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ASSESSING HOTEL JOB ADVERTISEMENTS IN ISTANBUL BASED ON THE SIGNALLING THEORY: THE CASE OF 'INDEED'

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ABSTRACT

The research's aim is to assess in which departments hotel businesses are looking for potential employees and to discover what skills and qualifications they demand from these potential employees. Based on the Signalling Theory, this research, therefore, set out to analyse the job postings of hotels operating in Istanbul with the largest number of city hotels in Türkiye. Content analysis was performed on 528 job postings retrieved from the website called 'INDEED', which was constituted specifically for international job searching. Results show most postings were published by 4- and 5-star hotels; the number of postings for the departments of F&B, front office, and housekeeping were relatively higher; half of the postings didn't require any proficiency in a foreign language, and nearly all postings requiring a foreign language demanded proficiency in English. They also outline that in the postings where foreign language was not required, the focus was on the positions of housekeeper, steward, waiter, and assistant housekeeper. Furthermore, there were no additional requirements in the postings apart from proficiency in software used for the front office department. Any prior experience was not a requirement %86 of the postings, among which the focus was on the positions of housekeeper, waiter, and receptionist. The originality of this research comes from the analysis of more detailed parameters such as department, positions, salary, and hotel class of the job advertisements posted on the internationally accepted web page called INDEED. The findings of existing studies in the literature are compared with those of this research in the discussion section, which illuminates how the qualifications required for different positions in hotels have been differentiated over time.

Keywords: Job Advertisements; Hotels; Signaling Theory; Employee, İstanbul

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İSTANBUL'DAKİ OTEL İŞ İLANLARININ SİNYAL TEORİSİNE BAĞLI OLARAK İNCELENMESİ: INDEED ÖRNEĞİ

ÖZET

Bu araştırmanın amacı, otel işletmelerinin hangi departmanlarda potansiyel çalışanlar aradığını ve bu potansiyel çalışanlardan hangi beceri ve nitelikleri talep ettiklerini belirlemektedir. Sinyal Teorisine bağlı olarak Türkiye'nin en fazla şehir oteli bulunan İstanbul'da faaliyet gösteren otellerin iş ilanları analiz edilmiştir. İçerik analizi, özellikle uluslararası iş arama için oluşturulmuş INDEED adlı web sitesinden alınan 528 iş ilanı üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Sonuçlar, ilanların çoğunun 4 ve 5 yıldızlı oteller tarafından yayınlandığını; F&B, ön büro ve kat hizmetleri departmanları için ilan sayısının nispeten daha fazla olduğunu; ilanların yarısının yabancı dil yeterliliği gerektirmediğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca yabancı dil bilgisinin istenmediği ilanlarda oda temizlikçisi, bulaşıkçı, garson ve yardımcı oda temizlikçisi pozisyonlarına odaklanıldığı belirlenmiştir. Oda temizlikçisi, garson ve resepsiyonist pozisyonlarına odaklanılan ilanların %86'sında herhangi bir mesleki deneyim şartı aranmamaktadır. Bu araştırmanın özgünlüğü, uluslararası kabul görmüş INDEED adlı web sayfasında yayınlanan iş ilanlarının departman, pozisyon, maaş ve otel sınıfı gibi daha ayrıntılı parametlerinin analizinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Tartışma bölümünde, literatürdeki mevcut çalışmaların bulguları, otellerdeki farklı pozisyonlar için aranan niteliklerin zaman içinde nasıl farklılaştığını açıklayan bu araştırmanın bulgularıyla karşılaştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş İlanları; Oteller; Sinyal Teorisi; İşgören; İstanbul.

INTRODUCTION

The labor-intensive nature of the tourism sector offers a wide range of employment opportunities for candidates. As standardization and automation processes are relatively limited in the sector, employment rates in tourism businesses are expected to be higher compared to many other sectors, which is also confirmed by international statistics. For instance, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2023), approximately 22.4 million new jobs were created in the travel and tourism sector globally in 2021. In addition, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2023), nearly 1.4 million new jobs were provided in the tourism sector in Türkiye in the above-mentioned year. Considering the multidimensional structure of the sector and the diversity of stakeholders in the value chains of tourism businesses, it is better understood how potentially abundant the sector is for generating employment. Accordingly, this makes human resources management (HRM) crucial in hotel businesses that are among the most significant stakeholders of the sector. Securing employees suitable for the job and the organization has a decisive role in the success of the business. In hotel businesses, where a large number of both low-qualified and highly qualified labour forces are involved in the service production process, HRM success is inextricably linked to the success of the organisation.

The service-oriented requirements of the sector emphasize the human factor in hotels, which requires the efficient functioning of HRM (Akçadağ and Özdemir, 2005). Otherwise, the productivity level of the employees may be adversely affected. In addition, as stated in the Service Profit Chain Theory (Heskett et al., 1994), employee satisfaction level has a direct impact on customer satisfaction (Çakı, Sezerel, and Geylan, 2020). In this respect, business efficiency and profitability are affected by the performance of employees. (Pelit and Çetin, 2020).

The hotel industry is labour-intensive and heavily relies on the human touch, which refers to the flexibility, respect, and empathy with which tourists want to be treated. Technology, on the other hand, is efficient, and as it improves, tourists are expected to become more inured to its use, but for now, it often fails on these important, subtle service fronts. Therefore, the use of automation in the provision of services in the hotel industry is less likely to be preferred and for a long time now, there has been a high level of employment in hotel businesses. Consequently, this requires hotel employees to be experienced, have communication and problem-solving skills, and have technical skills as well as social skills such as team working, and these skills are also taken into consideration during the recruitment process.

Employing theoretical frameworks in tourism-related job posting research can aid in the generalisation of results and facilitate readers' comprehension of the effects of job posting details. Mahjoub and Kruyen (2021) concluded that only 11.5% of studies on job postings are based on theory. Person-environment fit theory (36%) and signalling theory (21%) were the most common theories employed in these studies to explain the effects and outcomes of job listings. Congruity theory (14%), media richness theory (11%), the AIDA theoretical framework (11%), social identity theory (3.5%), and convention theory (0.5%) were the other ones that were found to be employed. The Signalling Theory served as the foundation for this study, which examined

job postings from hotels because the findings reveal more details (signals) about the industry than the surrounding area.

Signalling theory focuses on lessening the asymmetry of information between parties (Spence 2002). The five elements of the timeline that make up the foundation of signalling theory are the signal, the receiver, feedback, the signaller, and the signal environment (Connell et al., 2011). In the research, the givers of the signal (job postings) are hotels operating İstanbul. Candidates, graduates, and those pursuing a career in hotel management account for the receivers. Feedback is composed of decisions and behaviours in response to the signal. Signal environment comprises the external factors that affect the signal such as the industry employment gap, the pool of potential employees, and applicable laws. Signals can enable candidates to obtain information on various issues such as the company's human resources policy, price structure, and customer satisfaction, which may influence the candidate's decision about whether to apply for the position or not. Additionally, it helps students preparing for careers in the hotel industry to learn about the positions available and the requirements for each. Consequently, job posting data ought to be regarded as crucial indicators for hotel industry stakeholders and should be examined.

Hotel businesses conduct various methods in the procurement of human resources. References from employees in the organization, feedback from tourism training institutions, rival businesses and direct applications are among the most common evaluated factors in the human resources procurement process. Additionally, the classified ads of the print media, which were used for job postings in the past, have now been replaced by online platforms due to the development and widespread use of information and communication technologies. With the advancement of technology, Kureková et al. (2015) emphasize the importance of online job posting in recruitment processes, which provides great convenience for both the employer and the employee. As concrete evidence of this, the existence of numerous websites created for job posting and searching in multiple languages can be noted. These online job postings reach a much wider audience. Based on these facts and arguments, the quality and content of job postings are worth investigating. In this research, job postings for the hotel sector in Istanbul published on INDEED, one of the most frequently used job search sites by international businesses were examined.

Businesses in the tourism industry get their employees from a variety of sources. Employee supply is primarily sourced through recommendations from current employees, promotions and internal transfers, employment fairs, online employee search platforms, vocational high schools, and universities, including internships, competitor businesses, online or in-person applications, employment agencies, and private employment agencies. Seasonal tourism enterprises hire high school/university students and seasonal employment candidates to fill service, cooking, and housekeeping positions. Managers frequently pursue internal promotions and hire from competitors (Benli and Şahin, 2004; Çavdar and Çavdar, 2010; Ercan and Gön, 2020).

The research’s aim is to assess in which departments hotel businesses are looking for potential employees and to discover what skills and qualifications they demand from these potential employees. The

findings will shed light on both, firstly what abilities, qualifications, and knowledge students in the field of tourism should acquire and secondly how tourism education institutions can update their programs. Assessing and analysing the results of this study will be beneficial to the decision makers in the sector in terms of human resources procurement. The research questions examined and analysed in this context are as follows: RQ1: In which departments of hotel businesses is there a shortage of labour force?

RQ2: What are the skills and qualifications required by the labour force to supply hotel businesses?

RQ3: What information do hotel businesses share in job postings for human resources procurement?

The extant research in the literature, its review is presented in the next part, focus on departments, and the online job searching platforms examined remain at the local/national level. The originality and eigenvalue of this research comes from the analysis of more detailed parameters such as department, positions, salary, and hotel class of the job advertisements posted on the internationally accepted web page called INDEED. The findings of existing studies in the literature are compared with those of this research in the discussion section, which illuminates how the qualifications required for different positions in hotels have been differentiated over time.

1. Literature Review

Humans are at the core of tourism activities. Especially in the realm of accommodation services, the significance of human interaction and their strength to influence success are explicitly noticed. For this reason, professional management during the period starting from the recruitment process until the last working day of the employees will contribute to the sustainability and profitability of the business. The first part of the cycle, the recruitment process, has a determining role. Securing the right candidate who will fit the company's goals and job descriptions will reduce the negative effects of high labour turnover rates in the tourism sector and allow the business to employ the right candidates at a lower cost. Numerous research, to examine job advertisements can be found in the literature (Sodhi and Son, 2010; Erdem and Gezen, 2014; Anastasiou, 2014; Özdemir et al., 2015; Hong, 2016; Messum et al., 2016; Dunbar et al., 2016; Gardiner et al., 2018; Doğan and Tuncer, 2018; Ertaş, 2018; Oğuzbalaban, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020; Güçlütürk Baranye Noyan, 2020; Moore and Khan, 2020; Piróg and Hibszer, 2022; Düzgün, 2023; Erdem Bırkon and Özgen, 2023). However, a limited number of the studies concentrate on tourism, particularly the hospitality industry. Based on the importance of the subject, Erdem and Gezen (2014), who conducted research on job advertisements in tourism through an analysis of 1421 job advertisements, concluded that the advertisements were insufficient in terms of the opportunities offered to the candidates. On a similar subject, Özdemir et al. (2015) found that employers did not give due importance to education requirements, experience, and foreign language proficiency in job advertisements. Yılmaz (2020) concluded in his research that the job descriptions in the advertisements were not sufficient. These studies demonstrate that the advertisement contents are inadequate and unqualified.

In tourism-related job advertisements, it is observed that managers attach importance to the candidates' experiences rather than their education levels (Ertaş, 2018; Oğuzbalaban, 2019). Similarly, Rodríguez et al.

(2016) underline while having a degree is necessary to enter certain professions, it does not ensure job seekers a long-term position. The research findings are considered thought-provoking for higher education programs in tourism. Another remarkable finding from studies in the literature is regarding foreign language proficiency which is published as a mandatory condition by many employers in the tourism sector (Doğan and Tuncer, 2018; Düzgün, 2023; Erdem et al., 2023). Candidates who can speak one or more than one foreign language are preferred by many hotel companies.

Digitalization and digital job search platforms are also increasingly employed in staff procurement as part of human resources tasks. Linkedin, INDEED, Eleman.net, İŞKUR Mobil, Yenibiriş, and Secretcv are among the platforms used to find employment and employees. Job seekers post their resumes on these sites, while companies post the job criteria for the individuals they want. Linkedin, which can be accessed by becoming a member, is widely regarded as the most popular job and employee search site due to its international reach and preference among professionals. This site is also appreciated by professionals looking to expand their social networks (Tiryaki, 2022). It has more than a billion 50 million users worldwide. 60% of these users are young professionals aged 25 to 34 (Linkedln İstatistikleri, 2024). INDEED is a platform that only connects jobs and employers. INDEED is the world's leading job platform, with 580 million job seekers registered each month. It is available in approximately 60 countries and 28 languages, accounting for 94% of global GDP (Indeed, 2024).

With the widespread use of technology, the variety of automation programs used in hotels has also increased. Accordingly, the ability to use front office software has begun to be included among the qualifications sought in job advertisements. Erdem and Gezen (2014), in their research, concluded that 17.3% of job postings seek the above-mentioned ability, while Doğan and Tuncer (2018) found in their research that proficiency in front office software was sought in 78% of reservation agent job postings and 65% of receptionist job postings. It is possible to say that one of the reasons for the difference between the rates is the speed of the development of technology. In addition, while job postings in newspapers were included in the sample of the former study, only online job postings were examined in the latter one. No other study has been found showing the extent to which such software is included in job postings for hotels. However, the increasing level of service that consumers expect from employees due to rapidly developing technology is an indication that these rates will increase regularly in the coming years. Rodríguez et al. (2020) examined the educational and experience prerequisites linked to tourism job offers, as well as the contracts and pay that went along with them, using a sample of 9000 online job listings from one of the largest employment websites in Spain. The analysis demonstrates that the profession plays a critical role in determining wage disparities and contract formats for jobs in tourism. Depending on the position held within the industry, employees earn different incomes. Based on the literature, it is seen that experience and foreign language proficiency are the most sought-after candidates to work in hotels. It is concluded that a second foreign language and proficiency in front office software are preferred. In tourism, job searching is a dynamic process that changes based on visitor expectations and the rate at which technology advances.

2. Methodology

In the study, job advertisements for positions in hotels were examined through the content analysis method. The research results will shed light on both, firstly what qualifications students in the field of tourism should acquire.

The population of the study consists of job postings of hotels published on online recruitment sites in Türkiye. The recruitment website INDEED, which has over 350 million unique visits per month and is available in 28 languages across more than 60 countries (INDEED, 2023), was purposefully sampled due to the breadth of its coverage, and database.

Istanbul has the most city hotels of any Turkish city, which is why it was chosen as the study area. While collecting data on the website, the keyword 'hotel' was searched. Job postings by non-hotel businesses (for example, airline companies, etc.) were excluded from the sample. Furthermore, the research contained only one job advertisement from the same hotel that was posted on various days. The search was conducted between November 1, 2023, and November 30, 2023. This process yielded 528 job postings as data sources for content analysis, in which (a) information regarding the hotels, (b) department, (c) job title, (d) salary, and (e) the characteristics sought in candidates were taken into consideration.

3. Findings

Table 1 outlines the classification of 528 hotels in Istanbul that published job advertisements on INDEED. It states that 62% of the job postings (n = 321) were published by 5-star hotels and 26% (n = 139) by 4-star hotels. 6% (n = 33) by 3-star hotels, 5% (n = 28) by boutique hotels, and 1% (n = 7) by 2-star hotels, respectively.

Table 1. Classification of Hotels That Published Job Advertisements

Classification of Hotel	n	%
5-star	321	62
4-star	139	26
3-star	33	6
Boutique	28	5
2-star	7	1
Total	528	100

Table 2 demonstrates the analysis of job postings by departments. 26% (n = 139) of these postings were positions in the department of F&B, 24% (n = 124) were positions in the department of front office, and 19% (n = 102) were positions in the department of housekeeping. Then, respectively, 7% (n = 38) were positions for the departments of accounting and finance, 6% (n = 34) for the other departments and areas, including spa, fitness, hairdresser, quality control, entertainment, etc., and 6% (n = 31) for the departments of sales and marketing. 4% (n = 19) were published for top management positions, 3% (n = 13) for support

services such as parking areas. In addition, 2% (n = 12) were published positions for the department of technical service, 2% (n = 9) were for the department of purchasing, and 1% (n = 7) for the department of human resources.

Table 2. Job Postings by Departments

Department/Area	n	%	Department/Area	n	%
F&B	139	26,3	Top Management Positions	19	3,6
Front Office	124	23,5	Support Services	13	2,5
Housekeeping	102	19,3	Technical Service	12	2,3
Accounting and Finance	38	7,2	Purchasing	9	1,7
Others (spa, fitness, hairdresser, quality control, entertainment etc.)	34	6,4	Human Resources	7	1,3
Sales and Marketing	31	5,9	Total	528	100

Table 3 outlines the required years of experience for the job postings. It shows that 29% of the postings (n = 151) required 1 year of experience, 23% (n = 120) required 2 years of experience, 9% (n = 48) required 3 years of experience, and 6% (n = 31) required 5 years of experience. Of interest to the researchers, no experience was required in 27% of the postings (n = 140), and 1 posting required 12 years of experience.

Table 3. The Required Years of Experience for the Job Postings

Years of Experience	n	%	Years of Experience	n	%
1 year of experience	151	28,6	Preferably experience	27	5,1
No experience required	140	26,5	6 years of experience	4	,8
2 years of experience	120	22,7	10 years of experience	3	,6
3 years of experience	48	9,1	14 years of experience	3	,6
5 years of experience	31	5,9	12 years of experience	1	,2
Total	528	100			

Table 4 demonstrates the analysis of required proficiency in foreign languages for the job postings. It states that 47% of the job postings (n = 248) do not require proficiency in foreign languages. However, for 32% of the postings (n = 168), it is mandatory. Indeed, 15% (n = 81) of the postings were published in English, meaning that 47% of the postings (168 + 81 = 249) in total have a requirement to speak English. Additionally, proficiency in English or Persian was published as a requirement in 1 job posting (0.2%), proficiency in English or Arabic was posted as a requirement in 1 job posting (0.2%), and proficiency in English or Russian was posted as a requirement in 1 job posting (0.2%). Moreover, there were 9 job postings (1.7%) published in Spanish, 2 job postings (0.4%) in German, and 1 job posting (0.2%) in Chinese. Based on this, it is denoted

that candidates applying to the job positions for these job postings must speak the foreign language in which the job posting is published.

Table 4. The Analysis of Required Proficiency in Foreign Languages for the Job Postings

Requirement	n	%	Requirement	n	%
No Required Proficiency in Foreign Languages	248	47,0	Job Postings in German	2	,4
Proficiency in English	168	31,8	Proficiency in either English or Persian	1	,2
Job Postings in English	81	15,3	Proficiency in either English or Arabic	1	,2
Preferably Proficiency in English	16	3,0	Proficiency in either English or Russian	1	,2
Job Postings in Spanish	9	1,7	Job Postings in Chinese	1	,2
Total	528	100			

Table 5 statistically summarizes the analysis of required proficiency in a second foreign language for the job postings. 492 of these job postings (93.2%) didn't require proficiency in a second foreign language. While 29 job postings (5.5%) requested preferably proficiency in a second foreign language, candidates of 2 job postings (0.4%) were required to speak Arabic as a second foreign language. In 2 job postings (0.4%), preferably proficiency in Arabic as a second foreign language is requested, while in 1 job posting (0.2%), proficiency in Russian as second foreign language was mandatory. In 1 job posting (0.2%), candidates who speak Russian as a second foreign language were prioritized and in 1 job posting (0.2%), candidates who speak Arabic or Russian as a second foreign language would be preferred.

Table 5. Proficiency in a Second Foreign Language in the Job Postings

Requirement	n	%
No Required Proficiency in a Second Foreign Language	492	93,2
Preferably Proficiency in a Second Foreign Language	29	5,5
Proficiency in Arabic	2	,4
Proficiency in Russian	1	,2
Preferably Proficiency in Arabic or Russian	1	,2
Preferably Proficiency in Arabic	2	,4
Preferably Proficiency in Russian	1	,2
Total	528	100,0

Table 6 outlines the analysis of additional requirements in the job postings. In 83% of job postings (n = 439), no additional experience and/or skills were required from candidates. However, in 8% (n = 41) candidates were expected to be able to use the software 'Opera'. Similarly, in 2% (n = 12), proficiency in the software 'System Hotel' stood out as a requirement, while in 1% (n = 4), proficiency in the software

‘Electraweb’ was a requirement. Additionally, while proficiency in the software ‘ONQ’ was required in 1 job posting (0.2%), proficiency in the software ‘Micros’ was required in 3 job postings (0.6%). In 8 job postings (1.5%) priority would be given to candidates who use the software ‘Opera’, while in 8 job postings (1.5%), candidates who use the software ‘Electraweb’ would be prioritized. In 4 job postings (0.8%), proficiency in the software ‘System Hotel’ is given as a priority. In 1 job posting (0.2%), the software ‘MOD’ and in 1 job posting (0.2%), the software ‘ONQ’ were observed as the softwares that candidates should preferably use. Finally, in 6 job postings (1.1%), requirements to have proficiency in other areas that are not directly related to tourism education (Spa Management Training, CPA certificate etc.) were requested.

Table 6. Additional Requirements in the Job Postings

Additional Requirements	**n**	**%**	**Additional Requirements**	**n**	**%**
No Additional Experience and/or Skills Required	439	83,1	Preferably Proficiency in the Software ‘System Hotel’	4	,8
Proficiency in the software ‘Opera’	41	7,8	Proficiency in the Software ‘ONQ’	1	,2
Proficiency in the software ‘Electraweb’	4	,8	Preferably Proficiency in the Software ‘ONQ’	1	,2
Proficiency in the Software ‘System Hotel’	12	2,3	Preferably Proficiency the Software ‘MOD’	1	,2
Preferably Proficiency in the software ‘Opera’	8	1,5	Proficiency in the Software ‘Micros’	3	,6
Preferably Proficiency in the software ‘Electraweb’	8	1,5	Proficiency in other areas	6	1,1
Total	528	100			

Table 7 demonstrates the analysis of salary information in job postings. While salary information was absent in 86% of the advertisements (n = 453), only 14% (n = 75) provided it. The lowest amount of salary among the analysed data was 11.000 TL, and the highest was 30.000 TL. The ratio of the salary amounts stated by the hotels to the net minimum wage amount valid at the time the data was collected is also outlined in Table 8. In 53 of the 75 job postings (70.6%) with salary information available, the amounts were between 1 and 1.5 times the minimum salary. While there was one job posting offering a salary below the minimum wage, there were two job postings offering more than twice the minimum wage. While one of them offered 23.000 TL (2.02 times), the other job posting offered 30.000 TL (2.63 times).

Table 7. Salary Information in Job Postings

Amount	n	%	Ratio to Minimum Salary*	Amount	n	%	Ratio to Minimum Salary*
No salary information available	453	85,8	-	15.000 TL	16	3,0	1,32
11.000 TL	1	,2	0,96	15.500 TL	1	,2	1,36
11.402 TL	3	,6	1	16.000 TL	9	1,7	1,40
12.000 TL	2	,4	1,05	17.000 TL	4	,8	1,49
12.300 TL	2	,4	1,08	18.000 TL	8	1,5	1,58
12.800 TL	1	,2	1,12	18.500 TL	2	,4	1,62
13.000 TL	10	1,9	1,14	19.000 TL	2	,4	1,67
13.500 TL	2	,4	1,18	20.000 TL	4	,8	1,75
14.000 TL	2	,4	1,23	22.000 TL	1	,2	1,93
14.500 TL	3	,6	1,27	23.000 TL	1	,2	2,02
Total	528	100		30.000 TL	1	,2	2,63

*Data was collected between 1-30 November 2023. The amount of net minimum salary in Türkiye on these dates was 11.402 TL. The net minimum salary is 403 $ on 1 November 2023.

Table 8 demonstrates the analysis of the positions in the job postings that did not require a foreign language (n = 248). Of the job postings, 20% (n =49) were for the position of housekeeper, 9% (n = 23) for that of steward, 8% (n = 20) for that of waiter, and 8% (n = 19) for that of assistant housekeeper.

Table 8. Positions with No Requirements for Proficiency in a Foreign Language

Position	n	%	Position	n	%
Housekeeper	49	19,8	Accounting Manager	3	1,2
Steward	23	9,3	Bellboy	2	,8
Waiter	20	8,1	Doorman	2	,8
Assistant Housekeeper	19	7,7	Chef De Partie	2	,8
Others (Parking Area, Furniture Worker, Chief of Electrics, Driver, Dyer, Engineer, Tailor etc.)	16	6,5	IT Supervisor	2	,8
Sous Chef	13	5,2	IT Executive	2	,8
Accounting Executive	11	4,4	Reservation Agent	1	,4
Storekeeper	10	4,0	Front Office Manager	1	,4
Technical Service Staff	10	4,0	Ironer	1	,4
Chef/Cook	9	3,6	Window Washer	1	,4

Housekeeping Supervisor	7	2,8	Barman/Barmaid/Barista	1	,4
Vale	5	2,0	Restaurant Assistant Manager	1	,4
Security Staff	5	2,0	Sales Manager	1	,4
Disabled Staff	5	2,0	Sales Assistant Manager	1	,4
Laundry Clerk	4	1,6	HR Manager	1	,4
Spa Executive	4	1,6	SPA Manager	1	,4
Receptionist	3	1,2	Security Supervisor	1	,4
Laundry Supervisor	3	1,2	Hairdresser	1	,4
Breakfast Chef	3	1,2	Revenue Administrative	1	,4
Sales Executive	3	1,2			
Total	248	100			

In Table 9, the analysis of job postings that didn’t not require experience (n = 140) is shown. Of the data, 14% (n = 20) were for the position of housekeeper, 10% (n = 14) for that of waiter, 9% (n = 12) for that of receptionist, and 8% (n = 11) for the positions in support services.

Table 9. Job Postings with no Requirement for Experience

Position	**n**	**%**	**Position**	**n**	**%**
Housekeeper	20	14,3	HR Manager	3	2,1
Waiter	14	10,0	Spa Executive	3	2,1
Receptionist	12	8,6	Housekeeping Supervisor	2	1,4
Others (Parking Area, Furniture Worker, Chief of Electrics, Driver, Dyer, Engineer, Tailor etc.)	11	7,9	Sales Assistant Manager	2	1,4
Bellboy	8	5,7	Sales Executive	2	1,4
Steward	8	5,7	Storekeeper	2	1,4
Assistant Housekeeper	7	5,0	Vale	1	,7
Accounting Executive	6	4,3	Doorman	1	,7
Chef/Cook	5	3,6	Window Washer	1	,7
Disabled Staff	5	3,6	Chef De Partie	1	,7
Laundry Clerk	4	2,9	Breakfast Chef	1	,7
Customer Relations Executive	4	2,9	Accounting Supervisor	1	,7
Reservation Agent	3	2,1	Security Staff	1	,7
Sous Chef	3	2,1	Technical Service Staff	1	,7
Barman/Barmaid/Barista	3	2,1	Purchasing Manager	1	,7
Sales Manager	3	2,1	Hairdresser	1	,7
Total	140	100			

CONCLUSIONS

Since the hotel industry heavily relies on the human touch as detailed in the introduction part, and tourism has a high rate of turnover, hotels look for a great number of employees and publish numerous job postings. This research therefore sets out to assess in which departments hotels in İstanbul are looking for potential employees and to discover what skills and qualifications they demand from these potential employees. The research was conducted on the sample of INDEED, one of the internationally most frequently used job search websites.

This study also advances the Signalling theory by examining the data in job postings provided by hotel companies and evaluating them as significant signals. It is acknowledged that company managers intentionally use these cues, particularly to sway potential hires' perceptions of their jobs and the company in the way they want. As a result, candidates need to accurately interpret each message or signal contained in the text of the advertisements. For instance, the job postings with no requirement for proficiency in English or years of experience for the position of receptionist can indicate the target market, and service quality of the hotel or the challenges it faces in recruiting employees. Nonetheless, it is feasible to interpret this signal as unrelated to the candidate employment pool given the quantity of individuals obtaining tourism degree in the signal environment, or the candidate employee pool. Therefore, for the messages to be recognised as signals and provide accurate feedback, signaller-signal-receiver-signal environment needs to be appropriately appraised.

Assessing the job postings using the Signalling Theory, it also provides hints as to what qualifications students pursuing tourism degrees should seek to obtain employment in the hospitality industry. The majority of the job postings examined for this research were for entry-level positions in the hospitality sector. Given that proficiency in English was required in half of the advertisements—even the entry level positions—tourism academia should take this as a signal to offer tourism education in English.

Research findings demonstrate that the majority of postings were published by 4- and 5-star hotels, which is due to the fact that they use technology more regularly than other types of hotels. From this point of view, candidates seeking careers in 4- and 5-star hotels need to search for jobs online, which requires a high level of digital literacy to find a better job in tourism.

The findings show that job postings were published mostly for the positions of F&B, front office, and housekeeping departments, which is consistent with the findings of Erdem and Gezen (2014), Doğan and Tuncer (2018), Ertaş (2018), and Oğuzbalaban (2019). This finding is also compatible with the structural characteristics of the hotels where a large proportion of employees work in the above-mentioned departments.

The most frequently searched positions in hotels are receptionist, waiter, housekeeper, bellboy, assistant housekeeper, sous chef, accounting executive, housekeeping supervisor, chef, sales manager, sales executive, customer relations executive, spa executive, and technical service staff, respectively. To improve their chances of landing a job and their employability, students and others interested in a career in hotels should aim to at least fulfil the job requirements of the posted positions. The findings reveal that there is a dearth of

job postings for top management roles (such as general manager) in hotels, suggesting that hotels have minimal preference for online job postings when it comes to hiring managers.

The findings uncover that there is no requirement for proficiency in a foreign language in nearly half of the job postings, aligned with those of Özdemir et al. (2015). The job postings written in English, the ones with the requirement for proficiency in English and preferably proficiency in English accounted for half of all postings. Additionally, there were a few postings that were looking for proficiency in Persian, Arabic, Russian, and Spanish. This suggests that candidates with no proficiency in a foreign language can land a job in hotels; however, proficiency in a foreign language, especially English will increase the chance to be employed in hotels. The job postings with no requirements for experience indicate that people with degrees from departments other than tourism are employed in hotels so long as they do speak English. They may even be competitors to those who have received tourism education. Furthermore, it was concluded that proficiency in a second foreign language was not required in a significant part of the postings, while a second foreign language is preferred in limited postings. This demonstrates how speaking English nowadays opens up a variety of career options in the hospitality industry, which is also reiterated in the studies of Erdem et al. (2023) and Düzgün (2023).

Positions in which a proficiency in a foreign language was not required in hotels were found to be housekeeper, assistant housekeeper, steward, and waiter. Housekeeper and assistant housekeeper occasionally interact face-to-face with in-house guests, while steward and waiter serve them in person. The absence of no requirements for proficiency in a foreign language in the job postings for the above-mentioned positions shows that the target group is mostly Turkish people or guest satisfaction is not given due importance. These positions are regarded to be particularly appropriate for students that receive tourism education at the associate degree level in Turkish.

Job postings also shed light on proficiency in which software was sought after. In most of the job postings, no additional experience or qualifications were required. However, proficiency in softwares 'Opera' and 'Electraweb' particularly for the positions in the front office, satisfies a crucial commercial demand.

The majority of job advertisements did not include salary information. Of the job postings with salary information available, a few job postings indicate a salary that is double the minimum salary amount. Most job listings offer income that ranges from the minimum salary to 1.5 times. It is argued that the offered pay is insufficient to entice employees to the hotel given that the average rental price in the city is currently at minimum salary level. However, young unemployed people, especially those seeking career in hotel businesses, accept the low salary in order to start working. They so hope to climb the hierarchical ladder over time.

Organizational positions in which prior experience was not required in hotels are listed in job postings as housekeeper, waiter, receptionist and bellboy. The lack of a prior experience requirement in the job postings may indicate that the position is entry-level or that hiring new employees is a challenge. This is also because

students in tourism departments consider that positions like housekeeper and waiter are worthless in the eyes of society and the organisation, so they would rather not work in these roles. On the other hand, the job postings for the position of receptionist with no requirement for prior experience imply that the employees will receive instruction and training. Otherwise, hiring a novice applicant to work as a receptionist could have a detrimental impact on the productivity, earnings, and guest satisfaction of the company.

Based on the data collected, it is feasible to conclude that a tourism education is not necessarily required to hire employees in the hotel industry, particularly for entry-level roles, which shows the industry's viewpoint on tourism education, which is inconsistent with the finding of Rodríguez et al. (2016) who conducted similar research in Spain. The inconsistency comes from different study areas. The need for and duration of tourism education in Türkiye are, therefore, called into question by job postings that do not require experience or proficiency in a foreign language. In other words, one can pursue a job in the hospitality industry even without a degree in tourism.

Employees who are bilingual, experienced, proficient in software, collaborative by nature, possessing leadership qualities, and capable of handling risks and emergencies are expected to be Middle and senior level managers in the hotel industry. This is the reason it makes sense that the above-mentioned qualifications are not listed in job advertising for entry-level roles. Nonetheless, it may be argued that every employee directly or indirectly affects the guest's opinion of the quality of the service given the holistic nature of guest satisfaction and service. For this reason, even in entry-level roles, the most competent candidates in the staff pool ought to be assigned to the hotel business.

Candidates anticipate a better income as they have a higher degree, more qualifications, and years of experience. On the other hand, it is a well-known reality in the industry that hotels looking to cut expenses often hire inexperienced, low-educated candidates to pay lower.

Despite the fact that hotel managers mention in many meetings and interviews that they occasionally struggle to locate appropriate candidates, their job postings indicate that nearly everyone, regardless of their qualifications, has the opportunity to work in the hospitality industry, which could be acknowledged as a major contradiction. This finding resonates with that of Yılmaz (2020) who concludes that no specifics were provided in the job advertising. Türkiye boasts a large number of private and public universities that award thousands of graduates each year with associate, undergraduate, and graduate degrees in tourism. Regretfully, the job postings regretfully show that the degrees in tourism are worthless.

There are two major research constraints: a) the job postings analysed in this research were only accessible on INDEED; b) data were collected from hotels operating only in İstanbul. For future research, it is recommended to determine the study area as resort hotels, for example those in Antalya, and to compare the results with the ones from city hotels. Further, managers of hotel businesses might be interviewed to gather comprehensive information about the challenges and issues encountered in human recruitment in order to ascertain the labour shortage and the required qualifications.

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