, 2022). High employee turnover may negatively impact customer satisfaction and, consequently, damage the organization's reputation (Kim, 2014). To address this issue, improving employees' job satisfaction may lead to higher service quality in hospitality (Kong, Jiang, Chan, & Zhou, 2018). Therefore, job satisfaction is considered one of the indicators of success in the hospitality and tourism industry (Díaz-Carrión, Navajas-Romero, & Casas-Rosal, 2020). Additionally, employees' job satisfaction contributes to positive performance outcomes by enhancing organizational commitment, motivation, and extra-role behaviors (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010).

Numerous studies have explored the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention in the hospitality and tourism industry (Kim, Leong, & Lee, 2005; Karatepe, Arasli, & Khan, 2007; Yang, 2008; Koo, Yu, Chua, Lee, & Han, 2020; Nguyen, Haar, & Smollan, 2020). While some of these studies found a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention (Yang, 2008; Koo et al., 2020), others have reported a positive relationship between these variables (Balwa., 2021). These inconsistencies in the results lead to varied interpretations of the relationship between the relevant variables. Additionally, some studies in the hospitality and tourism literature have examined this relationship using meta-analysis (Park & Min, 2020; Erkasap & Özkan, 2022). However, the moderating effect of sampling region has not been sufficiently tested in this literature. Therefore, this research aims to integrate studies on the connection between job satisfaction and turnover intention using meta-analysis and to verify the relationship between these variables. Additionally, the moderating effect of the sampling region, which is thought to advance scholarly insights, on the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention will be examined. This study is expected to provide a new perspective for future research by offering more up-to-date and

reliable results regarding the relationship between these variables. It is also anticipated that the findings will guide hotel managers in developing effective employee retention strategies.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention in Hospitality

Job satisfaction is defined as “a state of mind encompassing all those feelings determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs as being met” (Evans, 1998, p. 12). Another definition describes job satisfaction as “how people feel about their job” (Spector, 1997, p. 2). Job satisfaction has a substantial effect on the sustainable growth of organizations (Heimerl, Haid, Benedikt, & Scholl-Grissemann, 2020). Examining factors such as job satisfaction is crucial, particularly in the hotel context where employee and customer interactions are intense (Phuong & Vinh, 2020). Job satisfaction motivates employees to perform their expected tasks and assume additional roles that contribute to achieving organizational goals (Alananzeh et al., 2023). On the other hand, several internal and external factors influence employees' job satisfaction. External factors include working conditions, wages, and supervision, while internal factors encompass growth and recognition, personal success, and the nature of the job itself (Zopiatis, Constanti, & Theocharous, 2014). Meeting expectations leads to job satisfaction; otherwise, dissatisfaction may occur (Han & Bi, 2024). Therefore, it is critical to focus on the fundamental antecedents of job satisfaction (Lu, Lu, Gursoy, & Neale, 2016), as job satisfaction is linked to various factors such as job performance (Chi, Vu, Nguyen, & Truong, 2023), organizational commitment (Bashir & Gani, 2020), customer orientation (Park, Ahn, Han, Back, & An, 2020), customer satisfaction (Son, Kim, & Kim, 2021), and turnover intention (Pinnington, Mir, & Ai, 2023).

Turnover intention is defined as “the last in a sequence of withdrawal cognitions, a set to which thinking of quitting and intent to search for alternative employment also belongs” (Tett & Meyer, 1993, p. 262). The antecedents of turnover are categorized into three groups: personal factors, external factors, and work-related factor (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Personal factors include variables such as age, education, and marital status, while work-related factors encompass factors such as pay, job performance, and job satisfaction. External factors include perceptions of employment and the unemployment rate. Retaining high-performing employees is crucial for organizational success, as high employee turnover incurs both time and

financial costs (Song & Vardarlier, 2023). Given the challenges many organizations, particularly in the tourism industry, face in retaining employees, managing turnover has become increasingly important (Duarte & Silva, 2023). The hospitality industry is characterized by close customer interaction, low wages, and long working hours (Díaz-Carrión et al., 2020). Consequently, the employee turnover rate is critically high in hospitality and tourism (Xu et al., 2022). Therefore, turnover can result in direct costs such as training and hiring new staff, as well as indirect costs such as decreased motivation, ultimately leading to poor performance outcomes in the hospitality and tourism industry (Ferreira et al., 2017). A high turnover rate also negatively impacts customer service quality in the hospitality industry (Wen, Zhou, Hu, & Zhang, 2020).

This situation has prompted the hospitality industry to seek solutions to address turnover intention. According to Ferreira et al. (2017), reducing the turnover rate requires developing supportive working conditions where employees can realize their potential and skills, and focusing on improving these conditions. Additionally, regional differences impact the quality of working life (Ozkan, Elci, Karabay, Kitapci, & Garip, 2020). Studies have also demonstrated that working conditions influence turnover rates in the hospitality industry (Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Poulston, 2009; Abdou et al., 2022). In fact, working conditions vary between countries (Niedhammer, Sultan-Taïeb, Chastang, Vermeylen, & Parent-Thirion, 2012). It has been reported that working conditions are generally better in countries with economic stability, low unemployment rates, and high unionization rates compared to other countries (Díaz-Carrión et al., 2020). Regional differences also affect job satisfaction (Jones & Sloane, 2009), as working conditions and job satisfaction are interrelated (Taheri, Miah, & Kamaruzzaman, 2020; Díaz-Carrión et al., 2020). According to the existing literature, enhancing job satisfaction is another effective strategy for reducing turnover rates (Chen & Wang, 2019). Employee job satisfaction is strategically significant for organizations because satisfied employees contribute to positive organizational outcomes, such as improved business performance (Ahmad & Raja, 2021). Thus, job satisfaction encourages employees to remain with the organization by leading to positive work outcomes, such as higher job performance (Chen & Wang, 2019). Similarly, research in the hospitality sector has identified a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention (Wang, Xu, Zhang, & Li, 2020; Koo et al., 2020). Moreover, Ozkan et al. (2020) found that the region moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and

turnover intention. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a negative association between employees' job satisfaction and turnover intention,

H<sub>2</sub>: Sampling region has a moderating role in the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

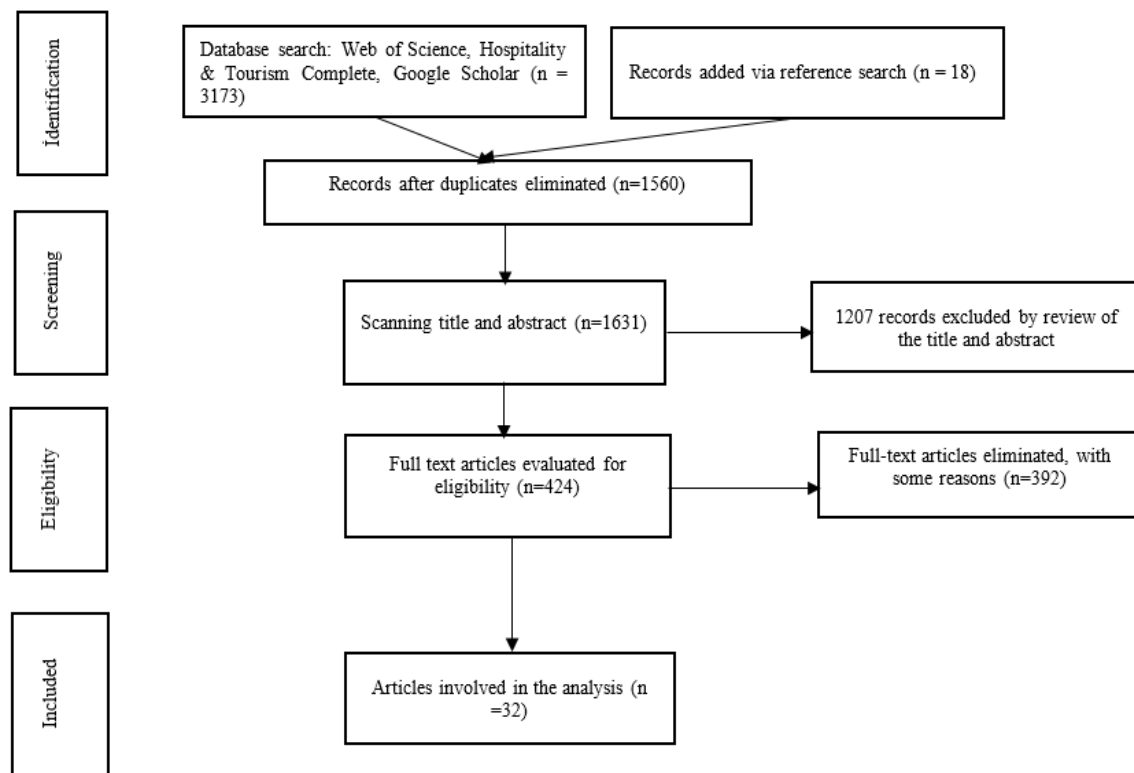
### 3. METHOD

#### 3.1. Research Design

The meta-analysis method was employed to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention and to clarify the controversy about the size and direction of this relationship. Meta-analysis is defined as the "statistical analysis of a large collection of analysis results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings" (Glass, 1976, p. 3). This method enables the synthesis of primary empirical findings using various statistical tests (Borenstein, Hedges, Higgins, & Rothstein, 2011). In this study, correlation meta-analysis was utilized, which involves describing the distributions of correlations from various research results to assess the relationship or effect between two variables (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). The correlation coefficients were converted to Fisher's z-scores, and the analysis was conducted using these transformed values (Borenstein et al., 2011).

#### 3.2. Literature Search

The Web of Science (WoS), EBSCOhost Hospitality & Tourism Complete, and Google Scholar databases were searched to identify articles investigating the association between the relevant variables. The search employed combinations of keywords related to job satisfaction ("job satisfaction," "work satisfaction," "occupational satisfaction"), turnover intention ("turnover," "intention to quit," "intention to leave"), and hospitality and tourism ("tourism," "travel," "hotel," "hospitality," "tourist," "leisure," "hospitality management," "restaurant"). Data collection was conducted in February 2024, initially yielding 3,173 articles. An additional search was conducted by reviewing the references of the selected studies to ensure no relevant studies were overlooked. This additional search identified 18 more articles, resulting in a total of 3,191 articles from both searches. After removing 1,560 duplicates, 1,631 articles were screened based on their titles and abstracts. Following this stage, 424 articles were assessed for eligibility, with 392 being excluded for not meeting the criteria. The final



**Figure 1:** PRISMA Flow Chart

sample consisted of 32 studies. Details of the process are presented in Figure 1.

The inclusion criteria determined for this research are as follows: (1) the study must be empirical quantitative research measuring the connection between job satisfaction and turnover intention, (2) it must report the sample size and correlation coefficient ( $r$ ), (3) the study must be conducted within the context of hospitality, (4) the sample must include employees rather than those at the administrative level, (5) the study must be published in English, and (6) it must be a peer-reviewed journal article.

### 3.3. Coding

The coding phase commenced after determining the studies to be included in the meta-analysis. The data were transferred to Microsoft Excel, where the sample size, sample group, publication type, industry focus, and  $r$  value indicating the relationship between the variables were coded. To ensure coding reliability, two researchers independently extracted relevant data from each study. The compatibility between the coders was then assessed, and any identified errors were corrected.

### 3.4. Data Analysis

The effect size and heterogeneity estimates for the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention were analyzed using the CMA 3.0 software. Pearson correlation was chosen as the indicator of effect size. The Fisher Z transformation was applied to calculate the effect size, which was then converted back to correlation for interpretation (Borenstein et al., 2011). Cohen's effect size index was used to explain the effect sizes. According to the effect size index (Cohen, 1992), an effect size  $> 0,50$  indicates a strong relationship,  $> 0,30$  indicates a medium and  $> 0,10$  indicates a small relationship. The effect size between the relevant variables is presented in the forest plot with a 95% confidence interval (Figure 2). There are two primary approaches to testing heterogeneity: the fixed-effect model and the random-effects model (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). The fixed-effect model assumes that the true effect is the same across all studies, while the random-effects model assumes that effect sizes vary rather than assuming a single true effect (Borenstein, Hedges, & Rothstein, 2007). Accordingly, the random-effects model was employed in this study. To assess potential publication bias, the funnel plot, Mazumdar Rank Correlations, Classic Fail-safe N, and Begg's test were utilized.

#### 4. FINDINGS

In this section of the study, the results related to publication bias, effect size, heterogeneity tests, and moderator effect analyses are presented.

##### 4.1. Publication Bias

Conducting a narrow screening process and not including research with small effect sizes in the analysis may cause publication bias (Egger, Smith, Schneider, & Minder, 1997). To assess it, the Funnel plot was first examined and given in Figure 2.

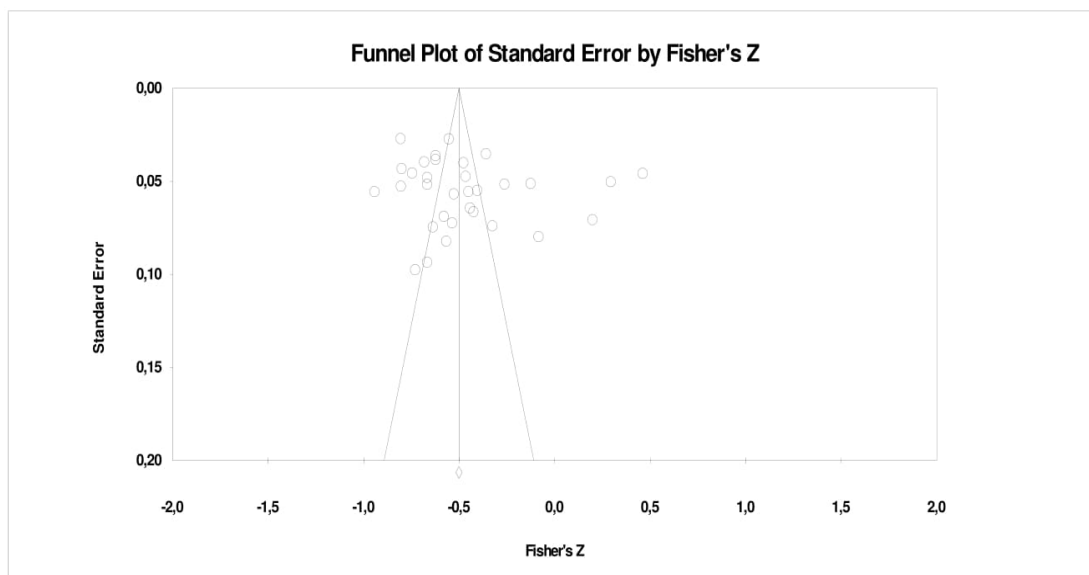
As illustrated by the funnel plot, the articles are predominantly concentrated in the upper part of the figure, with general effect sizes distributed approximately symmetrically on both sides of the graph. To further investigate publication bias, various methods can be employed. The results of the Classic Fail-safe N analysis are presented in Table 1.

number of studies, 3,105, is quite substantial, it suggests that there is no significant publication bias. Results for Begg's test and Mazumdar's rank correlation, which are additional methods for assessing publication bias, are also presented in Table 2.

According to the results, a p-value greater than 0.05 indicates that there is no publication bias (Begg & Mazumdar, 1994). Therefore, no publication bias is present in this study (p-value = 0.17,  $p > 0.05$ ).

##### 4.2. Effect Sizes and Heterogeneity Test

The heterogeneity test was employed to examine the connection between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Effect sizes between the relevant variables were calculated using Fisher's Z and subsequently transformed back into correlations. The effect size and heterogeneity test results are presented in Table 3.



**Figure 2:** Funnel Plot to Show Publication Bias

Table 1 shows the number of studies required to achieve a p value  $>0.05$  (Borenstein et al., 2011). Specifically, 3,105 additional studies are needed for the p-value to exceed 0.05. Given that the required

As shown in Table 3, the Q value was found to be 1273.031. According to the Chi-Square table, the expected value for 31 degrees of freedom (df) was 44.985 at the 0.05 confidence level. Since the

**Table 1:** Classic Fail-Safe N Results

Variables	Values
"Z value"	-52,70130
"P value"	0,00
"Alpha"	0,05
"Number of observed studies"	32
"Number of missing studies that would bring p-value to $>\alpha$ "	3105

observed heterogeneity value (1273.031) is greater than the expected value (44.985), it indicates a heterogeneous distribution among the studies included in the analysis (Higgins & Thompson, 2002). Additionally, the  $I^2$  value of 97.565, which exceeds 75%, indicates high heterogeneity (Borenstein et al., 2011). Therefore, given the high level of heterogeneity, a random effects model was used throughout the analyses.

In Figure 3, the black squares represent the effect size of each study, while the lines adjacent to the squares indicate the 95% confidence intervals for these effect sizes. According to Figure 3, there is a moderate negative association between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

**Table 2:** Begg and Mazumdar Rank Correlation Results

Variables	Values
“Tau”	0,11895
“Z-value for tau”	0,95677
“P-value (one-tailed)”	0,17

**Table 3:** Effect Size and Heterogeneity Test

Model	k	%95 C.I.					Heterogeneity		
		r	se	“Lower limit”	“Upper limit”	“df”	“Q <sub>B</sub> ”	“p”	“I <sup>2</sup> ”
Fixed	32	-0,463	0,009	-0,476	-0,450	31	1273,031	0,000	97,565
Random	32	-0,434	0,056	-0,519	-0,340				

**Notes:** k = number of studies; r = correlation; se= 95%CI = critical intervals for the weighed effect size; df = degrees of freedom; Q<sub>B</sub> = Q-statistic assessing heterogeneity across groups; I<sup>2</sup> = degree of heterogeneity within the category

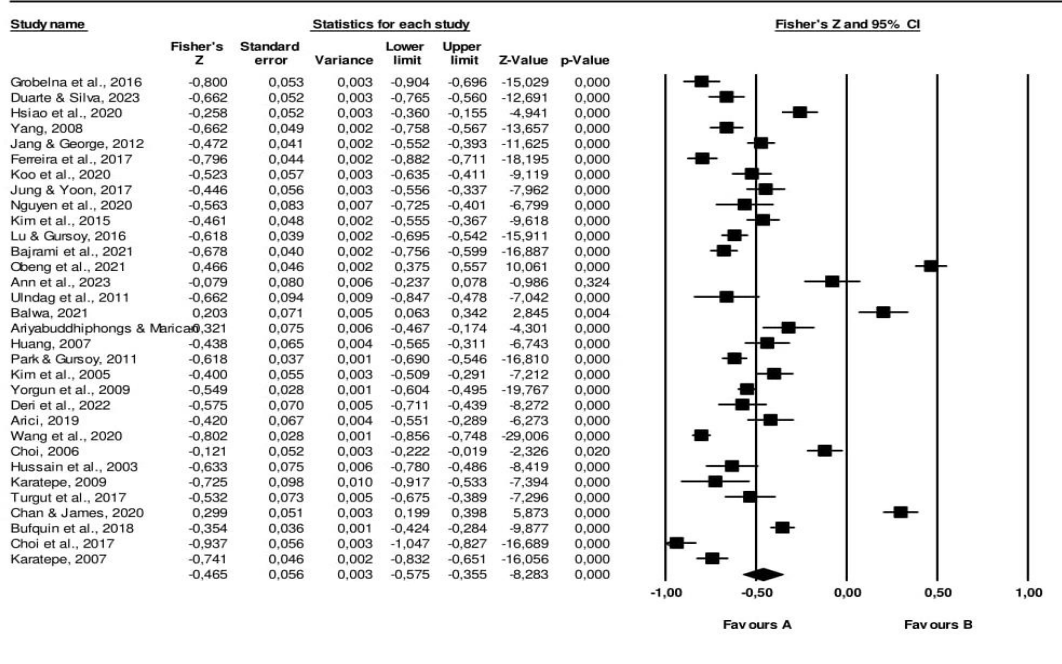
The average effect size was assessed as -0.434. According to the criteria proposed by Cohen (1992), an effect size of 0.1 indicates a small effect, 0.3 indicates a moderate effect, and 0.5 indicates a large effect. Therefore, the result suggests a moderate and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) association between the variables. Thus, H<sub>1</sub> was accepted. Figure 3 displays the forest plot of the random effects model.

A moderator variable influences the strength of the relationship between two variables (Borenstein et al., 2011). Table 4 presents the results regarding the moderating effect of the sampling region on the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

**Table 4:** Moderator Analysis of the Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Variable	Category	k	r	95%CI	Q <sub>B</sub>	df	p
Sampling region	“Africa”	2	-0,053	(-0,79, 0,75)	66,899	5	0,000
	“America”	4	-0,516	(-0,57, -0,37)			
	“Asia”	19	-0,443	(-0,52, -0,29)			
	“Europe”	5	-0,732	(-0,66, -0, 58)			
	“Middle East”	1	-0,079	(-0,23, 0,07)			
	“Oceania”	1	-0,563	(-0,62, -0,38)			

**Notes:** k = number of studies; r = correlation; 95%CI = critical intervals for the weighed effect size; Q<sub>B</sub> = Q-statistic assessing heterogeneity across groups; df = degrees of freedom



Meta Analysis

Figure 3: Forest Plot

As shown in Table 4, the sampling region influenced the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention and served as a moderating role ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore,  $H_2$  was accepted. The region with the largest effect size is Europe.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this meta-analysis was to explore the impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention. Relevant papers were accessed from three different databases, and a meta-analysis was conducted with 31 articles. First, publication bias in the evaluated papers was assessed using the Funnel plot, Begg and Mazumdar test, and Classic fail-safe N test. No publication bias was detected in the analysis.

As heterogeneity was observed in the statistical analyses, the random effects model was employed. The relationship between the study variables was significant, with an effect size measured at -0.434, indicating a medium level of effect (Cohen, 1992). This result aligns with the findings of the meta-analysis conducted by Madigan and Kim (2021), which also reported a significant association with a medium effect size. Additionally, the results are consistent with those of Ozkan et al. (2020) and Hur and Abner (2024), which revealed a significant relationship between the relevant variables but with a larger effect size. This finding is also in agreement

with studies examining the connection between relevant variables in tourism and hospitality (Yorgun, Yılmaz, & Keser, 2009; Ulndag, Khan, & Guden, 2011; Gobelna, Sidorkiewicz, & Tokarz-Kocik, 2016; Ferreira et al., 2017; Jung & Yoon, 2017; Bufquin, DiPietro, Orłowski, & Partlow, 2018; Koo et al., 2020; Deri, Ragavan, Chireh, Zaazie, & Niber, 2022).

To understand the reason for the heterogeneity in the study results included in the analysis, a moderator analysis was performed. It was determined that the sampling region had a moderating effect on the association between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Similarly, Ozkan et al. (2020) found that the region moderates the relationship between the relevant variables. Diaz-Carrión et al. (2020) concluded that working conditions vary by country and that even small differences in working conditions among countries within the same region can affect job satisfaction.

The findings indicate that the level of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction among hospitality employees plays a crucial role in influencing their turnover intention. Establishing a supportive work environment characterized by open communication and clear definition of roles and duties can enhance employee job satisfaction and thereby reduce turnover rates. Furthermore, providing opportunities for personal

development and organizing vocational training programs can also increase job satisfaction. It is advisable to address the issue of long working hours in the tourism and hospitality sector and to adopt organizational policies and practices that facilitate a balance between work and family life for employees.

This research has several limitations. First, some full-text articles pertinent to the study topic could not be included in the analysis due to inaccessibility. Second, only articles published in English were included, while other publication types were excluded. Third, this study focused on the moderating role of the sampling region in the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention. Future research should consider exploring the moderating effects of additional factors, such as education level and age.

### ETHICS DECLARATIONS

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Ethical Approval:** Since this study is based on secondary data, the use of ethical approval is not applicable.

**Informed Consent:** Since this study is based on secondary data, the use of an informed consent form is not applicable.

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