Professional Competencies and Working Conditions of Hotel Photographers: A Mixed Methods Study

Fotoğrafçılarının Mesleki Yeterlilik ve Çalışma Koşulları: Karma Bir Araştırma

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Highlights:
- This study focuses on photographers working in 5-star hotels
- It has been shown that graduates of the photography department do not work in the sector.
- It has been shown that the linguistic capital of hotel photographers is more important than their technical equipment and skills
- This study aims to fill an important gap in hotel photography

Abstract*:* The purpose of this study is to investigate the opinions of hotel photographers working in 5-star hotels' photography agencies regarding their professional competencies (technical, linguistic, educational, artistic and communication) and working conditions. Mixed methods research was used in the study. Data were collected using a convergent parallel design (QUAN+QUAL). The quantitative part of the study was conducted with one hundred and twelve participants and the qualitative part with seven participants. Quantitative data were analyzed statistically, and qualitative data were analyzed through descriptive analysis. According to the findings of this study, hotel photographers have a high level of financial satisfaction with their work, there is a lack of graduates from the photography departments of universities employed in the industry, the profession is perceived to be male-dominated, communication with the customers and fluency in foreign languages is considered to be of higher importance than mastery of photographic techniques, it is difficult to attract newly trained professionals to the industry, and the average age of employees is increasing.

Keywords*:* Hotel Photographers, Professional Competencies, Working Conditions, Emotional Labor, Linguistic Capital.

Öne Çıkanlar:
- Çalışmada 5 yıldızlı oteller bünyesinde çalışan fotoğrafçıları konu edilmektedir.
- İlgili bölüm mezunlarının sektörde istihdam edilmedikleri ortaya konmuştur.
- Otel fotoğrafçılarının sahip oldukları dilsel sermayeleri edindikleri teknik donanım ve becerilerinden daha önemli olduğu ortaya konmuştur.
- Otel fotoğrafçılığına ait ilk yayınlardan biri olması nedeniyle bir boşluğu dolduracağı düşünülmektedir.

Öz: Bu çalışma, 5 yıldızlı oteller bünyesindeki fotoğraf işletmelerinde çalışan otel fotoğrafçılarının, mesleki becerileri (teknik, dil, eğitim, sanat ve iletişim) ve çalışma koşullarıyla ilgili görüşlerini araştırmayı

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amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmada karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Veriler yakınsak paralel desen (NİC+NİT) kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Çalışmanın nicel aşaması 112 kişiyle, nitel aşaması ise 7 kişiyle yürütülmüştür. Çalışmanın nicel verileri istatistiksel olarak, nitel verileriyse betimsel analiz yoluyla analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen verilerden otel fotoğrafçılarının ekonomik anlamda işlerinden tatmin oldukları, üniversitelerin fotoğraf bölümü mezunlarının bu sektörde istihdam edilmediği, bu mesleğin erkek ağırlıklı bir meslek olarak görüldüğü, müşteri iletişiminin ve dil yeterliliğinin, fotoğraf tekniğine hakim olmaktan daha önemli bulunduğu, meslekte yeni yetişmiş eleman bulmanın zorlaştığı ve çalışanların yaş ortalamasının giderek arttığı sonuçlarına ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Otel Fotoğrafçıları, Mesleki Yeterlilik, Çalışma Koşulları, Duygusal Emek, Dilsel Sermaye.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Bu çalışma 5 yıldızlı otellerdeki otel fotoğrafçılarının mesleki yeterlilik ve çalışma koşullarını ortaya koymak üzere yapılmıştır. Turizm bölgelerinde ve özellikle Antalya'da otellerde çalışan fotoğrafçılara ilişkin literatürde daha önce yapılan bir araştırma bulunmaması nedeniyle de çalışma önem taşımaktadır. Çalışma, otel fotoğrafçılarının demografik, ekonomik durumlarını ortaya koyarken, eğitim, sanat dil ve iletişim becerileri gibi mesleki yeterlilikle ilgili görüşlerine ilişkin sorular etrafında şekillenmiştir.

Çalışmada karma yöntem uygulanmış olup nicel ve nitel (NİT+NİC) veriler birlikte toplanarak, analiz edilmiştir. Nicel yöntemle yapılan anketler 114 kişiye gönderilmiş, verilerin çözümlemesinde yüzde, frekans, aritmetik ortalama, standart sapma gibi betimsel istatistik analizi uygulanmıştır. Nitel veriler ise tek bir otelde çalışan fotoğrafçılar, işletme sahibi ve otel yöneticisinin de içinde bulunduğu 7 kişiyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Nitel veriler, Nvivo programı yardımıyla kodlanarak uygun temalar oluşturulmuş, betimsel analizle temalara ve kategorilere uygun olarak kodlanmış ve yorumlanmıştır.

Makalenin giriş kısmında Otel fotoğrafçılığındaki mesleki yeterliliklerin neler olduğu belirlenmiş ve tanımlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu bölümde otel fotoğrafçılığı özelinde teknik bilgi ve beceri, yaratıcılık, sanatsal duyarlılık, ekipman kullanımı, dijital programları kullanma yetisi, dil yeteneği, iletişim becerisi, pazarlama, sürekli öğrenme ve teknolojik gelişim konuları açıklanmıştır. Araştırmanın evren ve örneklem bölümünde demografik bilgiler, katılımcıların yaş, cinsiyet, öğrenim durumu, hâkim oldukları yabancı diller ve hangi bölgelerde fotoğrafçılık yaptıkları tablolaştırılmıştır. Katılımcılara; ilk bölümde meslekleriyle ilgili yeterlilikleri, işlerinde ekonomik tatmin sağlayıp sağlamadıkları sorulmuş, ikinci bölümde eğitimin gerekliliği, yabancı dil bilmenin önemi, otel fotoğrafçılığının sanatla ilişkisi, müşteriyle iletişim kurmanın önemi, dijital teknolojinin işleri nasıl etkilediği, otel fotoğrafçılığının yürütülmesinde yaş ve cinsiyet kriterleriyle ilgili görüşlerine yer verilmiştir. Katılımcılara gönderilen anket üç ana konu etrafında belirlenmiştir: İlki, otel fotoğrafçılığına ilişkin sorular, ikincisi eğitim ve mesleki yeterliliğe ilişkin sorular, üçüncüsü ise çalışma koşullarına ait sorulardan oluşmuştur. Anketler SPSS istatistik programıyla çözümlenmiş, betimsel istatistik analiz yoluyla analiz edilmiştir. Nitel veriler ise yüz yüze yapılan görüşmelerle kayıt altına alınmış Nvivo program yardımıyla kodlanarak temalar oluşturulmuştur. Nitel verilerin temalarının nicel verilerle uyumlu olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Elde edilen verilere göre; otel fotoğrafçılığı uzun ve yorucu çalışma saatlerine, sert rekabet ortamına bağlı olarak olumsuz yönleri değerlendirilmiş ancak mesleğin ekonomik olarak tatmin edici olduğu sonucu ortaya konmuştur. Otel fotoğrafçılığı yapmak için önerilen yaş aralığı 18-25 olmasına rağmen eldeki verilere göre çalışanların yaş ortalamasının 42 olduğu görülmüştür. Elde edilen bir diğer sonuç, katılımcıların mesleki eğitimi gerekli gördüğü ancak farklı sebeplere bağlı olarak üniversitelerin ilgili bölüm mezunlarının bu sektörde çalıştırılmadıkları ya da çalışmadıkları, hâlen çalışan fotoğrafçıların ise ağırlıklı olarak mesleği genelde kendi başlarına öğrendikleri tespit edilmiştir. Elde edilen bir diğer sonuç, sektörde başarılı olmak için dil becerisinin fotoğraf tekniğine hâkim olmaktan daha önemli olduğu ve bu anlamda Bourdieu'nun yaklaşımı ile "dilsel sermaye" kavramının değer elde etmede önemli olduğu görüşüne varılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra fotoğrafçıların çekim yaparken ya da fotoğraf satışında müşterilerle duygusal yakınlık kurarak satış yapmanın kazançlarını arttırdığı sonucu elde edilmiştir. Bu anlamda "duygusal sermaye"lerini kullanmak durumunda oldukları ortaya konmuştur. Sonuç olarak sektörde çalışacak eleman açığını kapatmak ve kaliteyi arttırmak için yeterlilikle ilgili tüm eğitimlerin verilebileceği

kurslar açılması, üniversitelerin ilgili bölümlerinde konuyla ilgili derslerle öğrencilerin bu işte çalışmak için teşvik edilmesi önerilmiştir.

Introduction

This study uses the term 'hotel photography' to describe the service of taking vacation photos of customers in five-star hotels in tourist destinations. The service is provided by specialized departments within these hotels. These departments, consisting of employees such as photographers, image editors (using photoshop), and cashiers, are usually not part of the hotel operations but are separate and private business units. It is known that this profession is mostly practiced in hotel photo shops in holiday destinations such Thailand, Bali, Maldives, Dubai, Greece, Spain, and Turkey, where photographers take pictures of vacationers throughout the day and offer them for sale.

In the field of tourism, it is only recently that the 'relationship between tourism and photography' has begun to gain prominence. In fact, Sontag (2011, 78) notes that there existed a 'correspondence' between tourism and photography from the very beginning when the photography was discovered. It is worth noting, however, that the literature on the relationship between tourism and photography is mostly composed of studies on photographs taken by tourists and their experiences (Urry & Larsen 2011).

Hotel photography can be classified as a branch of everyday life photography and travel photography. The practice of photography in the field of tourism can be divided into two categories: The first is photography by tourists and the second is the photography produced for tourists. In this respect, hotel photography belongs to the second category. This type of photography is produced for tourists (Chalfen 1979; 437). As can be seen, tourism photography has multiple applications. The importance of this lies in the fact that holiday photography is more than a mere visual record and has a dimension of self-construction and includes the socialization processes of the tourist (Robinson & Picard 2009; Crouch 2010). In this sense, the sectoral structure of professional hotel photography becomes more important.

Although there are many photographers working in this field in Turkey, the fact that this field is not well known in the industry and absence of academic research on hotel photographers makes the subject important. This study focuses on the professional competence and working conditions of photographers working in hotels using a mixed methodology combining qualitative and quantitative (QUAL+QUAN) data.

The main focus of the study was to provide an academic assessment of the situation by learning about the professional qualifications of those photographers working in hotels and their views on their working conditions; as well as to evaluate other issues revealed by the situation in the industry. The study seeks answers to the following questions:

- What are the opinions of hotel photographers regarding professional competence (educational background, artistic skills, linguistic skills, communication skills)?

- What are the demographic characteristics of hotel photographers and how do they affect their working conditions?

- What are the opinions of hotel photographers regarding the financial situation (competencies, financial satisfaction, the demand to become an employer)?

1. Professional Competencies in Hotel Photography

Job competence is defined as having the knowledge and skills to perform all the duties and responsibilities required of a job. In other words, it can be defined as all of the qualifications that people need to perform their jobs. In the literature, the terms competency and competence are often used interchangeably. However, these two concepts are distinct. While competency characterizes the individual characteristics that distinguish outstanding performance, competence is the minimum job standards required for an individual to perform his/her job effectively (Karahan & Kav, 2018). Regarding hotel photography, professional competencies can be listed as follows:

1.1. Technical Knowledge and Skills: Education in photography has an artistic dimension but it also requires technical education (Kalfagil 2012). In this sense, it is important to be equipped with technical knowledge relating to the profession and the ability to use it. Technical knowledge and skills such as using cameras and different lighting conditions, photography techniques, and composition rules are considered to be the most important qualifications for hotel photography.

1.2. Creativity and Artistic Understanding: A good photographer is expected to be a good observer and have a high degree of aesthetic sensitivity. It is also important for photographers to have artistic creativity. Sabit Kalfagil maintains that education in photography includes both technical and artistic aspects and that art education requires creativity. In this regard, he sees education in photography as a combination of technology and art (Kalfagil 2012, 242).

1.3. Knowledge about Photography Equipment: A photographer competent in his/her field should have the knowledge of the equipment to be used in the field. Hotel photographers are expected to identify and use cameras, lenses, and lighting equipment in this profession that is closely related to technology. Considering that many people take photographs today and that hotel guests also have their own cameras, it is necessary that the cameras that are used are regularly renewed and new developments in e technology in photography and equipment are closely followed. Having the proper pieces of equipment is an important factor in this profession.

1.4. Digital Editing (retouch): Given the introduction of digital technologies into our lives, hotel photographers must have a basic understanding of digital photo-editing software to be able to process and edit photographs. While many photographers working in hotels can do this themselves, some business owners prefer to employ a separate retoucher. These arrangements are essential for achieving and maintaining high quality in digital photography and especially in portrait photography.

1.5. Linguistic Skills: Photographers who will work in this field should speak the languages appropriate to the customer profile. Hotel photographers need to be able to provide their services in the tourists' own languages -it is one of the most important competencies on the part of photographers and is considered a form of capital. This is Bourdieu's theory of 'linguistic capital'. To put it simply, linguistic capital encompasses the linguistic resources that individuals possess and use in social interactions, shaping their access to social opportunities and resources (Bourdieu 2016). It is the linguistic knowledge, skills, and competencies that individuals possess and which can be transformed into social advantages. In other words, individuals with high linguistic capital have more competitive advantages in terms of social mobility, access to resources and cultural recognition.

1.6. Communication Skills: Hotel photography is an industry that requires direct human contact. It is therefore crucial to communicate effectively with customers, understand their needs, and meet their expectations. Sociability in communication is key to establishing trust between the customer and the photographer in sales processes. In this regard, emotions are an integral aspect of the relationship with the customer. The concept of 'emotional labor' described in the literature, encompasses not only the skills and physical characteristics of the photographer in the service sector but also his/her emotions in the form of the authentic relationships to be established with the customers (Chu & Murrmann 2006)

1.7. Marketing and Business Management: Marketing skills and business management know-how are essential for success. It is crucial to understand how to market the photographs taken, manage customer relations, and set prices.

1.8. Continuous Learning and Technological Development: The rapid change in photographic technologies and trends demand that photographers to be open to continuous learning and self-improvement. Individuals therefore need to acquire new knowledge and skills throughout their lives. This is what we call 'Lifelong Learning'. It refers to learning the knowledge and skills you need at every age (Coşkun & Demirel 2012, 108). And this is valid for technology-dependent industries such as photography. Lifelong learning is an integral part of photography education.

A successful career in hotel photography hinges on these eight core competencies, each of which can open doors to wider specialization and customization in various fields.

2. Methodology of the Study

2.1. Importance and Purpose of the Study

This study aims to reveal the professional competencies and skills of hotel photographers, their working conditions and whether they are financially satisfied with this job. The reason as to why the profession of hotel photography has been chosen is due to this profession's changing position and value within the tourism sector. The field of photography, at first regarded as part of the entertainment sector aiming to help the tourists have a better time, has acquired a commercial format in a short time and has come to be seen as an added value for hotels. This rapid transformation, in turn, has led to difficulties in finding photographers equipped with the required qualifications to work in the sector. The study sought answers to the following questions by analyzing the literature: What are the distinctive professional competencies of hotel photographers? How competent are photographers? What are their working conditions? Are they satisfied with their job and what difficulties they experience at work? The competencies and qualifications of the photographers working in this profession form the theoretical framework of the study. In addition, concepts of linguistic capital and emotional labor also constitute the problematic of the study since these concepts take center stage in distinguishing hotel photographers from other types of photographers.

2.2. Research Model

This research uses mixed methodology. Mixed methods is a type of research based on collecting and combining qualitative and quantitative data together (İslamoğlu & Alnıaçık 2019, 221). In other words, it is a method in which quantitative and qualitative (QUAN+QUAL) data are collected, analyzed, and integrated into a single study (Creswell & Clark 2018). Mixed methods research uses a range of data collection techniques to guarantee the validity and reliability of the data (Yıldırım & Şimşek 2013).

There are three basic designs as mixed method: convergent parallel mixed design, explanatory sequential mixed design and exploratory sequential mixed design (Creswell 2016, 219-227). This study uses a convergent parallel design (In this technique, the researcher collects quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, analyzes the two datasets separately, combines the results when interpreting (and sometimes analyzing) the data, and discusses and evaluates the results of the two separate analyses together. Both methods are given equal weight (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The overall goal is to compare the findings from the two different methods of data collection, thus confirming the findings from one method with the other. This simultaneous method is also referred to as triangulation by some researchers, Creswell & Plano Clark 2018).

2.3. Research Population and Sample

The sample of the research comprises *five-star* hotel photographers in Turkey. While deciding on the research group, the 'convenience sampling method', one of the purposive sampling methods, was selected because it is easily accessible (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). The research survey was created through Google form and sent to the open group called 'Antalya Hotel Photographers and Videographers' on social media. 114 people filled out the form.

In the qualitative part of the research, the 'maximum diversity sampling method' was employed. This method consists of a similar subgroup in the population (Büyüköztürk et al., 2024). The data were obtained from two business owners, one hotel manager and 4 photographers in the photography department of a five-star hotel in Belek.

Table 1. The Demographic Information of the Participants

N=112	n	%	AVE Ss
Year of Birth			
1965-1990	84	75.0	1982.54/9.77
1991 and above	28	25.0	
Gender			
Female	4	3.6	
Male	108	96.4	
Marital Status			
Married	69	61.6	
Single	43	38.4	
Educational Background			
Primary School	2	1.8	
Middle School	13	11.6	
High School	48	42.9	
University	43	38.4	
MA/Doctorate	6	5.4	

*Frequency Analysis

Upon evaluation of the demographic information of the participants, it was established that 75% of them were born between 1965 and 1990, 25 % were born in 1990; 96.4% were male; 42.9% were high school graduates, 38.4% were university graduates and 11.6% were secondary school graduates. The average year of birth of the participants was 1982.54 (Table 1).

Table 2. Languages Spoken by the Participants and Their Shooting Locations*

N=112	n	%
Known Language		
German	72	64.3
English	107	95.5
French	6	5.4
Russian	84	75.0
Dutch, Portuguese, Arabic, etc.	9	8.0
Shooting Locations		
Kemer	43	38,4
Belek	64	57,1
Manavgat	58	51,8
Alanya	35	31,3
Marmaris	25	22,3

*Frequency Analysis

Upon evaluation of the languages spoken by the participants and the shooting locations, it was established that 95.5% of the participants speak English, while 75% speak Russian, 64.3% speak German, 5.4% speak French and 8% speak other languages. The participants' shooting locations were as follows: Belek (57.1%), Manavgat (51.8%), Kemer (38.4%), Alanya (31.3%), and Marmaris (22.3%) (Table 2).

Table 3. Birth, Sex, Martial Status, Educational Background

	Year of Birth	Place of Birth	Sex	Marital Status	Educational Background
F1	1969	Burdur	Male	Single	High School
F2	1977	Antalya	Male	Married	Bachelor's Degree
F3	1991	Konya	Male	Married	Middle School
F4	1965	Diyarbakır	Male	Married	Bachelor's Degree
F5	1974	Rize	Male	Married	MA/Doctorate
F6	1968	İzmir	Male	Married	Bachelor's Degree
F7	1946	İslip	Male	Married	Middle School

2.4. Data Collection Tools

The quantitative survey questions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale with the following options: 1: Strongly Agree, 2: Agree, 3: Neutral, 4: Disagree, 5: Strongly Disagree.

The second part of the study employed to gain deeper insights into the results obtained from the quantitative method. For that end, face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants in the photography department of the hotel. These semi-structured interviews were conducted with four photographers, two managers and one hotel manager. Seven people who participated in the semi-structured interviews were selected as a separate sample group apart from the survey participants. All interviews were recorded and consent forms were signed by the participants. Participants were asked 10 questions:

1. Do you like your job? What are the challenges of your job?
2. Would you consider working in another job?
3. Do you think an education in photography is necessary to work as a hotel photographer?
4. How important is it to speak a foreign language in your job?
5. Do you think there is an artistic aspect to your work?
6. In your opinion, how important is it to communicate with customers?
7. How has digital technology transformed your work?
8. Does your job satisfy you financially?
9. What do you think is the ratio between men and women in this line of work
10. Do you think this job has an age limit? If so, why?

2.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The survey questions were revised with the input of an academic specialized in social sciences and a hotel photography manager to ensure reliability. A total of 114 people filled out the survey and two surveys were canceled. The analysis of quantitative data employed descriptive statistical analysis, including percentage, frequency, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation.

All the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded with the help of Nvivo program and appropriate themes were created. The data obtained were coded and interpreted in accordance with the themes and categories through descriptive analysis. Themes and codes are presented in the findings section with direct quotations. Participants were anonymized as F1, F2, F3.

3. Findings and Discussion

In the quantitative part of this study, the opinions of hotel photographers about their professional skills (technical, linguistic, educational, artistic and communication) and working conditions were investigated in terms of various variables. Tables and explanations of the quantitative data are provided below. These variables include information about photography (working duration, age criterion, educational background), educational and professional opinions (on educational, linguistic, technical, communication, and artistic aspects), working conditions of hotel photographers and opinions about the financial situation of hotel photographers.

Table 4. Information about Hotel Photography*

N=112	n	%
Working in Another Profession Before Hotel Photography		
Yes	77	68.8
No	35	31.3
Number of Years Working as a Hotel Photographer		
1-3 year	17	15.2
3-5 year	6	5.4
5-7 year	4	3.6
7-9 year	4	3.6
+10	81	72.3
Age to Start Hotel Photography		
18-25	52	46.4
25-30	40	35.7
30-35	12	10.7
35-45	3	2.7
45 and above	5	4.5
Photography Education		
Yes	67	59.8
No	45	40.2
Place of Photography Education/Training		
Self-taught	56	50
I learned from the employer at the hotel	23	20.5
I learned in a photography course	5	4.5
I learned in a photo studio	18	16.1
I learned at school	10	8.9

* Frequency Analysis

3.1. Quantitative Findings

Upon the evaluation of the participants' employment status before hotel photography, it was established that 68.8% of them had worked in another job. The number of years spent in hotel photography was found to be +10 (72.3%), 1-3 years (15.2%), 3-5 years (5.4%). The age to start hotel photography was 18-25 (46.4%), 25-30 (35.7%), and 30-35 (10.7%) respectively. It was established that 59.8% of the participants received photography training while half of the participants were self-taught (50%). It was also found that 20.5% of the participants learned the profession from their employer at the hotel, and 16.1% learned it in a photography studio (Table 4).

Table 5. Opinions on Education and Profession*

N=112	1		2		3		4		5	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Photography training is required for hotel photography.	55	49.1	29	25.9	4	3.6	21	18.8	3	2.7
I wish I had been trained in photography.	57	50.9	29	25.9	9	8	12	10.7	5	4.5
Training/education is not necessary to do this work.	19	17.0	28	25.0	8	7.1	31	27.7	26	23.2
I have a good command of photography techniques.	69	61.6	35	31.3	5	4.5	2	1.8	1	.9
I have a good command of the digital technologies regarding my field	63	56.3	40	35.7	8	7.1	1	.9	0	0.0
I can use photography-related programs	65	58	39	34.8	3	2.7	4	3.6	1	.9
To be fluent in digital technology makes it easier for me to find a job as a hotel photographer.	52	46.4	36	32.1	4	3.6	16	14.3	4	3.6
My theoretical knowledge about photography is sufficient.	28	25	40	35.7	18	16.1	18	16.1	8	7.1
Mastering the photography techniques is sufficient for hotel photography.	10	8.9	18	16.1	8	7.1	37	33	39	34.8
In hotel photography, establishing a relationship and interacting with tourists is more important than mastering the photography techniques.	58	51.8	36	32.1	7	6.3	9	8	2	1.8
I find it difficult to establish social relations with tourists while taking photos.	4	3.6	2	1.8	5	4.5	55	49.1	46	41.1
Building social relationships with tourists in hotel photography increases my photo sales.	83	74.1	27	24.1	1	.9	1	.9	0	0.0
Speaking foreign languages is important for hotel photographers.	85	75.9	0	0.0	1	.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
My linguistic skills are sufficient for this work.	67	59.8	33	29.5	4	3.6	3	2.7	5	4.5
I see myself as an employee of the hotel where I work.	27	24.1	26	23.2	9	8	32	28.6	18	16.1
I think what I do is related to art.	51	45.5	38	33.9	8	7.1	11	9.8	4	3.6
My job requires creativity.	73	65.2	30	26.8	4	3.6	2	1.8	3	2.7
I follow new photography trends for taking photographs in the hotel.	55	49.1	41	36.6	8	7.1	7	6.3	1	.9
I identify myself as a photographic artist.	40	35.7	33	29.5	19	17.0	17	15.2	3	2.7
I think my photographs are artistic.	35	31.3	36	32.1	27	24.1	12	10.7	2	1.8

*Frequency Analysis, 1: Strongly Agree, 2: Agree, 3: Neutral, 4: Disagree, 5: Strongly Disagree.

The overwhelming majority of participants believe that an education in photography is essential for those pursuing a career in hotel photography. In fact, 49.1% of them believe that education is necessary for hotel photography, while an even larger majority, 50.9%, want to receive education about photography. Furthermore, 27.7% of them think that education is necessary to do this job. The participants also demonstrated a high level of proficiency in photography techniques, with 61.6% reporting that they have a good command of photographic techniques. 56.3% of them have knowledge about digital technologies related to their subjects and 58% of them can use programs related to photography. 46.4% of the participants think that having a good command of digital technology makes it easier to find a job as a hotel photographer. 35.7% of the participants report that they have theoretical knowledge about photography while 34.8% of them are of the opinion that to be knowledgeable about only photographic techniques is not sufficient. 51.8% think that interacting with tourists is more important. 49.1% have no difficulty in communicating with tourists while shooting. 74.1% think that communicating with tourists speaking foreign languages is important. 59.8% of the participants consider their linguistic skills to be sufficient for shooting. 28.6% do not think of themselves as a staff member of the hotel. 45.5% think that their work is related to art, and 65.2% think that their work requires creativity. 49.1% follow new photography trends in hotel photography. 35.7% define themselves as a photographic artist and 32.1% find their photographs artistic (Table 5).

Table 6. Hotel Photographers' Opinions on Working Conditions*

N=112	1		2		3		4		5	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Having my own camera helps me earn more.	62	55.4	31	27.7	9	8	7	6.3	3	2.7
My work satisfies me financially.	39	34.8	48	42.9	16	14.3	6	5.4	3	2.7
I love the profession of hotel photography.	57	50.9	29	25.9	16	14.3	7	6.3	3	2.7
I would like to work in another job.	12	10.7	22	19.6	31	27.7	30	26.8	17	15.2
I would like to be an employer in the field of hotel photography in the future.	53	47.3	37	33.0	12	10.7	6	5.4	4	3.6
Being an employer is more risky and more difficult than being a hotel photographer.	67	59.8	24	21.4	6	5.4	10	8.9	5	4.5
The seasonal nature of hotel photography is financially challenging for me.	30	26.8	36	32.1	18	16.1	18	16.1	10	8.9
During the winter season, I work at a different job apart from photography.	14	12.5	32	28.6	11	9.8	36	32.1	19	17.0

*Frequency Analysis

Evaluating the opinions of the participants regarding their financial satisfaction with the job, 55.4% of them think that having their own camera increases their earnings; 42.9% of them think that their job is financially satisfying; 50.9% of them like the profession of hotel photography; 27.7% of them are unsure about working in another job; 47.3% would like to be an employer in hotel photography in the future; 59.8% think that being an employer is risky and difficult; 32.1%

think that the seasonal nature of the job makes it economically difficult, and 32.1% do not work in any other job other than photography during the winter season (Table 6).

3.2. Qualitative Findings of the Study

The findings in the qualitative part of the study are listed in line with two main themes: the professional competence of hotel photographers and their opinions on working conditions. Under the theme of 'professional competence' of hotel photographers, there are subheadings such as 'educational background', 'linguistic proficiency', 'use of technology', 'communication skills', 'artistic predisposition', and 'physical characteristics;' while qualitative data on working conditions include subheadings such as financial satisfaction, economic risks, and working conditions. The participants were first asked about the characteristics that a hotel photographer should have. The codes and frequencies related to professional competence are shown in the table. Secondly, they were asked to share their opinions on working conditions. The codes and frequency tables related to financial satisfaction, economic risks, and working conditions are shown below.

Table 7. Professional Competence of Hotel Photographers

Codes Related to the Theme								f
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	
Technological know-how	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	5
Communication skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			5
Educational background	✓	✓		✓			✓	4
Physical characteristics I (age)	✓	✓		✓			✓	4
Linguistic proficiency	✓	✓	✓	✓				4
Physical characteristics II (clothing)		✓					✓	2
Artistic predisposition			✓					1
Physical characteristics III (sex)		✓						1

When the participants' opinions were analyzed in the first theme, 6 codes emerged. As a result of the analysis of the data obtained from the Nvivo tables using the descriptive analysis technique, it was found that the participants mostly expressed opinions on technological mastery and communication skills. Four participants expressed negative opinions on technological developments and one participant expressed positive opinions. Participants predominantly reported that the widespread use of technology, especially the use of photographic applications on mobile phones, has had a negative financial impact on their work, decreasing the value of photography and transforming the field of photography. The analysis revealed the following opinions regarding technological developments:

> *I don't see a good future for this profession. The progress of technology is against us (F2).*

Digital photography had caused a financial loss in our sector. But we started to look at photography differently. The damage has been that one can now take pictures with mobile phones, which has reduced the need for us. We are experiencing a 10%-15% decline every year. The reason for this is that our age is characterized by technology, when you buy something today, you see a new model the very next day (F3)
They take digital photos and send them. They are not interested in buying photographs anymore (F7)

Since everyone takes photos with their mobile phones, the demand for photographers decreases (F5).

Using technology increases our work (F1).

Five participants made similar remarks with regard to communication skills. On evaluating these remarks, it can be observed that it is of great importance to establish communication with the customers for participants and this communication has a direct effect on sales. One participant articulated that they do not put any merchandise on their shelves but they instead sell emotions (F4). In this regard, it is maintained that the customer satisfaction achieved through the mobilization of the photographer's emotions increases production and sales. The opinions on communication skills in the data obtained are as follows:

It is necessary to know the psychology of the customer. The most important thing is to have an understanding of the customer's state of mind and act accordingly (F1).

We try to be friends with the customer so that we can attempt to sell photographs (F2). Sociable and outgoing photographers do their job better(F2).

The people you hire should be decent and you don't want the customer to complain (F3). You need to address the customer and understand how much money you will make from them (F3) Here; we sell something that doesn't exist. We are selling a fantasy(F3).

We are not a business that opens a shop somewhere and waits for customers to come in. We need to be in the field with the guests and have more contact with them(F5). I also know people who come back to the same place for vacation because of their good relations with the staff. A hotel photographer definitely affects the overall satisfaction of the guest (F5).

We don't have shelves, we sell emotions …Therefore, the people who will work in this line of work should treat tourists very well. We create supply and demand, and while we create supply and demand, they should not be a nuisance to the customers. First of all, they need to treat the customer well, convince the customer with good features, and attract them to the shop (F4). Therefore, in order to convince the customer, we have to appeal to his/her emotions. We promise them a souvenir. We need to understand this better than the customer (F4).

There is an incredible difference between the knowledge of photography and

working in the field of tourism photography. The most important characteristic is human relationships. Even if you have a knowledge of photography, you still need to communicate with people you don't know at all (F1).

Four participants commented on education. On evaluating these comments, it can be said that the participants believed that education was important but they also stated that they did not receive any academic education on photography. Besides, it is understood that the photographers working in this sector belong to different professional and educational backgrounds. The participants' statements about their educational background are as follows:

I was a carpenter in Bucak. At first, I was engaged in printing photographs. I had no education. I learned how to take photos from friends (F1) Even the photographers who have never received any training in photography adapt in a short time and take better pictures than trained photographers (F1).

It would be good to get some training in photography. Training is needed to change the use of light, exposure, customer psychology, and the way people look at the photographer. We are trying to train ourselves (F1).

Before taking up photography, many people worked in agriculture. Most of them are people who worked in other jobs in the tourism sector and changed their line of work (F2).

I choose the photographers that I will work with from different places. For example, one of them was a waiter and I made him a photographer (F7).

We try to train ourselves. (F4)…We cannot employ graduates of photography departments. These new graduates are actually technically ready, but the training they have received is not right for our workplace (F4).

We train people from other professions as photographers. We explained to them the basic shots. Digital technology facilitates our work and we just explain the technical aspects of the work (F4).

Regarding physical and biological traits, participants expressed three views. The first is that women are not employed in the sector. The other views are that there are difficulties in finding young photographers to work with, and, that the age ratio of the currently working photographers in the sector is gradually increasing. Due to their advanced age, it is physically demanding for photographers to work in the heat of summer in a hotel and rejection by the customers leads to psychological pressure on them at this age. Participants also referred to clothing and stated that dressing well has a positive impact on the customers. Their opinions are as follows:

All of our employees are men. We looked for female employees, but we couldn't find any. There are no female photographers because the working hours are too long and it is difficult to compete with male photographers.... Because it is necessary to establish a two-way communication with the customer. That's why we don't try to select very old employees…When they are young, they don't mind too much when customers refuse. As they get older, a breakdown begins. This is a bit related to personality. If the customer rejects you, you then start to refrain from approaching

the customer…While young people write 3 deadlines, they can write 1 photography appointment due to the age factor when they get older. Even though they have the power of attraction and performance, they provide less turnover with fewer shoots because they have fewer customers…Those whose communication skills take a turn for the worse loses his/her value. S/he realizes that he cannot do this job and withdraws from the business within 1-2 years. There are psychological aspects to this job, it is a matter of resistance…Young people are more active and can engage with the customers more (F4).

The working age group is between 40 and 50 years old. It is better if young people do it and we would like to train them. But young people say they will work for a year and do it themselves next year. But our work is difficult. When the customer rejects you, you can handle it when you are young but old people cannot take it. The customer is more lenient towards young people in this sense (F1).

The age of the photographer in this sector, the most productive ages are between 20 and 35. The average age of the employees in our business is over 30 and we prefer to work with people we know. In the past, new employees were hired to train them. But the increase in rents and the shortening of the season unfortunately affected us negatively in that respect (F2).

When they are young, they don't worry too much when customers refuse… In this situation, if the customer rejects you, you start to approach the customer less…Young people are more active and can approach the customer more (F4).

We want the photographers to be dressed properly and clean. Clothing has a positive effect (F2).

They now pay a lot of attention to clothing. They pay attention to how to talk to the customer. The job has become more difficult compared to the past (F7).

Participants argue that speaking a foreign language is more important than photographic education and technical know-how. The participants' statements regarding linguistic proficiency are as follows:

Here, we provide this service with the advantage of speaking a foreign language…I came to understand how necessary it was to learn a foreign language…It is important to be able speak a language well enough to satisfy the customer (F3).

The number of languages they speak, whether they have a camera or not, their previous experiences are the factors for the staff members to be employed. The foreign languages they speak is even more important than having their own camera…First of all, how our staff members present themselves is very important. Their style, clothing, habits, foreign languages they speak, their age, their educational background and cultural level… It is important that they are presentable because they represent business in the field (F4).

We sell the photographs by telling them how we will shoot it and how happy they

will be. We make this happen with the advantage of foreign language (F3).

Participants' opinions on artistic creativity are as follows:

This work has little to do with art. We generally look at it financially. The most beautiful photograph is the one we sell. We are here to make a living. We need to satisfy the customer. I don't think of it as art. I can take the photograph with a very beautiful composition, but if it doesn't sell, it doesn't mean anything to me, so I don't think it's art. It has to appeal to the customer (F3).

Table 8. Qualitative data on working conditions

Codes Related to Professional Opinions								
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	f
Financial satisfaction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	6
Financial risks	✓	✓	✓	✓				4
Working conditions	✓	✓	✓	✓				4

Six participants voiced their opinions on financial satisfaction pertaining to this profession. They predominantly state that the hotel photographers are financially satisfied with their work. Participants' opinions on financial satisfaction are as follows:

This job satisfies me both financially and spiritually…We make good money. We work on a premium basis (F1).

This job used to satisfy us economically. But now it is difficult. In the past, we could work for 6-7 months and not work in winter. We now try to create the opportunity to work in winter…It satisfies me economically. I work in this job for 6 months. I rest for 6 months, and I like this aspect of the job (F2).

You can also work for the remaining 6 months. I worked in Sarıkamış and Dubai in winter, but there are more important things than money (F3).

Economically, the rents of the hotels are quite high, I mean, the hoteliers make money, and of course there are a lot of photographers, it opens up a business area for them. There is an economy here. There are 200-300 photographers only in the Antalya region. The economic part of the job is not easy (F7).

Investment, operation, and sales costs of rooms have increased, and as the tourism economy has grown in total, rentals have increased as part of the same growth (F5).

In a hotel for 2000 people, if you can make 10 appointments a day during the day, if you can take a series of photos for this family, you can make your daily turnover. I look at it from a business point of view. 70% of them do this job without loving it. The reason they don't like it is that they are oppressed by the customer (F4).

Participants' statements on working conditions are as follows:

My working hours are too long ... I do the same job in the winter season. We go abroad to Bali, to Dominican Republic, to Dubai, and so on… As long as we earn money, we are satisfied with the working conditions, but we do not have established working hours… Everyone works here on a premium basis (F1).

I think those who live on minimum wage are happier. We live in Antalya, but we cannot swim during the entire season. To change jobs (F3).

We were expanding our business before. We were opening branches, but we are not thinking about it now. The sector has shrunk...We downsized both because of the difficulty in finding staff and because hotel rents have risen so much. There are no more trained staff. As the number of hotels increases, it becomes more difficult to find staff ...In the past, the season used to be longer, but now the season has become shorter, which is financially difficult for us (F2).

I wish it were 10 months instead of 6 months. It is a very pleasant environment for a single person. It is fun and you make money but it is really difficult for a married person (F3).

There was a transformation in rents. While we are developing our business in this way, the hotelier knows how much we earn more or less because he is a professional. Today we can pay 70-80 thousand euros for a hotel that we paid 10-15 thousand euros for 10 years ago. But since our business style has changed and there are now high turnovers, we have to pay that rent...70% of them do this job without loving it. The reason they don't like it is that they are oppressed by the customers (F4).

Participants stated the following about economic risks:

This also carries a risk. There is a risk at work (F1).

The photography business will not end, but we experience a 10%-15% decline every year (F3).

For the employer who runs a photography business, I see risk in this business, but we also want to get into it...Hotel photography has created a value within the hotels in 30-35 years. We pay more rent than other shops... The instability in the tourism sector also affects us. We have difficulty paying our rent (F4).

Everyone wants to be an employer. If it is in a good place, I can risk it. There is also a risk, it is necessary to do more detailed research. (F1) When you put a new person in, there can be a reaction from the team. We prefer to work with old staff (F2).

Discussions and Conclusions

This study aimed to examine the professional skills (technical, linguistic, educational, artistic and communication), the working conditions of and the problems experienced by hotel photographers working in the photography businesses in 5-star hotels in tourism destinations. The study adopted mixed methods in which qualitative and quantitative data were collected and combined.

As a result of the research, information on the demographic, personal and professional

characteristics of the participants, their opinions on professional qualifications and training regarding photography, working conditions and economic conditions in the industry were obtained through a 'scientific perspective', which is also the value of the study.

Upon evaluating the demographic information, it can be seen that hotel photographers are largely male, the majority of them are high school graduates, and the average age is 42. The causal relationship between demographic data and hotel photography can be attributed to the long and challenging working hours of hotel photography and the fiercely competitive environment, which has adversely affected the presence of female photographers in this field. In this sense, it is assumed that female photographers do not prefer to work in hotel photography due to the difficult working conditions.

The findings regarding the age of hotel photographers are quite interesting. As shown in Table 4, even though the respondents reported that the appropriate age to work as a hotel photographer is between 18-25 years old, the average age of the employees was found to be 42 years old with 54.9%. Quantitative interviews also revealed that employees are getting older and there are problems in finding and employing young photographers.

Upon examining the results obtained from quantitative and qualitative data, it was established that although the majority of the participants considered education necessary and stated that they received training/education, many of them learned photography on their own or from their employers. Participants stated that the photographers do not need documentation such as diplomas and certificates to do their job and they can only learn to do this job well in the field. Considering this, it is understood that there is no face-to-face or online training program for hotel photography in the course contents of the relevant departments in universities, in photography courses offered by NGOs, municipalities, and other institutions, and that education is not provided to pursue a career in working in this line of photography (At this point, it is important to understand what is meant by education. It is understood that the participants have not received photography education at universities and colleges. In general, it has been found that the employment of graduates of 4-year or 2-year departments related to photography is not particularly important in the sector).

Another result obtained from the data is that in order to become a hotel photographer, it is not sufficient to know the technical aspects of photography profession. Linguistic and communication skills are more important than professional/technical knowledge. The results obtained from the data suggest that having command of a foreign language will contribute to the sincerity and reliability to be established with the customer. Christian Marazzi states that in all sectors, including the service sector, media, health, and education sectors, the main characteristic is that language and linguistic skills are in a central position, and that language and communication are vital for the production of social relations and similar things (Marazzi 2010, 9). Linguistic capital is also important for hotel photography, which is positioned within the service sector. Bourdieu states that '...all linguistic situations function like a market in which the speaker offers his or her goods, and the characteristics of the goods that the speaker produces for this market are based on his or her expectation of the possible value of those goods in the market...' Bourdieu also states that all language-related situations function like a market where things are exchanged (Bourdieu 2016). In short, the communication relationship is not just a communication relationship, but also an economic relationship in which the personal value of the speaker is at stake.

Bourdieu explains this situation with concepts such as 'linguistic market' and 'linguistic capital'. He states that when someone produces a discourse for buyers who are capable of evaluating it, setting a value for it, and putting a price on it, one can speak of a linguistic market (Bourdieu 2016, 149). He maintains that the concept of 'linguistic capital' refers to certain

linguistic gains, corresponds to the power exerted over linguistic price formation mechanisms, and that a given individual considers it as the power to operate these price formation mechanisms to his own advantage and to obtain surplus value from it (Bourdieu, 2016; 151). As a result, according to Bourdieu, the linguistic capital of a good is an important factor. Hotel photographers perform their jobs not only with their technical qualifications and skills, but also with their linguistic capital.

'…*Another phenomenon is the photographer's communication skills, including foreign language skills, which are considered more important than linguistic capital in the data obtained. One of the participants states the following*, '…*Here, we are selling something that does not exist, we are selling a fantasy*' and another participant states '...*We don't have shelves, we sell emotions...*' These statements draw attention to the importance of emotions in the relationship established with the customer. It emphasizes that in businesses working as a part of the service sector, employees are expected to participate in their work not only with their intellectual and physical characteristics, but also with their emotional characteristics. It is important to show sincere emotions to customers. (Akoğlan Kozak & Güçlü Nergis 2008; Chu & Murrmann 2006; 1881-1191). This concept, which is referred to as 'emotional labor' in the relevant English literature and translated into Turkish as 'emotional effort', has an important place in service businesses in particular (Glomb & Tews 2004). In his book The Managed Heart, Hochschild states that he used the term 'emotional labor' for the first time in the literature in 1983 to describe 'the use of emotions to create facial and bodily images in a publicly observable way while providing the service' (Hochschild 1983, 7). Hochschild states that the emotions used while providing the service can be considered a part of production, that emotional labor has exchange value like other types of labor, and that a price can be set for emotional labor. Hochschild states that if a society that produces goods can become alienated from goods, a society that produces services can also be alienated from these services. It is stated that this situation leads to emotional incompatibilities in the long term, that the individual is alienated from his/her own emotions and as a result, the employee may experience burnout or leave his/her job (Hochschild 2012, 5-7).

In the tourism industry, there is an important relationship between linguistic capital and emotional labor. In order for hotel photographers to increase their sales, emotional labor and establishing emotional bonds with customers can be seen as factors contributing to customer satisfaction (Hochschild 2012). By basing the concept of emotional labor on a service behavior paradigm, they defined service as a 'spectacle', service employees as 'actors/actresses', customers as 'spectators', and the workplace as 'stage' (Chu & Murrmann 2006). It is when the employees attempt to feel the emotions, they are asked to feel by hiding their own emotions in the workplace, it is almost like playing a role (Chu & Murrmann 2006, 1182). In this context, it is believed that being more sociable and having good communication skills will affect the nature of the relationship to be established with the customer and this will ultimately increase the sales of photographs. It is also considered very important for the photographer to be presentable, to dress appropriately. It was established that the photographer represents the 'shop' in the field and that economic success is related to this. In relation to this, the emphasis on the importance of a good image also brings up the phenomenon of the integration of the personal image of the employees with the image of the business (Kart 2011).

In the data obtained from the quantitative data, although the participants stated that this job requires creativity and is related to art, the qualitative data revealed that this job has little to do with art, and that the goal of the photographer is customer satisfaction and selling the photograph rather than taking an aesthetic photograph. In this respect, the relationship between what is

produced in the field of photography and art, and the contexts in which the photographer is not accepted as an artist are unclear.

Another data that stands out is the problem of technological developments in the field of photography. These developments have a considerable effect in hotel photography. Most of the photographers stated that they have a good command of new technologies and that this is effective in finding a job.

Another finding revealed by the research is that it is preferred that the hotel photographers have their own camera and equipment. This is also understood to be a factor in increasing their earnings.

Upon evaluating the themes related to working conditions, it is established that most of the participants work on a premium basis, that their working hours are very long and they do not have days off. Participants stated that this job satisfies them economically, that they enjoy this job, and that they would like to work as an employer in the future, although they find this to be financially risky.

Since tourism is seasonal, it was established that it is difficult to work for 6 months and be unemployed for 6 months for participants. It was also found that some photographers go to places where winter tourism exists or go to work abroad in winter.

It is among the findings of the study that the high rental income generated by the increase in investment, operation, and sales costs in the hotel industry is an advantage for hoteliers.

Considering the qualitative data on working conditions, it is understood that there is a shortage of staff to work in the field due to the increase in the number of hotels. It was a striking finding that it was no longer possible to train staff at a young age through internships, master-apprentice relations etc. And the business owners do not want to make an effort to train staff.

Another important finding is that photographers who have been doing this job for many years undergo psychological problems due to being rejected by the customers. Those who cannot deal with this aspect of the job leave this job. One can predict that the number of trained personnel will further decrease in the coming years.

Recommendations

In Greece, there are some organizations that both train photographers working in tourism and provide services to the sector (*PhotoHotel - Hotel Photography*, n.d.) (https://www.photohotel. com/en). The fact that there is no such organization in our country, where tourism is a large industry, is a huge lack and disadvantage. It is recommended that courses be opened to provide training in this sector, which is seen as an important source of income economically, and that courses be added to the curricula of universities. In this way, the increasing need for personnel can be met.

This study was conducted with photographers working in the sector (a total of 124 + 7 people). Although it does not speak for and make generalizations regarding all the photographers in the sector, it gives a fairly robust idea regarding the general inclinations in the sector. In order to obtain more detailed and comprehensive information, larger scale studies and field research are needed.

These two recommendations are important in terms of identifying and articulating the basic requirements for the field of hotel photography to be in a better position both aesthetically and industry-wide.

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