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Destination Branding: An Interdisciplinary Overview

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

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AIMS & SCOPE

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EDITORIAL

Tourism is an important activity and the major source of income for many destinations. To be competitive, destinations must develop and promote strong brands. A variety of interdisciplinary approaches to destination branding have been prompted by researchers and practitioners with distinct backgrounds that resulted in alternative destination branding strategies. This Special Issue aims to advance an interdisciplinary perspective on destination branding by encouraging interdisciplinary contributions. In article 1, considering Japan and the 2020 Olympic Games, the authors propose that tourism and destination branding are relevant soft power tools to generate a positive reputation, shape the country's image and attract visitors. In Article 2, by adopting a sustainable management perspective, the authors test tourists' intention to conserve cultural heritage destinations. The role of place identity, destination image and sustainable intelligence are also addressed in the context of cultural heritage destinations in India. Article 3 deals with emerging trends in the post-COVID 19 world. Innovative approaches and principles with the potential to be applied in destination branding are identified. Article 4 deals with content shared on social media and its influential role on potential tourists' behaviour. It is widely accepted that positive user-generated content is influential in choosing the holiday destination and the hotel.

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ABSTRACT

The perception of well-being through tourism improves the quality of life of tourists, and for senior tourists, this relationship is even more promising. While the association between tourism and mental health is clear, the processes involved are not always clarified. Thus, this systematic literature review aims to explore and systematise the benefits of senior tourism for well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with life. Following the PRISMA method, the search was undertaken on platforms SCOPUS and Web of Science, using the research terms "senior tourism", "elderly tourism", "well-being", and "life satisfaction". Articles were included, if published after 2018, peer-reviewed, in English, concerning an overview of senior well-being and tourism. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the final sample comprised 16 articles. Senior tourists experience higher well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with life when their goals are of high valence, more likely to be achieved, coherent with the activities, and when they feel pleasure associated with achieving those goals. Still, senior tourists' happiness, life satisfaction and well-being are associated with four central elements: interpersonal relationships; time and resource management; achievement of goals and objectives; and management of the personal meaning attributed to the experience. Theoretical and empirical implications are further discussed.

KEYWORDS

ARTICLE HISTORY

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1. Introduction

Tourist experiences are multidimensional and subjective as they encompass individuals' sensations, expectations, and needs (Jelinčić & Matečić, 2021), which provides a sensation of meaning through these experiences. Thus, meaningful experiences are a complex concept, focused on the self and the social, relational, and emotional dimensions. Meaningful experiences are related to the interpretation, narration, and transformation of individuals' lives based on the activities, events, and environments in which people engage (Packer & Gill, 2017) and are characterised by the level of attraction and impact on individuals' attention. They represent the sum of the experience, its evaluation, and all the contextual, environmental, and emotional contingencies.

In the general context of tourism, senior tourism is expanding rapidly (Silva et al., 2021; Kezman & Goriup, 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2022) and has become an important study group for the global tourism market (Stoncikaite, 2022). However, studies are scarce to analyse the individuals' choices, travel experiences, and outcomes on the overall perception of well-being (Sie et al., 2021). The projection of the senior tourism market highlights that it will become the biggest crucial driving in the hospitality markets (Stoncikaite, 2022).

As a matter of contextualisation, several systematic literature review studies have been developed to explore the links between tourism experiences and several psychological variables. From the relationship between positive psychology, tourism, and well-being (Garcês et al., 2018; Vada et al., 2020), the synergies between mindfulness, tourism, satisfaction, loyalty, happiness, and well-being (Iacob et al., 2021), and memorable tourism experiences and its role on the attribution of meaning (Hosany et al., 2022), all these studies focus on tourism as a vehicle for the promotion of psychological and physical benefits, including higher well-being, satisfaction with life, and happiness. However, studies fail to address the senior group specifically, in terms of the intergenerational interactions between motivations, tourists' experiences, and well-being (Wang et al., 2023).

In so doing, this systematic literature review intends to explore further a new path for tourism that acknowledges tourism's potential for improving the well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction indexes of silver-haired tourists. The main aim of this study is to explore and systematise the benefits of senior tourism for well-being, happiness, and general life satisfaction.

The article is organised into five main chapters. Chapter two offers the literature review, where the concepts of elderly tourism, well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction will be explored. Chapter three is dedicated to the Systematic Literature Review's methodology, which will explain the research protocol, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and the steps undertaken until the final sample is reached. Chapter four includes the results and discussion considering the existing literature on the area. The final chapter is dedicated to the theoretical and managerial implications and the main conclusions. Some future research directions are discussed, according to the main gaps found.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Elderly Population

The world is facing an important phenomenon: it is growing older than ever (Patterson et al., 2021). As provided by United Nations (2019), by 2050, it is expected that one in six people will be over 65 years old. As Li and Chan (2021) acknowledged, ageing is a personal, emotional, and relational process characterised by individuals' subjective experiences, emotional encounters, perceptions, meanings, and values. Ageing well implies that individuals develop and maintain their ability to function in different areas of their lives, such as performing basic needs, learning, growing, making decisions, being mobile, being involved in relationships, or contributing to society. Reaching this functional ability, older individuals' perceptions of well-being increase (World Health Organization, 2019).

When approaching the topic of the elderly population, it is essential to acknowledge that, during the decades, technology and health improvements over the lifespan are becoming expressive, leading individuals to live longer than previously and thus, healthy life expectancy is a significant concern for this population.

In a few words, older people are a heterogeneous group of individuals with different, personal, and significant life trajectories and, thus, different perceptions of ageing and subjective well-being due to their personal experiences, and social and cultural backgrounds (Li & Chan, 2021).

Cavapozzi and Zantomio (2021) concluded that the senior population is characterised by homeowners who have an incoming amount of more than 70% of their pre-retirement earnings. Additionally, these citizens are known for having spare time that can be used, for example, to provide informal care to family members and friends. Thus, leisure activities might increase life satisfaction and well-being (Zhang, 2023), social engagement, social inclusion, self-acceptance and reflection, and the creation of significant memories (Xiang & Qiao, 2021).

Bowling (2008) is an enthusiastic researcher in the field of older individuals. Through his studies, several perceptions have risen associated with active ageing, such as having or maintaining physical health, leisure and social activities, mental functioning, and engagement in healthy social and familial relationships. Additionally, if older adults have good perceptions of their health and well-being, their ability to be involved in leisure and tourism activities is positively influenced (Patterson et al., 2021).

As such, elderly tourism appears to be an attractive solution for seniors who want to engage in activities that promote their psychological, physical, subjective, and emotional well-being (Patterson et al., 2021; Zhang, 2023).

2.2 Elderly Tourism

Over time, the tourism market has increasingly changed its paradigm, and senior tourism is becoming a significant segment in this context (Patterson et al., 2021), with senior tourists as the significant contributors to the increase in the tourism economy (Wen et al., 2020). Senior tourism is expected to become a solid economic area as the population ages, with the older population giving travel and tourism substantial importance when they retire (European Commission, 2014). Travel has become one of the biggest triggers for tourists to improve their perception of well-being. For senior tourists, the need to engage in tourist experiences becomes even more concrete to enhance their quality of life (Hwang et al., 2020). Thus, there is a relational and dynamic link between tourism and ageing (Li & Chan, 2023).

Age is the primary characteristic used to identify senior tourists, even though the literature is not unanimous (Wen et al., 2020), with ages ranging from 50 years (e.g., Milman, 1998) to 65 years or older (e.g., Jang et al., 2009). Overall, a tourist is considered senior when reaching the age of 60 years old (Hsu et al., 2017). Also, senior tourists are known as wealthy, have plenty of time to spend on different activities, and their lifestyle is characterised by entertainment and enjoyment of travelling (Kazeminia et al., 2015). Additionally, Moller et al. (2007) concluded that older people are generally active, healthy, and willing to engage in different types of social activities while performing a tourist experience, considering that leisure engagement is a significant component of their lives.

In sum, senior tourists' most expressive sociodemographic characteristics are age, gender, self-perceived economic status, and the amount of spare time available, which might influence positively or negatively the probability of involving in tourism experiences and act as barriers or triggers depending on senior individuals' personal past experiences (Patterson et al., 2021).

Moreover, senior tourists' literature reinforces other sociodemographic characteristics based on previous studies on the area. One example is the model developed by Nimrod (2007). This activity theory postulates that senior individuals who search for tourism experiences look for opportunities for cultural and recreational activities that enhance their overall quality of life. Thus, senior tourists are characterised by their active seek for social interactions, personal development, and individual identity formation (Patterson et al., 2021).

On the same line, Zhang (2023) established that travel experiences for senior adults are synonymous with four outcomes: reminiscing the past, bonding with family members and other individuals, rediscovering themselves in new situations, and developing informal care networks. Nevertheless, it is essential to recognise that as people age, the process that leads to these outcomes becomes more significant than the outcomes itself (Alen et al., 2012).

Additionally, senior tourists' interests constantly change in duration, number, and preferences. The main interests nowadays are educational tourism, soft adventures, heritage patrimony, and volunteer-

ing holidays. A significant reflection arises through this information: Tourism markets must evolve and address senior tourists' primary motivations for travel to satisfy their well-being perception (Lee, 2016).

Senior tourists' perception of well-being is essential for understanding their behaviours and responses when living the experience. Thus, and acknowledging that elderly people need extra care through the development of the experience, it is vital to consider the diversity of needs of senior tourists, which sometimes involves a prolonged length of stay so they can take full benefits of the experience they engaged in (Hwang et al., 2020).

The fulfilment of individuals' purposes is a lifetime process. In so being, literature has become prominent in approaching the connotations of ageing well and old age, as well as their relationships with tourism, to understand how they drive meaning and fulfil personal intentions over their lifespan, through tourism, interacting with time, place, and mobility (Li & Chan, 2021). In this sense, leisure travel improves senior tourists' perception of well-being and the attribution of meaning; nevertheless, the processes underneath are often understudied (Zhang, 2023).

Thus, the intertwined connections between ageing and tourism are relational, embodied, and dynamic and involve older adults' personal past experiences, life trajectory, views, values, needs, choices, and the differences in the meanings they attribute to tourism, ageing, and well-being (Li & Chan, 2021). Elderly tourists have initiative and are enthusiastic about exploring and pursuing their own travel goals by engaging in different sensory interaction experiences after assessing their environment, cognition, and experience, which will enable them to develop their identity, relationship, and family environment towards a deeper engagement in tourism activities (Xiang & Qiao, 2021).

The association between healthy ageing and positive travel experiences is increasingly gaining attention in the literature. Individuals who engage in positive and remarkable tourism experiences are more likely to age successfully and look for similar future tourism opportunities (Patterson et al., 2021).

Despite the growing rate of senior tourism, this niche is dependent on socio-demographic characteristics and socio-occupational or family constraints (e.g., age, education, work, and type of accommodation) (Cavapozzi & Zantomio, 2021; Mendes et al., 2022). Nonetheless, their motivations to travel involve self-knowledge and search for well-being, showing their need to fulfil intrinsic goals (Mendes et al., 2022). Older tourists may prefer passive and inner pursuits, sometimes leading to loneliness and social disconnectedness. Thus, engaging in tourism can be a crucial alternative to weaken the isolation factor and improve or rebuild social relations, life expectancy, and quality of life (Kim et al., 2021; Xiang & Qiao, 2022; Asan et al., 2023).

2.3 Well-being

Well-being is the pearl of positive psychology (Seligman, 2002), considering its role in explaining how individuals drive meaning from their lives. As such, it represents a multifaceted concept measured with different subjective and objective indexes, representative of individuals' desirable, pleasant, and good lives (Larsen, 2007; Mendes et al., 2022).

Applied to tourism, well-being is the most desirable outcome for tourists, residents, and workers (Voigt, 2017; Garcês et al., 2018), and one of the strongest predictors of the emotional bond tourists develop with a particular destination, contributing to individuals' inner self, belongingness, and coping with everyday stress (Vada et al., 2020).

One of the most crucial well-being perspectives includes the search for meaning under the immediate outcomes of the experiences—hedonic well-being—versus a broader perspective related to long-term benefits—eudaemonic well-being (Packer & Gill, 2017; Voigt, 2017; Vada et al., 2020). On one hand, hedonic well-being is the immediate perspective of well-being related to the pursuit of happiness (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999; Packer & Gill, 2017; Voigt, 2017), the development of positive and negative emotions, the search for enjoyment, pleasure, fun, relaxation, escape, and sensory stimulation (Watson et al., 1988; Waterman, 1993; Diener et al., 2010; Packer & Gill, 2017; Voigt, 2017). On the other hand, eudaemonic well-being is characterised by excellence, using individuals' virtues and strengths to undertake the best choices and actions (Laing & Frost, 2017).

Huta and Waterman (2014) adopted four central eudaemonic perspectives: (1) growth (self-actualisation and personal goals), (2) *meaning* (purpose of life), (3) *excellence* (higher standards of individuals' be-

haviours), and (4) *authenticity* (connection with our inner selves). To Ryff (1989), eudaemonia assesses six dimensions: (1) *self-acceptance* (self-actualisation and optimal functioning), (2) *positive relations with others* (trust, empathy, identification with others, and intimacy), (3) *autonomy* (self-determination, independence, and regulation of behaviour), (4) *environmental mastery* (create environments that suit one's psychic and mental conditions), (5) *purpose in life* (comprehension of life purpose), (6) *personal growth* (ability to grow, actualisation, and openness to experience).

Comparing both dimensions, hedonia represents an orientation to the present, regarding regulating emotions and affective outcomes, whilst eudaimonia is focused on the future. Both relate to the positive affect and decreasing distress, significance, appreciation, and long-term outcomes (Seligman, 2011). As such, positive emotions are present right in the imagination of travel, which enables a more robust engagement, meaning, and purpose (Filep & Deery, 2010).

Derived from the previous perspective, Seligman (2011) developed the PERMA model as a theory that enables the understanding of well-being as a holistic phenomenon involving five dimensions (Garcês et al., 2019): a) positive emotions (e.g., amusement, awe, compassion, contentment, gratitude, hope, interest, joy, love, and pride); b) engagement (when individuals' strengths match the challenges); c) positive relationships (development of strong ties that enables health improvements); d) meaning (sense of belongingness and connection to something bigger); e) accomplishment (achieving goals). The benefits associated with this theoretical perspective are related to higher self-acceptance, positive relationships, personal growth, and purpose in life (Seligman, 2011).

2.4 Subjective Well-being

Subjective well-being is another well-established perspective in tourism and well-being studies that enables a higher understanding of how individuals drive meaning from their experiences (Diener, 1984; Vada et al., 2020). As a definition, subjective well-being respects individuals' overall perception of satisfaction with their long-term lives and immediate emotions. It results from individuals' mastery and progress considering their goals, strengths, values, personality, activities, and social relationships (Diener, 1984). From this point of view, subjective well-being is an evaluation of a person's life, considering their cognitive state in different life domains and the presence of positive and negative emotions or the absence of the last ones. It results from individuals' mastery and progress considering their goals, strengths, values, personality, activities, and social relationships.

Subjective well-being has three main characteristics. First, it is subjective, meaning its evaluation depends on individuals' own experience. Second, it involves positive measures. It is not just concerned with the absence of negative factors, but also with the inclusion of positive criteria and the relationship between these two. The third characteristic includes an overall assessment of all aspects of individuals' lives (Diener, 1984).

Considering the causes of subjective well-being, four main causes lead to a general perception of subjective well-being: a) subjective satisfaction, associated with other personal values such as self-esteem, family life, and satisfaction with work and health; b) income, since wealthier individuals seem to rate higher levels of happiness than poor people; c) social interaction, since happier individuals are more sociable, being this a bidirectional relationship; and d) activities, considering that active involvement in activities is associated with higher levels of happiness, depending on the degree of engagement with the activity, and individuals' personality (Diener, 1984).

In sum, well-being is essential to senior tourists' involvement in tourism experiences. A study performed by Nimrod (2007) allowed for the emergence of the Activity theory, suggesting that tourism enhances the opportunity for elders to involve themselves in cultural and recreational experiences, leading to an improved perception of quality of life, happiness, and subjective well-being. In so doing, tourists who undertake a holiday experience have a higher sense of well-being both before and after the experience (Abdullah, 2004). Such reflection led to an inclusive research protocol, which will be explained in the next chapter.

2.4.1 Happiness

Happiness is firmly attached to his proposal, like well-being. Thus, happiness can be defined as desirability, considering external criteria, such as virtue or holiness. Individuals seek positive sensations about what is desirable; being that desirable does not mean a happy state; instead, it means that eudaimonia relates to living a virtuous life, which leads to feelings of desirability and, coherently, happiness. So, happiness depends on the framework of the observer rather than the actor's subjective judgment. Similarly, well-being and happiness are characterised by the positive evaluations of individuals' lives as good ones. People experience more positive and pleasant emotions during a certain period of their lives and are particularly predisposed to those same emotions during the same period (Diener, 1984).

Seligman (2002) described the true essence of tourism and the concept of happiness on his positive psychology theory, named authentic happiness theory. According to the assumptions, it is related to three types of life: 1) Pleasure life, where tourism is seen only as a superior need for amusement, and the seeking for immediate pleasure is the one objective for individuals. The focus is placed on pleasure and positive experience, associated with positive emotions across different stages of life, and the development of strengths and virtues on passionate and pleasurable activities in which individuals engage, considering their positive traits; 2) Good life, which gives a vital role to altruism and the involvement with the community; 3) Meaningful life, where individuals seek for meaning through tourist activities and experiences, associated with educational and personal development opportunities. In other words, it is the stage where individuals apply their strengths in activities that lead to a greater good and engage in a feeling of greater life satisfaction rather than the pursuit of an empty life (Huta & Ryan, 2010).

Happiness is the sum of immediate pleasurable moments associated with developing values, meaning, and self-realisation (Filep & Deery, 2010). This should alert to the importance of addressing tourism in a positive, humanist-inspired way, making it possible for host communities to flourish, encouraging workers to thrive and, finally, enhancing the quality of the experiences (Filep, Macnaughton, et al., 2017), leading to the development of a strong relationship between tourism, travel, and wellbeing (Filep & Deery, 2010; Filep, 2014, 2016; Matteucci & Filep, 2017), and its impacts on life satisfaction, a construct explored right after.

2.4.2 Life Satisfaction

The literature defends that engaging in leisure tourism activities is critical to enhancing senior tourists' overall satisfaction and positive emotions. Thus, well-being is considered an antecedent or trigger of overall life satisfaction (Asan et al., 2023). The satisfaction with life with a specific experience is based on the theoretical perspective of the Bottom-up Spill-over Theory (Diener, 1984), where happiness results from the sum of small pleasures.

Satisfaction can be considered a separate element of well-being, with a different meaning from the affective indexes. Thus, satisfaction with life is related to the cognitive element of well-being, where the individual's conscious evaluations of his or her life circumstances are related to conscious values and goals. As such, satisfaction with life is associated with a global judgment of life circumstances and their comparison to one's standards. If the comparison is favourable, people report high satisfaction with life. Life satisfaction can be defined as a cognitive judgment of one's life that depends on individual characteristics and past experiences (Pavot & Diener, 1993)

Literature associating the concepts of tourism, elders, and life satisfaction is still evolving. Nevertheless, efforts have been made to increase the knowledge about the influence of tourism on older tourists' life satisfaction. As such, the benefits are associated with high culture, free outdoor activities, spirituality and enrichment, popular culture, following generations, and independent home activities, suggesting that participating in leisure activities improves the overall life satisfaction of silver-hair tourists of leisure life and intimacy of older adults (Nimrod, 2007; Kim et al., 2015; Uysal et al., 2016; Zhang & Zhang, 2018).

2.5 Meaningful Tourism Experience

Finally, the meaning attached to the tourism experience is also an essential theoretical foundation of this study and, thus, is worth the attention. A meaningful experience goes beyond the unique idea of an

emotional outcome, potentially predisposing the individual to self-reflection (Wilson & Harris, 2006; Bosangit et al., 2015; Lyu et al., 2018). The focus is placed on the attribution of meaning and discovery, which determine the impact of the experiences on tourists' lives. Meaningful travel is a unique and essential way of building a sense of self, confidence, and empowerment (Wilson & Harris, 2006). Travel enables the discovery of what makes everyday life meaningful (e.g., social relationships, encounters with nature, an opportunity to think about oneself, and personal growth (Packer & Gill, 2017). Nevertheless, a lack of understanding of what makes a tourist experience meaningful persists due to the intertwined use of similar constructs: 1) authentic experience, associated with genuine, timeless, unchanged experiences (MacCannell, 1973), that allows for a better examination of the embodied emotions, social interactions, identity, and relationships (Rickly, 2022); 2) Extraordinary experience, as positively intense, intrinsically enjoyable, and transformative (Arnould & Price, 1993). A recent study described them as '(...) the positive co-existence of the ordinary and the non-ordinary. An emotionally positive experience, intrinsically enjoyable, encompasses collaborative interactions and conflict-easing situations by setting up boundaries' (Goolaup & Nunkoo, 2022, p. 10); 3) Memorable experience, as an essential event stored in the memory and recalled after it has occurred, associated with the development of intense emotions that influence individuals' lives. After a solid reflection, they are retained in tourists' memories, becoming memorable (Duerden et al., 2018) and help to reinforce the recollection of pleasurable episodes experienced by tourists (Kim et al., 2012); 4) transformational experience, related to self-realisation and self-exploration (Sheldon, 2020) that lead to an individual's inner transformation in values, beliefs, intentions, and self-perceptions (Willson et al., 2013; Duerden et al., 2018).

The previously mentioned constructs have some common elements: 1) a focus on the social dimension, 2) the search for well-being, 3) the personal dimension, and 4) emotional development.

3. Methodology

3.1 Planning and Conducting the Review

The methodological approach adopted was a systematic literature review, which intends to make sense of a significant amount of information about a subject to contribute to improving the literature on that topic by providing specific answers to questions. The ultimate objective of this method is to map out areas with little or no relevant research to identify the needed studies (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). While the association between tourism and mental health of senior tourists is clear, the processes involved are not always clarified. Thus, this systematic literature review aims to explore and systematise the benefits of senior tourism for well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with life.

3.2 Research Questions

The present study intends to answer the following questions: 1) What are the specific benefits of the tourist experience for senior tourists' well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction? 2) What are the main topics related to the engagement of senior tourists in determined tourist experiences.

3.3 Searching

The chosen databases were Web of Science clarivate, and SCOPUS, considering their high-quality standards required by the Relative Quality Indices, the JCR InCites Journal Citation Report (WoS) and the SJR Scimago Journal Rank (SCOPUS; Harzing & Alakangas, 2016). The terms were simultaneously searched in the databases by linking the strings with the Boolean operators 'AND' and 'OR', as well as the truncation elements " " and * to restrict the specific term or to guarantee that all the words with the same radical were included, respectively. The research protocol was:

1. SCOPUS – TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Senior touris*" OR "elderly touris*") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (well-being OR wellbeing OR "well being").
2. Web of Science – TS = [("senior touris*" OR "elderly touris*") AND (well-being OR wellbeing OR "well being")]

3.3.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The following inclusion criteria were carefully considered for each article: (a) it was published in a peer-reviewed journal; (b) the language was English; (c) it was published between 2020 and 2023; (d) it included an overview definition of senior tourists' well-being. An article was excluded if one of the following criteria was met: (a) it was not published in a peer-reviewed journal; (b) it was in a language other than English; (c) it was published before 2020; and (d) the study did not include a general overview of senior tourists' well-being.

3.3.2 Conducting the Review

The first author applied the inclusion and exclusion criteria through the scope of titles, abstracts, and keywords for each record. Data extraction was performed through an Excel spreadsheet, and two main types of information were detailed: i) metadata (authors, year, country, topic, methods, results, journal); ii) specific relevant data to answer the previously defined research questions (concepts from well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction).

The preliminary search found 37 records from WoS and SCOPUS. The first step was the removal of the records due to duplicates and other reasons (e.g., unavailable articles). Thus, 21 records were screened.

After a first screening of the research terms used in the protocol, the first author searched for an overview definition of the research terms included in the research protocol (i.e., well-being, happiness, or life satisfaction). The abstracts that did not refer to any of the characteristics (n=5) were excluded. Second, the remaining research team reviewed the selection and confirmed that the articles selected in the first place resulted from a high-quality procedure.

The final step involved a complete analysis of all eligible articles. The final sample was comprised of 16 peer-reviewed articles. The definitions and results of the study were carefully extracted and assigned to different domains.

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA flow diagram, which visually represents the methodological process to enable a more straightforward interpretation.

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Source: PRISMA, 2020
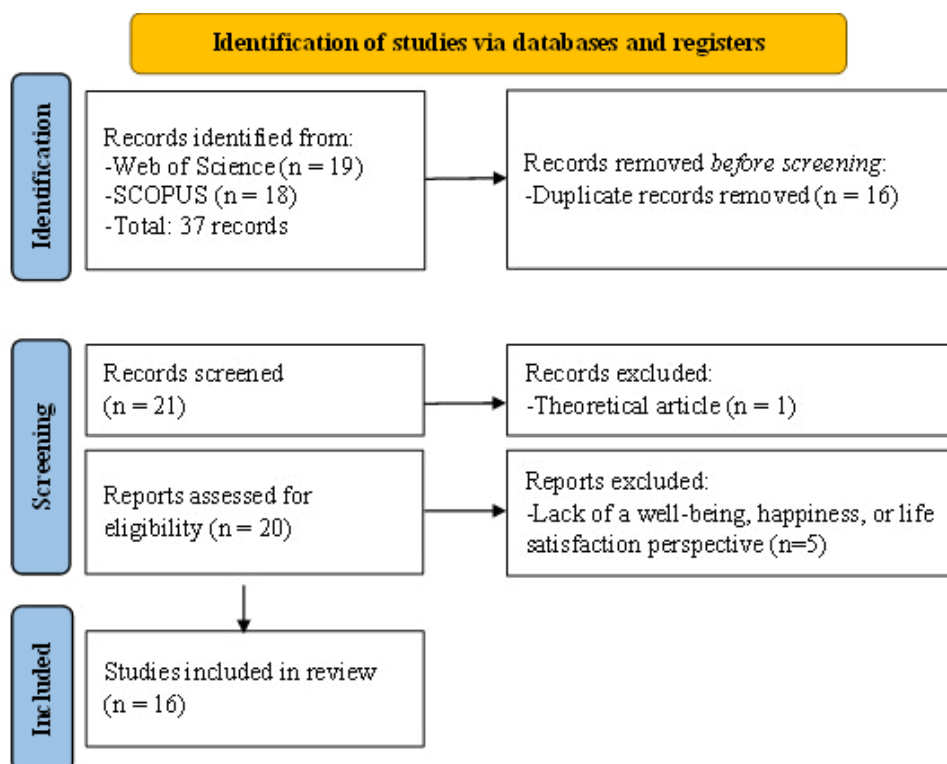
4. Results and Discussion

This systematic literature review intended to explore and systematise the benefits of senior tourism for well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with life. As seen in Table 1, most of the articles (10) were published between 2022 and 2023, acknowledging that senior tourism is a topic that is increasingly expanding on the literature (Silva et al., 2021; Kezman & Goriup, 2022; Ribeiro et al., 2022). The oldest articles were published in 2020 and focussed on tourism expenditure and life satisfaction for seniors (Mahadevan & Pam, 2020), as well as the significance of WBP in the senior tourism industry in South Korea (Hwang et al., 2020). The latest ones were developed in 2023 and were aimed to examine the connectedness to nature and life satisfaction of seniors (Asan et al., 2023), the relationship between mind and body interactions and continuum theory perspectives on senior tourism, active ageing, and well-being (Xiang & Qiao, 2023), the intergenerational interactions with adult children and their relation with the elderly's travel experience and well-being (Wang et al., 2023), the relationship between leisure travels and subjective well-being (SWB) among older adults (Zhang, 2023), and the development of the well-being scale for urban elderly tourists (Zhang et al., 2023).

Table 1. Peer-Reviewed Articles Per Year of Publication

Publication Year	Authors
2020	Mahadevan & Pam (2020); Hwang et al. (2020);
2021	Cavapozzi & Zantomio (2021); Kim et al. (2021); Li & Chan (2021); Sie et al. (2021);
2022	Kežman & Goriup (2022); Mendes et al. (2022); Ribeiro et al. (2022); Stoncikaite (2022);
2023	Asan et al. (2023); Xiang & Qiao (2023); Wang et al. (2023); Zhang (2023); Zhang et al. (2023)

Source: Own Elaboration

The articles were published in 16 top-ranking journals, including the *Current Issues in Tourism* (3), *Tourism Management* (2), and *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management* (2) (see Figure 2). None of the articles were published in a journal with a psychological focus, suggesting that tourism journals focus more on research that brings together senior tourism, well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction. Thus, the present article contributes to the knowledge developed in the psychological field by engaging these topics as a solid psychological phenomenon.

Figure 2. Sources Title
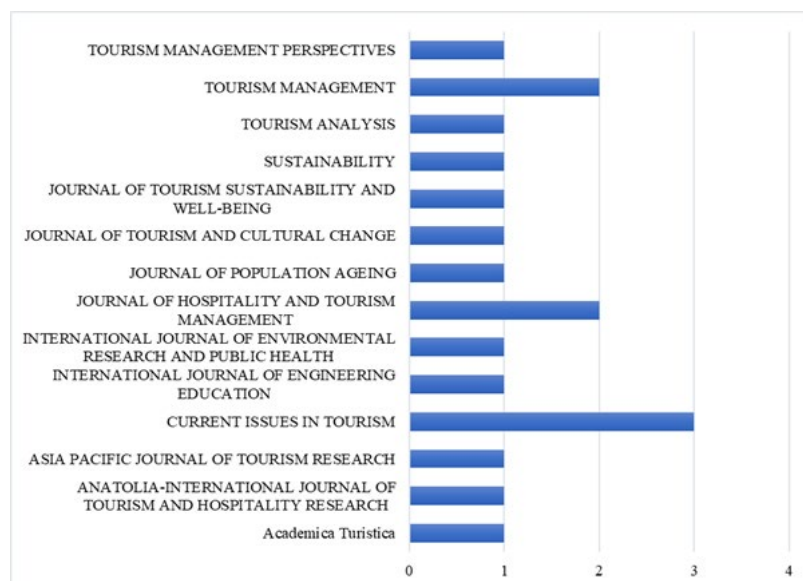
Source: Own Elaboration

The articles had different aims; however, the focus of exploring well-being and life satisfaction is the same in all of them, which leads to the assumption that tourism is an active, healthy lifestyle that promotes senior tourists' well-being (Mendes et al., 2022), through a higher appreciation of the meanings of the travel (Zhang, 2023).

Table 2. Peer-Reviewed Articles' Objectives, Country, Design, Participants, Results, and Conclusions

Article	Objective(s)	Country	Design	Participants	Results	Conclusions
Asan et al. (2023)	Propose and test a conceptual model linking CTN with tourist experience, well-being, and life satisfaction.	Uk and Turkey	Quantitative (Multiple-item scale analysis; PLS-SEM);	211 senior individuals aged 60 or over	-Connectedness to nature had a positive effect on tourist experience, well-being, and life satisfaction;	-Connectedness to nature enhances tourist well-being, which in turn influences overall subjective well-being; -Well-being is a sub-domain of life satisfaction; -Greater involvement in nature-based experiences enhances the well-being of the elderly and contributes to healthy ageing;
Cavapozzi & Zantomio (2021)	Explore the perspectives on daily life, the probability of undertaking tourism in older age and the role of personal characteristics acting as triggers and barriers to tourism.	Italy	Quantitative (Multiple-item scale; Regression analysis)	31.088 Italian elderly tourists aged 65 or more	-Strong socioeconomic gradient in tourism, with worse-off individuals less likely to undertake the activity. -Disability is a barrier to tourism. -Sociability and engagement in the reading act as triggers to tourism;	- The decision to undertake tourism for the elderly is significantly correlated with a variety of health and socio-economical characteristics such as age, education, working history, type of accommodation, frequency of social contacts and engagement in reading;
Hwang et al. (2020)	Explore the significance of WBP in the senior tourism industry in South Korea.	South Korea	Quantitative (multiple-item scale; Confirmatory Factor Analysis; Structural Equation Modeling)	349 senior tourists over 65 years	-Brand prestige leads to increasing well-being perception, which in turn influences consumer attitude and Word of Mouth; -Well-being perception influences consumer attitude and Word of Mouth;	-Tour guide services influence the relationship between brand prestige and well-being prestige; -Tour guide services influence the relationship between Consumer attitude and Word of Mouth; -Senior tourists need extra care, and when this condition is guaranteed, it lead to higher spending and overall life satisfaction;
Kežman & Goriup (2022)	Examine silver hair market.	Slovenia	Quantitative (Differences between groups)	405 silver-hair tourists from 65 to 75 years	-Elderly women are more likely to choose less dynamic activities, such as playing board games, or reading books and magazines; -Tourists aged 65 to 69 are more likely to opt for moderate tourist activities; -There are statistically significant differences in tourism activities that raise cultural capital; -Higher rated activities for silver-hair tourists with a lower personal monthly income were among "spiritual and religious activities"; -Silver-hair tourists with better health rate their activities higher; -Silver-hair tourists most often visit friends and relatives; -Casinos and cruises: least used by silver-hair tourists;	-Women are more focused on opportunities to socialise and interact with people and their families while travelling; -Silver-hair tourists with a higher level of education are more likely to choose tourist activities that develop cultural capital, compared to those with lower education; -Silver-hair tourists do not choose more or less dynamic activities depending on their age, but all activities are more attractive to younger silver-hair tourists; -State of health does not affect the choice of more or less dynamic tourist activities, but affects the frequency of the general choice of all tourist activities;
Kim et al. (2021)	Develop a theoretical perspective to understand senior tourist behaviour better.	N.A.[1]	Literature review	N.A.	-Senior tourist behaviour is guided by four major principles: 1) Increased leisure travel satisfaction is experienced when selecting leisure travel goals whose attainment is likely to induce high levels of positive affect in their social lives (goal valence); 2) Increased life satisfaction is achieved when pursuing leisure travel goals that are most likely to be attained. Thus, goal attainment ensures the experience of high levels of positive affect in their social lives (goal expectancy); 3) Increased leisure travel satisfaction by acting to implement leisure travel goals. Goal implementation increases the likelihood of goal attainment and the experience of positive affect in their social lives (goal implementation); 4) Increased leisure travel satisfaction through the attainment of leisure travel goals, thus, ensuring the experience of positive affect in their social lives (goal attainment);	

Li & Chan (2021)	Explore the entangled relationships between tourism, ageing and well-being in later life.	China	Quantitative (multiple-item scale); Qualitative (interpretivism as theoretical stance)	48 Chinese senior tourists	-How tourism affects ageing well is shaped by senior travelers' early life and travel experiences, the personalised conceptions attached to tourism, and well-being; -Four scenarios of ageing well: 1) journey of family-role transitions and life-meaning renewal; 2) Journey towards collective experience of affective intimacy, vitality, and charismatic group image; 3) Therapeutic journing for mental and physical well-being; 4) Journey of arduousness towards spiritual well-being and eudaimonia;	-Tourism and well-being: entwined and dynamic process in which people are continuously producing relational assemblages through interaction with time, place, and mobility; -Tourism and ageing: dependent on older adults' personal past, life trajectory, views, values, needs, choices, life paces, and individual differences in meanings attached to tourism, ageing and well-being; -Grow older and richer life experience: different levels of importance in different domains, and perspectives of well-being; -Travel: personalised ways of age identity; have collective experiences; -Linkages between tourism and well-being: shaped by how Chinese relate their travel with the concepts of "lao" (old), "ku" (suffering), and "le" (happiness and well-being); -The impacts of tourism on older adults' lives and well-being are relatively continuous depending on how the elderly interact with time and place, and individuality confronts the changes of their social and cultural environment;
Mahadevan & Pam (2020)	Examine the two-way relationship between tourism expenditure and life satisfaction for seniors.	China	Quantitative (Longitudinal study)	Chinese seniors	-There is bidirectional causality between tourism expenditure and life satisfaction; -Senior tourism demand was found to be income inelastic	-There is growing importance in a two-pronged policy strategy – a government policy committed to social tourism programs for seniors who cannot afford travel and those who reside in rural areas; -Another government strategy is to address aged concerns related to mobility and health to improve well-being and the provision of appropriate facilities for leisure travel; -Senior tourism can buffer Chinese economic growth during the economic crisis and uncertainty, making the twin policy strategy a worthwhile consideration;
Mendes et al. (2022)	Present a confirmatory analysis of the PERMA model in a sample of Portuguese senior tourists who visited the island of Sao Miguel (Azores).	São Miguel, Açores (Portugal)	Quantitative (Multiple-item scale; Confirmatory Factor Analysis; Scale reliability analysis)	434 Portuguese senior tourists who visited São Miguel, Azores	-Scores above the midpoint in the 5 dimensions of PERMA and Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS);	-Experiences of senior tourists when visiting São Miguel contributed significantly to their well-being;
Ribeiro et al. (2022)	Analyze the internet use by older tourists to plan their trip to the Algarve before the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.	Algarve (Portugal)	Quantitative (Multiple-item scale)	845 senior tourists traveling to Faro, until 90 years	-There are statistically significant differences between different groups of respondents regarding internet use when planning a trip to the Algarve;	-There are statistically significant differences between the age groups, the levels of education, the tourists with(out) disability and the respondents' country of origin. These differences confirm that there are a lot of older tourists who have no digital literacy;
Sie et al. (2021)	Examine the links between senior tourists' self-determined motivations, tour preferences, memorable experiences, and life satisfaction because of travel	Australia	Quantitative (integrative hierarchical model)	51 Australian tourists aged 50 or over	-Many individuals derived a range of psychological benefits that remained with the traveller long after the actual trip had been completed; -Memorable experiences and perceived benefits were found to mediate the relationships between motivations or tour preferences and the life satisfaction of the senior tourists;	-Recollection of travel experiences is critical to memorable experiences, which ultimately influence perceived benefits and life satisfaction; -Restorative, personal, and meaningful travel experiences provide learning opportunities and influence situations where individuals may develop an increased sense of tolerance, sensibility and flexibility; -Excitement while experiencing a unique culture or interacting with local people is an essential component of educational tourism, which influences psychological benefits;

Stoncikaite (2022)	Highlight the complex nexus of recreational later-life mobility, active engagement and successful ageing.	N.A.	Literature Review	N.A.	-Older people, especially baby boomers have become the key elements in today's recreational mobility on a global scale and contribute to the neoliberal ideals of production, self-management, and efficacy; -Many older individuals engage in leisure travel abroad to reconnect with their youthful selves, experience a sense of well-being and happiness, and challenge negative age-related stereotypes; -Senior tourism is closely wedded to the unrealistic ideals of active and positive ageing that foster an idealisation of the image of a good old age and may have negative repercussions for those who cannot adhere to active and productive lifestyles; -Silver tourism will require diversification and different modes of travelling to offer alternative options (e.g., travel experiences from home, smaller groups, less crowded destinations or more sustainable tourism);	
Wang et al. (2023)	Explore how intergenerational interactions with adult children shape the elderly's travel experience and well-being.	China and overseas (e.g., Japan)	Qualitative (In-depth interviews)	20 elderly tourists	-Adult children's acknowledgement (disconfirmation) of elderly tourists' experience plays an important role in the supportive (conflicting) interactions and subsequently enhanced (jeopardized) the elderly's well-being.	-A close investigation of the impact of intergenerational interaction on the travel experience and well-being of seniors enables tourism industry to make appropriate changes to its strategies and tourism products to enhance intergenerational interaction, thereby contributing to the growth of the silver-haired tourism market and destination performance.
Xiang & Qiao (2023)	Explore the relationship between mind and body interactions and continuum theory perspectives on senior tourism, active ageing, and well-being.	N.A.	Qualitative (Representative picture interviews)	-20 elderly tourists;	-Positive emotions in cellphone album photos and friends circle photos; -Positive motivation, interest, and pleasure during the travel process were more frequent, followed by satisfaction and love from relatives; -More content in representative photos with people in the background, which reflects the interaction and deep sense of participation of the community and people at the tourism site, and respondents demonstrate positive effects of tourism through deep participation, integration into the environment, and the implementation of responsibilities and obligations; -Respondents focused on the need for affectionate relations and sought the ones who helped them build socialization and enhance cohesion; -Meaning of being an elder in the homecoming tour and the profound meaning of family search realized in the second half of life; -Achievement: reflects self-centered personal accomplishment, but also the self-efficacy of olders in helping others in their travels, and the overall sense of accomplishment of social inclusion; -40-65 years old: Travel behaviors influenced the lives of the respondents, generating a willingness for active travel, developing skills for travelling alone, overcoming demands of regular travel, and reserving disposable income for travel); -60 years: Travel motivation focused on enjoying retirement based on past travel experiences and availability of more leisure time travel needs: move from daily space into exotic space; -Narrative storylines: value realisation, emotional enhancement, building long-term community relationships, which led to self-efficacy and reward through travel and leisure behaviours; -Sensory interaction experiences in senior tourism played an essential role in the narrative process; -Continuity value pursuit: 1) Sensory interaction and association; 2) Mental adjustments outcomes; 3) Continuity efficacy output;	-Emotional outcomes in travel among elders were interest, pleasure, satisfaction, and affectionate love; -Individuals pay more attention to the positive effects and impacts that travel brings to their daily lives (in particular, affectionate love motivates the elderly to increase their frequency of travel); -When the tour brought the value result of participation, it was the participation of physical and mental interaction, which not only physically participated in the scene, but also transformed the feelings brought by the tour site through mental integration and interaction; -By returning to their hometowns, older respondents trave their family origins, reunite with their loved ones, and travel back to their hometowns, as a positive demonstration of meaning in life; -The developmental path of continuity in senior tourism is a stable process of change in which respondents past beliefs, interests, and behaviours are retained and further deepened and iterated; -Elders adapt to their post-retirement identity, tapping into the perception of well-being in tourism, exploring the value of tourism, and continuing to adapt to new tourism roles; -The mechanism of action of bodily perception and sensory interaction are generated by integration the associative effects of the five senses and integrating the adjustments of the five senses with mind, which ultimately contribute to the perception and formation of well-being in the elderly;

Zhang (2023)	Contribute to theorising the relationship between leisure travels and subjective well-being (SWB) among older adults.	Singapore	Qualitative (Semi-structured interviews)	30 older travellers from 60 to 82 years	-Four recurring themes leading to various elements of well-being: 1) Reminiscing the past; 2) Bonding with family members; 3) Rediscovering self; 4) Forming informal networks of care;	-The process of reminiscing the past on the move brings emotional wellness; -Subjective well-being has two dimensions: 1) Affective – Senior travellers experienced positive emotions when encountering places that evoked fond memories. The opportunity to savour delicacies of the past also brought about joy; 2) Cognitive – Happiness is also experienced at the cognitive level as it is often through reminiscing the past when one starts to adopt a more reflective stance regarding their living conditions then and now, dreams when they were young, and overall life satisfaction. -Bonding with family members led to subjective well-being among senior travellers, such as meaningful engagement; -Leisure travel: go out of comfort zone and try new things. Their openness to new experiences reaps excitement, satisfaction, and motivation to engage with new challenges; -Hedonic well-being: excitement and thrill; -Eudaimonic well-being: push off limits, sense of accomplishment and life satisfaction, renewed purpose, and meaning in life;
Zhang et al. (2023)	Develop the RSHTUE tourist well-being scale.	China	Quantitative (Scale Development)	641 elderly tourists	-Twelve dimensions of Rural Summer Health Tourism for Urban Elderly: 1) Sensory Experience; 2) Immersive experience; 3) Personal growth; 4) Role identification; 5) Place attachment; 6) Self-efficacy; 7) Positive emotion; 8) Interpersonal relationships; 9) Sense of meaning; 10) Heath experience; 11) Sense of atmosphere; 12) Desire to talk;	- Rural Summer Health Tourism for Urban Elderly tourist well-being scale with eight dimensions: 1) Positive emotions measure the short lived pleasure that tourists experience from the beautiful scenery and healthy food of the destination; 2) Interpersonal relationships with tourists and residents; 3) Sense of meaning, related to deep and long-lasting experience of well-being; 4) Self-efficacy, similar to sense of control; 5) Place attachment, related to feelings in relation to the place; 6) Health experience, which is the primary goal for elders; 7) Sense of atmosphere, which creates a family-like atmosphere so that elderly tourists would not feel restrained; 8) Desire to talk;

[1] Not Applicable
Source: Own Elaboration

According to the results of the articles and their contribution to this study's aims, a general acknowledgement is that well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction were improved when seniors involved themselves in tourist experiences. Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that senior tourists build different conceptualisations of being old and young, and how they should behave in later life. In a study undertaken by Li and Chan (2021), the authors concluded that the relationship between tourism and well-being concerning seniors is related to the concepts of "lao" (old), "ku" (suffering), and "le" (happiness and well-being). As such, senior tourists' well-being is related to the six main topics: 1) The motivations that lead to the involvement in the experience; 2) the quality of the relationships, both the ones developed during the trip and the ones already developed with their travel companions; 3) the improvement of well-being dimensions; 4) life satisfaction improvement; and 5) perception of safety through tourism activities.

Concerning the first topic, the results show that a higher perception of well-being is associated with the positive valence of the goals that lead tourists to engage in that experience in the first hand, travel goals that are likely to be attained, the congruence between these goals and the activities to fulfil them and their evaluation, meaning that the closer to the expectations, the higher the life satisfaction and well-being perceptions (Kim et al., 2021). From here, it is possible to acknowledge that the goals that are the basis for the involvement in a determined tourist experience are the key to understanding where the meaning is

attached. In other words, when the motivations are intrinsic, they are automatically rewarding. Such goals include having solid relationships with loved ones, helping others when needed, and personal growth.

Additionally, leisure travel enables senior tourists to go beyond their comfort zones and experience new things, showing that novelty can motivate this type of tourist to engage in different tourist experiences (Zhang, 2023). On the other hand, when the motivations are extrinsic, they acquire value associated with an instrumental reward, such as making money and controlling people. In so doing, social satisfaction with life can be enhanced when the goals are intrinsic in their value, leading to a higher perception of psychological well-being, happiness, and overall life satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sirgy et al., 2011). Additionally, when the goals to engage in determined tourist experience are based on higher order needs (e.g., social, esteem, self-actualisation) rather than basic needs (e.g., biological and safety needs), subjective well-being is improved, as well as positive affect (Kim et al., 2010; Sirgy et al., 2011). However, studies have shown that senior tourist's experiences influence this subjective well-being perception. More experienced travellers are more motivated to pursue goals related to experiencing other cultures and being close to nature. In contrast, less experienced senior tourists engage in experiences that lead to fulfilling stimulation and security (Pearce & Lee, 2005).

In sum, senior tourists can develop higher positive affect and subjective well-being when their motivations are associated with basic needs, rather than growth needs. Finally, autonomy is an important topic when considering travel goals that enable senior tourists' desire to be independent, considering that when senior tourists drive for autonomy, their well-being perspective is easily achieved (Kim et al., 2021; Xiang & Qiao, 2021). As such, life satisfaction can be increased when senior tourists have the autonomy to develop their travel agendas and activities (Kim et al., 2021).

Regarding the second topic, Zhang's (2023) study emphasises that the subjective well-being of senior tourists is improved through reminiscing the past, bonding with family members, rediscovering the self, and forming informal care networks, which leads to emotional wellness. Specifically, bonding with family members during the trip led to subjective well-being and the enhancement of meaningful engagement, and positive relationships with those members. Additionally, Wang and colleagues (2023) developed a study about generational tourism. They concluded that elderly interactions with adult children when travelling together play a crucial role in the supportive interactions and, thus, enhance senior tourists' well-being.

Also, several studies in gerontology (e.g., Li & Chan, 2021) show that satisfaction with social life is an important ingredient for the overall satisfaction of elderly people. On this behalf, subjective well-being can be improved when one's social life is satisfied. From here, senior tourists who engage in determined activities can experience higher rates of happiness when the activities involve positive interactions with friends and family. Thus, ageing well is associated with accomplishing collective experiences through tourism (Li & Chan, 2021).

Additionally, senior tourists feel more comfortable and secure in being involved in tourism activities when their family members are supportive and incentive active communication, in scenarios where senior tourists' perceive a series of constraints to the accomplishment of tourism activities (Wen et al., 2020). As such, the various psychological, physical, and sensory interactions of tourists influence their travel behaviours which, ultimately, increase their well-being through a higher security in exploring new environments, changing emotional values, improvement of self-awareness, and a higher perception of quality of their lives (Skavronskaya et al., 2020; Xiang & Qiao, 2021). Thus, strengthening bonds with family during senior leisure travel leads to a higher perception of subjective well-being through meaningful engagement (Zhang, 2023).

In sum, the strengthened the social relationship circle of senior tourists, the higher the positive emotions they feel, and, the higher their well-being perception (Xiang & Qiao, 2021).

Then, well-being dimensions were improved through tourist experiences. Specifically, Mendes and collaborators (2022) acknowledged that senior tourists' well-being was enhanced in the five dimensions of PERMA, meaning that through tourism activities, senior tourists showed higher levels of positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaningfulness, and accomplishment. Thus, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model can be applied to senior tourism (Mendes et al., 2022). Overall, the experience enhanced their perception of well-being. Similarly, Xiang and Qiao (2023) concluded that the five dimensions of

PERMA were positive, and senior tourists' perception was improved through sensory interaction, linkage, physical and mental tuning, and tourism continuity value pursuit.

Additionally, the results show that there are psychological benefits that last long after the trip ends, proving that tourism activities enhance the eudaimonic dimension of the subjective well-being perception of senior tourists, associated with higher meaning, accomplishment, and self-development (Sie et al., 2021), as well as spirit peacefulness, environmental mastery, and learning (Li & Chan, 2021). Nonetheless, Thus, the positive effects of leisure travel for senior tourists are the improvement of well-being, happiness, and psychological health (Stoncikaite, 2022). In fact, with the gaining of new life experiences, senior tourists attribute different levels of importance to different domains of well-being.

However, it is difficult to generalise the benefits of travel to silver-haired tourists without acknowledging their perceptions of the old, the dimensions of ageing well, and the most important domains of later life. Thus, travel activities that encourage a young spirit influence the group image as a charismatic and contribute to an affective intimacy that becomes a crucial part of later life. In sum, tourism impacts elderly people's lives and well-being, considering their time and place, and, simultaneously, their social and cultural environment. These assumptions enable us to reflect on the distinction between a eudaimonic perspective associated with coping with hardship, pushing limits, finding new meanings and purpose, and accomplishment, and a hedonic one, characterised by the reward and sacrifice for family and friends, excitement, satisfaction, and motivation (Li & Chan, 2021; Zhang, 2023). Altogether, both perspectives influence how individuals drive meaning from their experience and well-being (Li & Chan, 2021) and understand what it means to be on the move and be an active citizen (Zhang, 2023). Moreover, positive psychology has a strong impact on explaining how tourists thrive, meaning from their experience, considering that positive psychology is the science of well-being and, thus, helps to explain how it is increased (Seligman, 2002; Xiang & Qiao, 2021). Last, a study developed by Zhang et al. (2023) confirmed that, despite the five dimensions of PERMA, another three could easily explain senior tourists' well-being, namely, self-efficacy (associated with the sense of control), place attachment (related to the feelings towards a destination), health experience (the primary goal of elderly tourist), sense of atmosphere (prevents tourists from feeling restrained), and desire to talk (in order to prevent loneliness).

As seen, the well-being perception of elderly tourists involves the dimensions related, not only to a more long-term perspective but also a short-term one (Li & Chan, 2021). From the long-term perspective, senior tourists develop positive emotions when visiting places that evoke strong memories, associated with opportunities to remember the past. Additionally, remembering past positive experiences enables elderly tourists to be more reflective about their lives, regarding their living conditions and their life satisfaction (Zhang, 2023).

As for the fifth dimension, senior tourists revealed a higher perception of their overall life satisfaction through tourism (Mahadevan & Pam, 2020; Kežman & Goriup, 2022; Asan et al., 2023). A study developed by Asan et al. (2023) highlighted the relationship between tourists' well-being and life satisfaction, through the connectedness to nature, meaning that nature-based tourism activities lead to psychological and sociological benefits when individuals evaluate their general life and happiness rates. Similarly, travel experiences strongly impact the quality of life and satisfaction in general. The benefits include improved well-being, gaining new experiences, learning, expanding the social network, and improving health (Kežman & Goriup, 2022). Thus, when selecting and planning a tourism experience, it is essential to consider that social motivations whose attainment is likely to generate a high dose of positive affect are essential to improve senior tourists' overall sense of well-being (Kim et al., 2021).

The security senior tourists feel in their travel destination is one of the most crucial factors for their overall evaluation of the trip as meaningful. The safest the activities undertaken and the destination, the better the decision-making process. Simultaneously, holidays became enjoyable, unproblematic, safe, and memorable, improving senior tourists' health and well-being. The results suggest that despite the contemporary models of successful ageing encourage active habits in life, elderly tourism adopts a more conservatory perspective, which defends calmer and less active leisure activities (Stončikaitė, 2022).

Finally, the limitations of the studies were profoundly analysed, and some critical reflections were raised. Primarily, it is possible to include the various limitations from the included studies in this systematic literature review into three categories: 1) Sample, 2) Methodology, and 3) Theoretical variables.

In the first domain, sample, several of the studies revealed limitations under the specific sample chosen, for example, senior tourists in the Connected to Nature Tourism Experiences (Asan et al., 2022); South Korea, with a high prevalence of women (Hwang et al., 2020); China travel and leisure lives of Chinese elderly people (Wen et al., 2020; Li & Chan, 2021; Zhang et al., 2023); Tourists who were in the middle of an outbound travel (Wen et al., 2020); Elderly tourists from typical rural areas in China, such as Zhongyuan Township and Jiangxi Province (Zhang et al., 2023). Thus, it is important to explore different contextual samples to verify the universality of the findings of the studies (Zhang et al., 2023), as well as understand the impact of other cultures and contexts, as well as different individual characteristics and interactions, on the perceptions of elderly tourists' leisure experiences (Li & Chan, 2021). Second, Xiang and Qiao (2021) performed twenty interviews, which can be insufficient for analysing the travel behaviour and psychological characteristics of all elders. Secondly, the study developed by Hwang and associates (2020) implied that it was challenging to define senior tourists by chronological age, considering the number of studies that provide different information on this topic. Thus, a suggestion is made by the authors, who defend the importance of considering other socioeconomic parameters for shaping senior tourist's definition, such as health, retirement, socioeconomic status, subjective age, and income levels.

From the second domain, methodology, it was possible to acknowledge the authors' difficulties in determining the best methodological plan. Perhaps this has to do with the fact that humans are unpredictable and, thus, shape the conduction of the studies in a way that investigators cannot control. First, the study conducted by Asan et al. (2023) suggested that the cross-sectional design chosen for the study relied on a small sample drawn from two countries, suggesting that longitudinal designs with a larger sample could be a better option. Second, Cheng et al. (2022) adopted a factor-clustering approach based on the literature, which has several disadvantages. Thus, the authors suggest that new scales and algorithms should be considered for clustering analysis. Third, Hwang et al. (2020) adopted a nonprobability convenience-sampling approach and, thus, in turn, challenged the application to the entire population. Fourth, Mendes et al. (2022) adopted a cross-cultural validation design based on a time of resumption of the tourism activity, still related to the Covid-19 pandemic, which could have biased the interpretation of the data presented. Fifth, Xiang and Qiao (2021) used in-depth interviews through representative photos, and this method could include limitations on the reliability and validity of the results. Sixth, Zhang (2023) reflected on the need for more qualitative methods to provide deep insights into how elderly tourists shape their travel experiences. In sum, studies defend the need to engage in more qualitative approaches when emerging on the study of elderly tourists' perceptions of their leisure experiences to obtain better results related to the quality instead of the experience's frequency (Li & Chan, 2021; Xiang & Qiao, 2021).

Finally, in the third domain, Theoretical variables, the generality of the studies suggests that future investigations should include other psychological variables, such as emotional well-being and social well-being, as potential outcomes of connectedness to nature experiences (Asan et al., 2023), the impact of memorable tourism experiences and tourism activities in well-being (Mendes et al., 2022), attachment and identification with the place (Cheng et al., 2022), affect, emotions, and coping practices during travel experiences (Li & Chan, 2021), the understanding of the perception of senior tourists concerning their physical and psychological needs during a leisure trip (Mendes et al., 2022), include more critical and interdisciplinary perspectives on the theorisation of ageing studies and leisure tourism (Stoncikaite, 2022), explore the segmentation variables of well-being of elderly tourism to understand the role of the different conceptions of well-being on tourism and active ageing (Xiang & Qiao, 2021), and explore the role of elderly tourists' well-being as an antecedent, outcome, moderating, or mediating variable of the research design (Zhang et al., 2023). Through these findings, a significant reflection is made on the role of the psychological variables concerning well-being, emotions, and social relationships on the perception of elderly tourists' active and healthy ageing as major contributors that influence how older people engage in leisure activities, depending on different personal characteristics that, naturally, shape this process.

In sum, the studies included in the systematic literature review show good quality. Both the literature review selected to sustain the methodological design and the results obtained, both the procedures that ensure the quality and robustness of the methodologies adopted. These have essential implications for the results obtained in our study, concerning that it enabled the organisation of the main findings into a process of creation of meaning when planning a tourism experience: the motivations that lead to the

involvement in the experience; 2) the quality of the relationships, both the ones developed during the trip and the ones already developed with their travel companions; 3) the improvement of well-being dimensions; 4) life satisfaction improvement; and 5) perception of safety through tourism activities. This has important implications because elderly tourists may often engage in passive and inner pursuits, with important implications related to loneliness and social disconnectedness (Asan et al., 2023). Thus, knowing what leads senior tourists to engage in determined tourism experiences is critical to ensure their emotional, social, physical, and psychological well-being, as well as healthy and active ageing.

5. Conclusion

The present study intends to systematise the benefits of tourism to the senior market, considering their well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction rates throughout time. This research contributes to enhancing the literature related to three interconnected premises. First, the research maps out and synthesises studies that enable the reader to understand the dimensions of the tourism experience that most improve senior tourists' well-being, happiness, and satisfaction with life. Second, this study answers the following questions: 1) What are the specific benefits of the tourist experience for senior tourists' well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction? 2) What are the main topics related to the engagement of senior tourists in determined tourist experiences? Finally, this research contributes to the advancement in the literature by acknowledging what makes up a meaningful tourism experience in elderly tourism perspective.

Concerning the results obtained, senior tourists' well-being is related to the five main topics: 1) The motivations that lead to the involvement in the experience (e.g., Kim et al., 2021); 2) the quality of the relationships, both the ones developed during the trip and the ones already developed with their travel companions (e.g., Zhang, 2023); 3) the improvement of well-being dimensions (e.g., Mendes et al., 2022); 4) life satisfaction improvement (e.g., Asan et al., 2023); and 5) perception of safety through tourism activities (e.g., Stoncikaite, 2022).

Overall, a tourism activity that improves senior tourists' well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction is one that, on the first hand, is planned due to intrinsic goals, enables tourists to develop their social life satisfaction, contributes to well-being enhancement through positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment, leads to overall life satisfaction and happiness, and is filled with a security perception associated with the environment where the activities are developed and the resources needed.

The following chapters discuss the theoretical and empirical implications of the study.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical point of view, literature on tourism, psychology, and elderly population find in the present study and opportunity to enhance the knowledge about the psychological characteristics involved in the planification, living, and impact of a tourism experience. Thus, different groups might develop a strong interest on the results and reflections obtained.

First, higher educational and professional institutions in tourism and psychology could find important information in this study. Tourism and psychology focus on individuals' minds and behaviours to develop a significance for the experience phenomenon (Scott et al., 2017; Garcês et al., 2020). Students can act as educational tourists on the destination, simultaneously acting as motivational triggers for senior tourists to engage and personalise their experiences, benefiting from their studies, interactions with local and foreign people, and experiences that foster personal and professional growth (Tomasi et al., 2020). Identifying dreams and fantasies beneath the motivations to choose a destination or evaluate one experience as memorable should lead to developing more significant activities based on elderly individuals' preferences and goals (Coelho et al., 2018). In the case of tourism courses, knowing about the different motivations and how they influence the meaning attached to the experiences can be the foundation to create professionals highly sensitive to the need to invest in developing meaningful tourism experiences for senior tourism. As for psychology courses, the promotion of psychological health and well-being finds in tourism a potential field of action to develop initiatives that call for these dimensions in the first place,

and for senior tourists, this is even more important, considering the perceptions they develop about their limitations. As such, senior tourism markets can benefit from developing psychological and touristic content to enable students to be more aware of how to promote secure, emotional, and memorable tourist experiences.

Second, the different tourist instances find in this study important information regarding the motivations behind the choice for determined tourist places, to innovate and personalise their offer and promote the potential of those places and promote high rates of well-being of elderly tourists. Specifically, destination marketing institutes are the principal interested market of these outcomes, informing for the need to improve destinations to make senior tourists engage in meaningful experiences that satisfy their needs, feelings, thoughts, and motivations (Chang & Hung, 2021). Still, the benefits of the holidays are numerous, such as physical well-being and an overall increment of happiness (Garcês et al., 2020). These findings highlight the need for industries and entrepreneurs to be aware of the elements associated with significant experiences (Smith & Diekmann, 2017).

Third, the investigation and development units (I & D) focused on the psychology of tourism for senior markets could benefit from the present study, following the growing trend of tourism based on the acquisition of knowledge referred to the motivations that brought different tourists to the same place. These I&D units could focus on the attempt to understand a range of different audiences, focusing on senior tourists, the community that receives them and other stakeholders dedicated to this industry, to develop new impactful strategies (Garcês et al., 2020).

5.2 Empirical Implications

The reflections made in this study could help develop several initiatives that promote the psychology of tourism, well-being, and mental health.

First, the literature on tourism assets focuses on the need to increase well-being as a mean to enhance self-care. Thus, the planning of an experience is not a static process, as it involves tourists' actions, thoughts, and expectations (Larsen, 2007). As such, tourism marketing campaigns must invest on appealing tourism campaigns which enable senior tourists to become the centre of their own experiences to meet their personal needs and motivations. In fact, knowing how people appraise their experiences and label them "meaningful" can help destinations and stakeholders take the best out of their travel experiences (Dunman & Mattila, 2005; Jiang, 2017), and considering senior tourists' need for security (Stoncikaite, 2022), the personalization of their own experience is even more important.

In line with the previous, urges the need to innovate the touristic products according to elderly tourists' psychological characteristics (Pine & Gilmore, 2019). One strategy could be personalising the attendance of senior tourists, physically on the travel agencies or online, through simple surveys to explore the motivations when seeking a determined experience and, this way, provide a personalised service to their expectations. By improving communication with tourists, it is possible to enhance their happiness before, during, and after the experience (Filep & Deery, 2010).

Similarly, the dimension nature & disconnect were strongly associated with the promotion of meaning and self-care (Garcês et al., 2020; Asan et al., 2023). Recent research has pointed out that, similarly to the meaning attached to relationships with other people, affiliation with natural environments is equally essential to defining tourists' well-being (Filep et al., 2022). In this sense, marketing industries could invest in tourism in nature, considering its particular and attractive characteristics. One strategy could be attractive commercials where nature is associated with self-care, well-being, the ability to practice full awareness, and intense emotions and memories. In sum, natural spaces can be promoted as therapeutic spaces that allow for the development of mental and physical well-being (Gesler, 2005) and associate with the security elderly tourists crave when planning their tourism experiences (Stoncikaite, 2022).

Additionally, individuals associate different outcomes and meanings to different experiences (Jiang, 2017). Touristic instances such as hotels, marketing industries, and touristic companies can enhance their potential through the adaptation of the activities and policies they adopt to senior tourists' needs allowing tourists to engage in meaningful personal experiences that lead to positive emotional, behavioural, and perceptional outcomes (Garcês et al., 2019).

Finally, marketing industries could benefit from the development of appealing and convincing adver-

tisements in different social media channels (e.g., commercials, Facebook, Instagram) with good content related to the overall image of the destination, considering this is the most crucial dimension in the process of choosing a travel destination (Park & Ahn, 2022).

5.3 Limitations and Future Guidelines

The study revealed some limitations, which can be further planned as future research guidelines.

First, all the results must be carefully interpreted considering the subjective characteristic of systematic literature reviews. Thus, future studies must encourage this analysis in a diversified way, considering, for example, different inclusion criteria (e.g., another language, different time range), or different research terms (e.g., include "silver-haired" as a synonym for "elderly" and "senior").

Second, one of the studies in the sample highlighted the relationship between tourists' well-being and life satisfaction, through the connectedness to nature, meaning that nature-based tourism activities lead to psychological and sociological benefits when individuals evaluate their general life and happiness rates (Asan et al., 2023). Similarly, Garcês et al. (2020) revealed that nature was one of the most cited motivations that enhanced tourists' well-being in Madeira Island. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of understanding of the impact of nature on the tourist experience and well-being of elderly people. Thus, future investigation should explore the role of nature as a scenario where senior tourists can feel happier and more satisfied and, thus, improve their well-being perception.

Then, considering the results obtained and the need to innovate tourism experiences, it could be interesting to complement this study with a qualitative approach. A suggestion could be the development of a focus group with the intent to inquire a small group of senior tourists about their relationship with natural environments and its role in the attribution of meaning, as literature has pointed out this dimension as equally meaningful for tourists' well-being (Filep et al., 2022). Also, this focus group could also be helpful to deepen the understanding of the fundamental motivations to engage in a determined experience, the activities searched and the main benefits. Through this, it would be possible to gather information that enabled the development of a more concise explanation of where the meaning is attached, when exploring senior tourists' intentions to travel. Also, a focus group could enable a better understanding of the future behaviour of tourists in terms of revisit intention, word-of-mouth intention, and recommendation intention (Park & Ahn, 2022).

Then, the study highlights that the social component might be one of the primary motivations for senior tourists engage in a determined tourist experience, related to the improvement of the established relationships and the involvement in new ones (Crompton, 1979; Zhang, 2023). Therefore, future guidelines could explore this dimension and its role in attributing meaning to tourism experiences.

Tourism studies tend to classify the management of emotions into two major categories: positive and negative. Several studies have been interested in the influence of positive and negative affect before a tourist trip, and the results have been coherent in showing that people tend to repeat enjoyable experiences and avoid the negative ones (e.g., Jiang, 2017; Ma et al., 2017; Vada et al., 2019; Garcês et al., 2020). Also, literature supports that the process of meaning-making decreases negative emotions and improves positive ones and life satisfaction (Fredrickson, 2001; Newman et al., 2014; Zheng et al., 2020). Future studies should explore the role of positive emotions in decreasing negative emotions and remembering memories associated with negative tourist experiences. This idea could generate important information on how individuals can accumulate resources and use them when needed, in other words, how to be proactive individuals stimulated by challenges, which leads them to more support, more vitality and, thus, more positive mood (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009).

Finally, several studies in gerontology (Asan et al., 2023) show that the satisfaction with social life is an important ingredient for overall satisfaction of elderly people. Thus, tourism represents a crucial tool on the improvement of satisfaction with the social life of senior tourists. However, studies fail to explain the impact of tourism in the social and general life of the old people. Following this idea, future studies could deepen the understanding of the impact of social life on tourists' general life satisfaction in tourism assets, which can be helpful to prevent seniors' isolation.

Altogether, the study introduces important information for both literature and practice, to promote senior tourists' well-being, happiness, and life satisfaction through tourism.

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Unlocking Employee Well-being in Tourism and Hospitality: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

In today's rapidly changing work landscape, ensuring a good balance between work and personal is a critical concern for employees. This equilibrium significantly influences their overall well-being, affecting work attitudes and behaviours. Research on the tourism and hospitality (T&H) workforce has covered many topics, but there remains an evident gap in scholarly investigations specifically addressing the well-being of employees in this industry. This work intends to fill the void by undertaking a thorough systematic literature review (SLR) focusing explicitly on employee well-being within the T&H sector. This thorough technique helped us identify and evaluate the most relevant studies from an extensive literature. The main goal of this academic paper is to address the identified research gap and provide practical insights for various stakeholders. Policymakers could benefit from recognising T&H workers' challenges and opportunities. Practitioners, including businesses in this sector, can gain valuable guidance on implementing strategies that promote work-life balance among their workforce. Scholars will also discover a consolidated resource that informs their future research and assists them in contributing to employee well-being discussions. Our results may also help T&H organisations develop work-life-balanced workplaces. Our rigorous literature analysis and practical insights seek to improve employee well-being, organisational performance, and industry vitality.

KEYWORDS

Employee Well-being, Tourism, Hospitality, Systematic Literature Review, Tourism Employees.

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1. Introduction

Service-based businesses dominate the tourism and hospitality (T&H) sector, wherein the employees serve as the organisation's primary offering and as ambassadors for the organisation's brand (Hsu et al., 2019). It is widely understood that the exchange process in the tourism industry relies heavily on human interaction, which makes it a very labour-intensive process (Deery & Jago, 2009; Alrawadıeh et al., 2019). The health and welfare of employees in the T&H industries remain a critical area of inquiry for tourism scholars. An employee's psychological and mental health is included in their overall welfare, in addition to their physical health (Al Doghan & Talat, 2023). It can be noted that T&H employees' emotional labour and levels of engagement at work fluctuate throughout the day, thus understanding these shifts is crucial (Yu et al., 2023). The occurrence of emotional dissonance may be unavoidable due to the presence of a high-stress work environment characterised by extended working hours, irregular work schedules, substantial workloads, and demanding clientele (Yang et al., 2020). Furthermore, their mental and physical behaviours are favourable for delivering high-quality services and fostering a strong and enduring relationship with clients (Bednarska, 2013).

T&H, being a high-contact industry, requires a large pool of employees who can handle complex situations. Hence, employees may experience significant levels of stress in order to meet performance goals. Also, the experience of stress arises from conflicts in both the professional and personal domains, necessitating a harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life (Deery, 2008). Workplace stress, unfair behaviours, and job insecurity among employees might harm organisational outcomes (Alpler & Araslı, 2020; AlMutawa et al., 2023). The COVID-19 epidemic certainly impacted distress levels, job security, and mental well-being (Baloch et al., 2022). The reason for workers' diminishing morale was because of the uncertainty and anxiety caused by COVID. It significantly affected the mental and psychological health of employed workers and supervisors (Hameed et al., 2023). Numerous organisational outcomes, such as employee performance, are correlated with workers' sense of well-being (Veingerl Čič et al., 2016; Çetin et al., 2022). The T&H business has been linked to aggressive norms and workplace stress as potential causes of abusive supervision (Yu et al., 2023). The concept of job insecurity refers to the subjective experience of individuals perceiving their job position as vulnerable and at risk of being lost. This perception can result in adverse reactions and consequences for individuals and businesses, including reduced dedication, diminished contentment, and detrimental effects on one's physical and mental well-being (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2022). According to Sirgy et al. (2001), one of the main indicators of an employee's level of satisfaction is their work-life quality.

The well-being of employed workers also includes the pursuit of a work-life balance. Organisational investigation into the topic of balance between work and personal life often concentrates on employees as well as managers, revealing that conflict is linked to organisational circumstances, including long hours and job pressure (Sturges & Guest, 2004; Sun et al., 2020). Organisational variables (work demands, work culture, home demands, and home culture) and human factors (energy, work orientation, personal control, personality and resilience, age, gender, life stage, and career stage) influence work-life balance (Siu, 2013; Prayag et al., 2019). The implications of achieving or struggling with work-life balance include several aspects such as job happiness, overall life satisfaction, personal well-being, stress levels, performance outcomes both in the workplace and at home, as well as the influence on others within one's professional and personal spheres (Mulvaney et al., 2007; Sun et al., 2020). Travel experiences reduce stress and improve employees' quality of life (Chen et al., 2016; Sie et al., 2021). Commitment to the job and job satisfaction are the two main measures of work-life quality (Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh, 2022).

Employee well-being has been the subject of prior research that has used several models of theory, including the effort recovery model, reciprocity norm theory, need hierarchy theory, bottom-up spillover theory, conservation of resources theory, organisation justice theory, self-determination theory and job demands-resources theory (Le et al., 2016; Sirgy, 2019; Thal & Hudson, 2019; Gordon & Shi, 2021; Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh, 2022). Although previous studies have explored many facets of the T&H workforce (Kuriakose et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2023), there is a noticeable deficiency in academic inquiries that particularly focus on the welfare of employees within this sector. Given the growing recognition of employee well-being in modern times, scientific inquiries have already been undertaken to examine many

aspects of well-being. Therefore, there is a lack of extensive and integrated analysis in the literature review about the well-being of employees, which has not been thoroughly examined and is characterised by fragmentation. Using a systematic literature review, an endeavour is made to generate knowledge and offer an in-depth review of the existing literature concerning employee well-being. The purpose is to address the current knowledge gap through a thorough and systematic evaluation of the literature, specifically focused on the well-being of employees in the T&H industry.

Firstly, this research offers an in-depth assessment of many aspects of employee well-being within the T&H sector. The existing literature on employee well-being has been examined historically over several years. The primary scholarly papers are examined in order to get an understanding of the various patterns and developments pertaining to employee health and wellness. Following is the article's outline: Firstly, this article reviews employee well-being studies to summarise the main types of topics covered in the literature, the journals publishing articles on employee well-being, organisational partnership and data type (i.e., quantitative, mixed, qualitative and other statistical techniques); finally, this article reviews previous investigations to summarise their findings. Consequently, this offers prospects, orientations, and pathways for future research endeavours in this progressively significant topic within the realm of tourism literature.

2. Literature Review

Place and nation branding may enhance destination branding by incorporating improved social services and societal well-being in the tourism sector (Chigora & Hoque, 2018). Individuals may also strive for well-being as a means of improving their lives. Determining employability is crucial for addressing industry instability, fostering employee commitment, and reducing work insecurity, especially in the tourism sector (Alpler & Araslı, 2020). It might be challenging for many employees in the tourism industry to travel, pursue education, and maintain a healthy lifestyle since they are in front-line roles for 24-hour operations (Deery & Jago, 2009).

Well-being is a multidimensional and complicated societal phenomenon that is intangible (Chang et al., 2021). Well-being may be defined as a pleasant and subjective emotional state that individuals experience in relation to their experiences in life (Lin et al., 2014). Henceforth, the well-being of employees is a widely discussed subject in the context of organisational dynamics. Employee well-being is "the overall quality of an employee's experience and functioning at work" (Grant et al., 2007). Therefore, 3 essential elements comprise employee well-being: (1) subjective well-being; (2) psychological well-being; and (3) workplace well-being (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009). Key mental health indicators in the workplace include employees' psychological and subjective well-being (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2013). A term analysis of employee well-being is presented in Table 1. Employee well-being can be understood in the three-dimensional model of subjective well-being, which includes rationally evaluating one's overall life satisfaction, decreased adverse consequences and enhanced favourable effects (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2013; El-Sawalhy et al., 2022). While material well-being is often prioritised in tourism, other experts suggest that psychological and subjective well-being are crucial (Filep, 2016; Chang et al., 2021). Séraphin et al. (2023) found that research on transformational luxury might conceivably enhance the well-being of people. They also found that four factors—risk, ethics, trust and ambidextrous managerial practices—are crucial to the development of luxury innovations.

This study also extensively studied the significance of tourists' well-being within the T&H business (Lehto et al., 2020; Junaid et al., 2020; Sie et al., 2021; Majeed & Kim, 2022; Awan et al., 2022; Khairy et al., 2023). Many investigations highlighted the importance of well-being in enhancing the lives of various tourist demographics (Morad, 2007; Zhou et al., 2017; Stončikaitė, 2021). Dileep and Chandrasekar (2019) and Soliman et al. (2023) have conducted an investigation that analysed the association between technological experience and the well-being of tourists at tourism destinations. Another research showed that virtual tourism experiences may improve workers' mental health and focus while giving tourism spots a chance to highlight real encounters (Walters et al., 2022). The evaluation conducted by Knollenberg et al. (2019) examined the progress of the community and its overall welfare in the context of T&H. The term

"geriatric tourism" has achieved academic recognition in the tourist industry due to the attention placed on the well-being of elderly or senior travellers (Tsartsara, 2018).

Several factors impact employee well-being on different levels. Scholars in T&H have shown that work-leisure conflict significantly impacts both the professional and personal lives of workers (Tsaur & Yen, 2018). Previous academic research has indicated that organisations that have employees with low levels of well-being are susceptible to adverse consequences. These consequences include lower efficiency, compromised decision-making abilities, increased absenteeism rates and overall inferior performance (Cabrera et al., 2018). At the organisational level, bullying at work has an unfavourable influence on workers' productivity, wellness, and service quality (Hsu et al., 2019; Kitterlin-Lynch et al., 2022). Support services are available to shield workers from stressful circumstances like conflict between their jobs and personal lives (Xu & Cao, 2019). Employee resilience is a crucial determinant in the overall well-being of tourism entrepreneurs and their organisations (Prayag et al., 2019).

Table 1. Term Analysis of Employee Well-being

Term Analysis	Definitions	Research-based on the review
Employee Well-being		
1. Subjective Well-being	Subjective well-being relates to the personal assessment and evaluation that individuals make of their overall life satisfaction and the many aspects and activities within their lives (Diener, 1984).	Agyeiwaah et al. (2024); Hameed et al. (2023); Sie et al. (2021); Su et al. (2016); De Bloom et al. (2016)
2. Psychological Well-being	Psychological well-being represents a person's comprehensive evaluation of the quality of their lives (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).	Kimbu et al. (2023); Al Doghan & Talat (2023); Mensah et al. (2022)
3. Workplace Well-being	Workplace well-being incorporates a number of aspects of the workplace, such as the physical setting, employee happiness on the job, the culture of the workplace, and the organisational framework (Schulte & Vainio, 2010).	Adam et al. (2023); Tang et al. (2020); Hsu et al. (2019)

Source: Own Elaboration

2.1 COVID-19 and Employee Well-Being

The implementation of COVID-19-related measures, such as social distancing, remote work, travel limits and reduced staffing, has limited the ability to maintain previous work practices, resulting in a transformation of employee work patterns (Salari & Murphy, 2022). The COVID-19 epidemic also caused uncertainty among employees, which adversely impacted the T&H sector (Sharma et al., 2021; Baloch et al., 2022). Tourism was hit hard by the global reduction in demand for employment caused by the COVID-19 epidemic (El-Gohary, 2020; Gupta et al., 2022). Due to the outbreak, there has been a substantial drop in individuals' confidence regarding the stability of their employment and financial hardship which was related to a decrease in positive feelings, leading to a reduction in employees' subjective well-being (Açikgöz & Günay, 2020; Hameed et al., 2023). Operations, marketing, and organisational strategy have all been areas where businesses have dealt with VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity) in the past few years (Hu et al., 2023). This phenomenon is notably apparent among the workforce in the tourism sector, whom the pandemic has significantly impacted. Consequently, these circumstances have had detrimental effects on their mental well-being (Elshaer & Azazz, 2023). Hameed et al. (2023) posited that the significance of one's fundamental assessment in mitigating the adverse effects of monetary pressure and impact on an individual's overall happiness via unfavourable feelings was significant among employees in a developing country like Pakistan. Furthermore, it has been noted that the presence of career anxiety among the prospective workforce might harm their psychological welfare, ultimately influencing how they perform (Rahimi et al., 2022).

Table 2 depicts the comparative state of employees prior to and subsequent to the COVID-19 epidemic. The implications of health concerns on individuals employed in the tourism industry can exhibit variations

based on their demographic attributes and job-related factors (Elshaer & Azazz, 2023). Prior research has shown that several elements, such as leadership style, organisational embeddedness, and corporate social responsibility practises, have a substantial effect on the standard of job life and employees' contentment in the tourism sector (Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh, 2022). According to the social support viewpoint, co-workers' assistance reduces employees' perceived uncertainty and emotional tiredness during such crises (Sharma et al., 2021). Following the global pandemic's consequences, sustainability has emerged as a critical factor in determining both the quality of work-life and efficiency of work (Diamantis & Puhr, 2022; Fuchs et al., 2022; Salem et al., 2023). Furthermore, travellers, workers, stakeholders, etc. are looking for methods to recover and revitalise by generating spirituality and religion in their behaviour (Wang et al., 2021; Rezapouraghdam et al., 2022). The T&H sector has included environmental behavioural tactics in response to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Khattak et al., 2021; Khairy et al., 2023).

Table 2. Employee Scenarios Prior to and Following COVID-19

S. No.	Scenario before COVID-19	Scenario after COVID-19
1.	No or less teleworking (Andrulli & Gerards, 2023)	Increase in teleworking (Andrulli & Gerards, 2023)
2.	Less concern about job insecurity (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2022)	Anxiety, despair, and stress levels rose in tandem with rising job instability (Elshaer & Azazz, 2023)
3.	Working conditions were confined and restricted (Chaichi et al., 2023)	Working conditions are flexible (Malousis et al., 2023)
4.	The working environment was challenging, making jobs tiresome (Hu et al., 2023)	With technological advancement, jobs have become easy (AlMutawa et al., 2023)
5.	Existence of socio-economic inequalities among the employees (Wong et al., 2021)	Existing socio-economic inequalities worsened post-pandemic (Malousis et al., 2023)
6.	The employees had a level of awareness of the technical software required for job execution, albeit their proficiency in using the software was limited (Radić et al., 2020)	Employees have shown a high level of adaptability and commitment towards using technology applications and platforms in their professional endeavours (Mensah et al., 2022)
7.	Lack of concern around the possibility of experiencing employment instability (AlMutawa et al., 2023)	Significant rise in anxiety and distress about employment instability (AlMutawa et al., 2023)
8.	Lack of employee well-being and mental health awareness (Chaichi et al., 2023)	Employee satisfaction and well-being mentally are given considerable priority (Fuentes et al., 2022)

Source: Own Elaboration

3. Methodology

This study applied a systematic literature review (SLR) to comprehensively investigate and synthesize existing research on employee well-being within the tourism and hospitality (T&H) sector. The SLR design followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) procedures (Moher et al., 2009), as illustrated in Figure 1.

To ensure the relevance and quality of the included articles, a particular inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Inclusion criteria encompassed scholarly articles focusing on employee well-being, tourism, and hospitality. Only articles in the English language were considered. Exclusion criteria comprised studies not directly addressing employee well-being or those lacking relevance to the T&H sector.

A broad search strategy was devised to identify related articles. Electronic database i.e. Scopus, was systematically searched using specific keywords. The search strings were constructed using Boolean operators, combining terms such as "well-being" AND "employees" OR "tourism" AND "hospitality".

Choosing Scopus for our systematic literature review on employee well-being in tourism and hospitality brings numerous advantages. Scopus's comprehensive coverage ensures access to a diverse range of scholarly sources, vital for a multidisciplinary field like ours. Its international scope facilitates the inclusion of studies from various global regions, offering a more representative review. The citation analysis feature aids in identifying influential works, contributing to historical context. Abstract and keyword indexing enhances search precision. Given the interdisciplinary nature of employee well-being, Scopus's coverage of diverse subject areas proves valuable. Additionally, Scopus's rigorous quality control ensures the reli-

ability of peer-reviewed studies, affirming the robustness of our systematic review. The study selection process involved multiple stages. Initially, titles and abstracts were screened for significance, followed by a full-text assessment of eligible articles. The data extraction process entailed methodically logging pertinent data, such as author names, publication years, research methodologies, important conclusions, and implications, from the chosen publications. This information was then synthesised to identify overarching themes and patterns. A quality assessment was conducted to gauge the methodological rigour of the included studies. The assessment considered research design, sampling methods, and data analysis techniques. Studies were not excluded based on quality but were considered in the synthesis with quality considerations. The findings were combined to present a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge on employee well-being in the T&H sector. There are limitations to this SLR. The inclusion of only English-language articles may introduce language bias. Additionally, the dynamic nature of the T&H industry may mean that recent developments are not fully captured in the literature.

This systematic literature review employed a robust methodology to investigate the current state of employee well-being within the T&H sector. The systematic approach confirms a comprehensive and unbiased synthesis of existing knowledge, providing valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and scholars.

Figure 1. Flow Chart of the Literature Section based on the PRISMA Approach (in Lines of the Moher et al. 2009)

Source: Own Elaboration
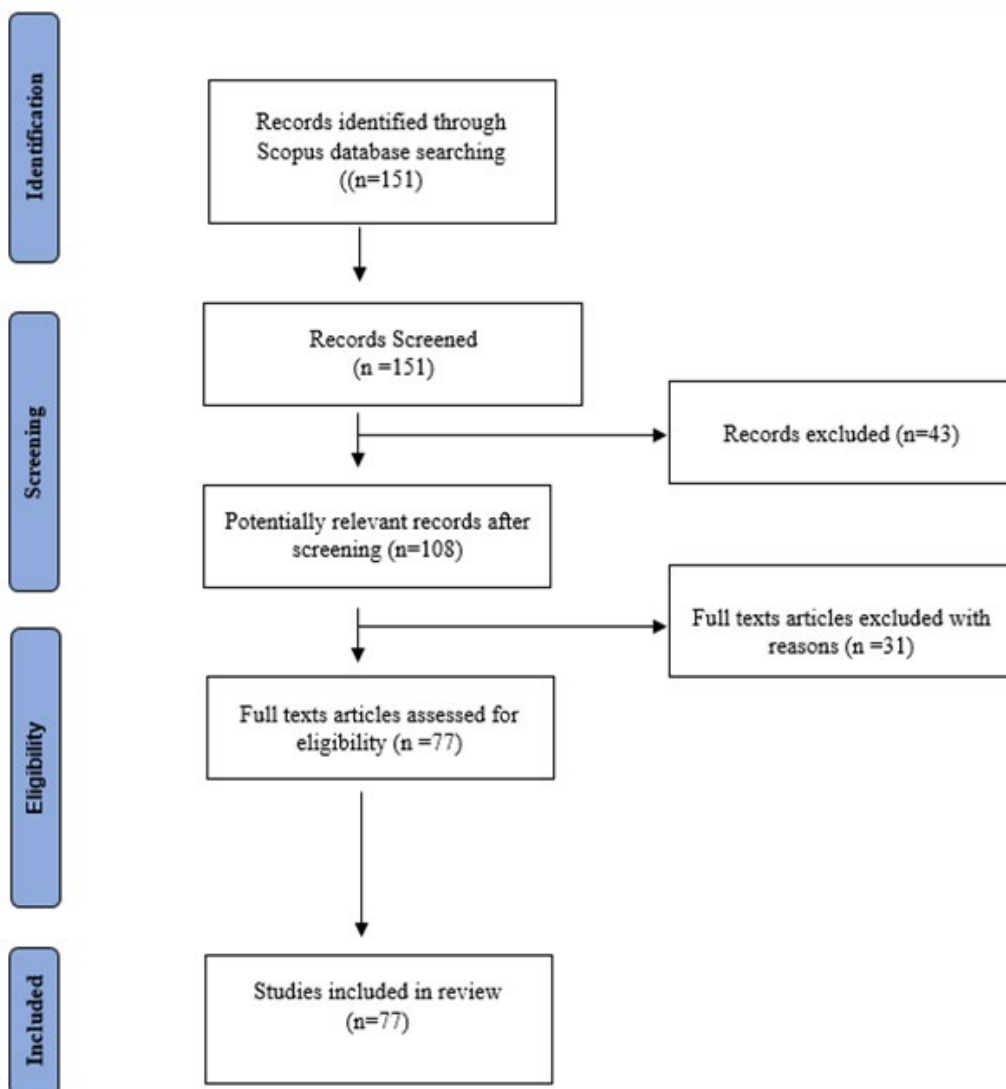
4. Presentation of Results, Discussion and Conclusion

This research has conducted a comprehensive evaluation of scholarly publications published in journals from 1990 to 2023, focusing on the topic of employee well-being. Despite the topic's narrow focus on the hospitality and tourism industries, scholarly publications have increased in recent years. The articles reviewed in this research shed light on the initial investigations about employee well-being, wherein the challenges employees face within an organisational context were examined, especially in the wake of the coronavirus epidemic. However, subsequent observations have indicated a shift in the approach towards these challenges, with a focus on adopting a positive mindset through the practice of mindfulness and actively seeking out opportunities that promote personal happiness and satisfaction. Based on the afore-mentioned existing literature pertaining to this subject, the attainment of employee well-being may be succinctly described as being contingent upon the following identified conditions:

4.1 Through Organisational Support

Employment opportunities in the service sectors are distinguished by frequent and significant interpersonal encounters, often accompanied by heightened stress levels (Benítez et al., 2021; Koh et al., 2022). Given the labour-intensive characteristics of the tourism business, it is crucial to highlight human capital resources in the present setting and its considerable potential to imitate the physical aspects of rival goods (Bednarska, 2013). Employees are more likely to feel fulfilled when they have beneficial interpersonal interactions with coworkers; on the other hand, initiatives to achieve positive outcomes in terms of organization-building from employees will be in vain unless they see an inviting, cooperative, and trustworthy work atmosphere fostered by the business (Wang et al., 2023). Table 3 provides an overview of the studies that were examined to investigate the impact of organisational support on employee well-being.

Positive organisational behaviour, which promotes positive phenomena like optimism and resiliency among employees, is a key component in the relationship between well-being and organisational characteristics (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009). To encourage increased workforce investment, businesses must pay careful attention to how employees feel about the fairness of the workplace and their own personal well-being (Tripathi & Kumar, 2023). Therefore, organisations should prioritise their employees' well-being by implementing policies and programmes that promote diversity, equity, and compassion in the workplace.

Table 3. Review Studies of Organisational Support for Employee Well-Being

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Yu et al. (2023)	To determine if there is a connection between subordinates' emotional labour on a daily basis, their level of engagement with their job, and abusive supervision.	China	95	R-Studio, ESM	These results highlight employees' everyday reactions to abusive supervision, assisting T&H managers in creating training programmes and policies to mitigate harmful effects and safeguard employee well-being.
2.	Al Doghan & Talat (2023)	To investigate the effect of personal and organisational parameters on employees' emotional health.	Saudi Arabia	234	Pearson's Correlation Test	According to the study, A worker's psychological well-being, work-life balance, and supervisor behavior are all affected by the presence or absence of social support.
3.	Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh (2022)	To provide a theoretical framework that connects perceived organisational support and several outcome factors such as burnout, life happiness, and work-life balance.	Turkey	301	PLS-SEM	The findings reveal that tour guides' quality of life at work is improved and their levels of burnout are reduced when perceived organisational support is implemented.
4.	Xu & Cao (2019)	To establish a conceptual structure for comprehending challenges and difficulties related to work-life balance in the hotel sector.	U.K.	-	Meta-analysis	Outcomes show that social assistance, positive and negative affectivity, job features, and outcomes like employment-related well-being, stress efficiency, and turnover intentions are all associated with work-to-non-work and non-work-to-work conflicts.

Source: Own Elaboration

4.2 Through Familial Assistance

Employees who experience high job expectations and work overload are compelled to work extended hours, resulting in heightened conflicts between their work and non-work activities (Yilmaz, 2015; Al-Aali, 2023). Consequently, this situation hinders their ability to engage in leisure activities. Employees are confronted with the challenge of balancing their professional obligations with familial responsibilities, which may potentially harm their overall welfare. Employees who work full-time may need more flexible work arrangements to balance their personal and professional lives, and this may be the case more so than for those who work part-time (Cabrera et al., 2018). In the context of work, the provision of social support has been shown to have a mitigating effect on mental tiredness, enhance emotional labour, and foster both job satisfaction and job achievement (Lin et al., 2014).

Table 4 summarises the research on family support and employee well-being. Organisational managers must support work-family policies that improve employee well-being to resolve work-family conflict (Medina-Garrido et al., 2023). Employer-provided family-friendly policies or perks may help employees balance work and family obligations. Therefore, family support may play a catalytic role in improving the well-being of employees by lowering their stress and anxiety levels.

Table 4. Research on the Influence of Family Support on Workers' Well-being

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Medina-Garrido et al. (2023)	To, directly and indirectly, evaluate the impact of employee access to and assistance from their employer's work-family policy on well-being and organisational commitment.	Spain	530	PLS-SEM	The findings suggest that human resource management should prioritise organisational support for workers to make work-family policies available and foster organisational commitment and well-being.
2.	Fuentes et al. (2022)	To investigate the impact crisis anxiety has on the emotional well-being of cruise ship employees.	-	-	PLS-SEM	It shows that employees' impression of their employability outside the industry moderates fear. The COVID-19 crisis does not affect family support.
3.	Alrawadıeh & Alrawadıeh (2022)	To provide a theoretical framework that connects perceived organisational support and several outcome factors such as burnout, life happiness, and work-life balance.	Turkey	301	PLS-SEM	The findings reveal that tour guides' quality of life at work is improved and their levels of burnout are reduced when perceived organisational support is implemented.

Source: Own Elaboration

4.3 Attaining Work-Life Balance

Employees in the T&H sector often have to balance many priorities at once, which may negatively affect their health and productivity on the job (Cabrera et al., 2018). Tourism impact research has recently shifted to non-economic indicators, including quality of life for tourists, employees and community inhabitants (Uysal & Sirgy, 2019). The total quality of life of employees was also observed to be influenced by their work-life quality (Lütkenhaus, 2020).

When analyzing work-family problems, taking into account individual variations among workers, using different nations as research settings, and looking at the long-term effects of work-family assistance schemes, it is essential to take a complete viewpoint. The topic of work-family support policies needs more scholarly attention within the industry of T&H, which warrants further investigation to better understand the implications and effectiveness of such policies. Furthermore, policies on childcare and women's safety need to be implemented since they affect the work-family balance. Hence, the adoption and implementation of policies aimed at achieving a harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life can effectively assist in improving the health and happiness of employees, especially those who experience undue psychological strain. An overview of work-life balance studies on employee well-being is in Table 5.

Table 5. Review Studies on Work-life Balance Research for Employee Well-being

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Chaichi et al. (2023)	To study well-being in a Malaysian casino to understand employee issues and factors influencing motivation to provide realistic mitigation strategies.	Malaysia	14	NVivo Software	Lack of break time, erratic working hours impacting family time, handling client outbursts, and pandemic-related changes in emotional support and pay hurt employees. Employed women were especially susceptible.
2.	El-Sawalhy et al. (2022)	The research builds an integrative model using social influence theory to examine the connections between overqualification, social distance, and four different organisational attitudes.	Egypt	409	WarpPLS 7.0	Employees' quitting intentions, satisfaction with their jobs, well-being, and counterproductive behaviour were all found to be impacted by overqualification, with social acceptance playing a mediating role.
3.	Uysal & Sirgy (2019)	To suggest that metrics of quality of life may be utilised as indicators of performance in the tourism industry, either on their own or in conjunction with other, more conventional measures of success.	USA	-	Literature Review	It may be inferred that there exists a reciprocal association between traditional performance metrics and indices of quality of life.
4.	Cabrera et al. (2018)	To study work-family and family-work overflow and hospitality sector well-being. Additionally, this research examines if supervisor support moderates this association.	Spain, UK, Norway	1494	SPSS	Research indicated that perceived supervisor support significantly affected employees' job well-being, with work-family spillover and perceived supervisor support playing a moderating role.

Source: Own Elaboration

4.4 Practicing Employee Mindfulness

Utkarsh and Sigala (2021) suggested that tourism should prioritise the well-being of stakeholders, including employees, tourists, and communities, using a well-being and mindfulness theoretical lens. Tourism can be a meaningful activity that improves the quality of life and happiness through hedonic activities. It was also noted that healthy ecosystems play a crucial role in supporting various essential services for the overall well-being, health, sustenance, and survival of human populations (Marcinkevičiūtė et al., 2022). It was also observed that the emotional and psychological well-being of employees and customers may be greatly enhanced via the effective adoption of nature-based solutions in T&H management (Cai et al., 2021; Sohaib et al., 2022).

According to prior research, employees who possess a heightened state of mindfulness are inclined to see an abusive boss as exhibiting unjust behaviour (Burton & Barber, 2019; Yu et al., 2023). Mindful employees and mindful leadership are essential for mindful organisations since they can appreciate the subtleties of this offering. Various negative emotional states, such as anxiety, tension, and depression, may be lessened via regular mindfulness meditation, according to research (Yu et al., 2023). Therefore, employees should engage in mindful practices and coping approaches to boost their health and happiness, as well as their productivity and progress in the workplace (Zhu et al., 2020). Table 6 outlines the impact study of mindfulness on the well-being of workers.

Table 6. Review literature on Employee Mindfulness for Well-being

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Yu et al. (2023)	To determine if there is a connection between subordinates' emotional labour on a daily basis, their level of engagement with their job, and abusive supervision.	China	95	R-Studio, ESM	These results highlight employees' everyday reactions to abusive supervision, assisting T&H managers in creating training programmes and policies to mitigate harmful effects and safeguard employee well-being.
2.	Elshaer & Azazz (2023)	This study applies a mediation analysis to how job instability and psychological well-being are related among hotel and travel industry employees.	Egypt	475	PLS-SEM	The results demonstrate that job insecurity significantly affects depressive symptoms, anxious thoughts, and stress levels in the tourism industry and that financial strains on families exacerbate the detrimental impact of uncertain employment on mental well-being.
3.	Hameed et al. (2023)	To comprehend the goal of calculating the financial burden of the COVID-19 epidemic resulting from job termination on the subjective well-being of those employed in the T&H industry.	Pakistan	284	Mixed	Financial strain and subjective well-being were shown to have a considerable negative connection in Study 1, with negative affectivity mediating the relationship. Study 2 revealed that COVID-19-related job loss caused long-term financial pressure, requiring employees to use various contextual and personal resources to minimise its influence on subjective well-being.
4.	He & Hao (2022)	To conduct an in-depth cultural study of three autoethnographic case studies from the hospitality sector.	United States	-	Autoethnography	The outcomes indicate that emotional labour and employee well-being in diverse settings are a closed cycle with a mutual connection that triggers ongoing modifications through the individual's cultural interactions.

Source: Own Elaboration

4.5 Better Working Opportunities

The tourism industry has much to gain from embracing sustainability practices, including a more competitive perception and a more productive workforce (Islam et al., 2019; Andrade-Valbuena et al., 2022). Also, better mental health for tourism workers may be achieved by establishing policies and practices that provide job stability, which in turn offers more consistent schedules for work, more generous benefits, and more chances for career advancement (Elshaer & Azazz, 2023). The consideration of virtuous organisational practises (VOPs), which have a special focus on enhancing the well-being of employees, is necessary to improve job performance (Veingerl Čič et al., 2016). Eventually, employees, as marketers and operators, will be able to understand tourists' voluntary electronic word-of-mouth behaviour and develop ways to increase it (Fan et al., 2023).

Table 7 discusses research on improving working conditions for employee well-being. Employees who experience a significant degree of job satisfaction exhibit loyalty towards their respective organisations (Bednarska, 2013). An increase in brand participation, organisational citizenship, role internalization, and overall brand health may be a result of a happy and healthy workforce, which is an inherent mechanism for workers to actively represent the brand (Wang et al., 2023). Henceforth, employee well-being improves in tandem with their work satisfaction and work quality (Uysal & Sirgy, 2019).

Table 7. Review Studies on Improving Employee Well-Being by Obtaining Better Working Opportunities

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Wang et al. (2023)	To shed light on two tourist hotspots' primary staff members by presenting a structural equation model for corporate camaraderie, employee happiness, employee helpfulness, and brand ambassador conduct.	China	208	AMOS-SEM	The empirical findings demonstrate that employee brand ambassador behaviour may be determined by workplace friendship via two mediators: employee well-being and employee helpful behaviour.
2.	Gordon & Shi (2021)	To examine the effects of workaholism on the connection between recovery, health, and professional performance in the hotel management field and how successful recovery from vacations influences career advancement.	United States	302	Multiple Regression Analysis	The effects of workaholism and recovery experiences on the perceived professional success and well-being of hotel managers were investigated and evaluated in this research.
3.	Hameed et al. (2023)	To comprehend the goal of calculating the financial burden of the COVID-19 epidemic resulting from job termination on the subjective well-being of those employed in the T&H industry.	Pakistan	284	Mixed	Financial strain and subjective well-being were shown to have a considerable negative connection in Study 1, with negative affectivity mediating the relationship. Study 2 revealed that COVID-19-related job loss caused long-term financial pressure, requiring employees to use various contextual and personal resources to minimise its influence on subjective well-being.

Source: Own Elaboration

4.6 Sensitizing of Awareness Programmes on Employee Well-being

Employees in the T&H sector often have to balance many priorities at once, which may negatively affect their health and productivity on the job. Also, the T&H sector may be emotionally demanding due to the immersive characteristics of the travel industry and the dynamic and intimate human relationships involved. Emotional labour refers to the process by which employees must express the right feelings in order to perform at an optimal level throughout interactions (He & Hao, 2022). Maintaining a pleasant outward demeanour while at work may be tough, especially if the task is emotionally draining. Affective events considerably increase workers' organisational variable evaluations, demonstrating the relevance of neuro leadership abilities in regulating emotions and promoting the health and happiness of workers (De La Nuez et al., 2023). Hence, the organisation needs to contemplate implementing awareness initiatives that engage employees and address the issue of well-being, while also establishing a conducive climate that fosters the development of capable professionals.

Also, their suffering from job insecurity might draw strength from their optimism and perseverance (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2022). In this manner, people are more likely to take responsibility for their own health and happiness, which in turn increases their capacity and productivity. Table 8 reviews research on employee well-being and awareness programme efficacy.

Table 8. Review Studies on the Effectiveness of Awareness Initiatives in Boosting Employee Well-being

S. No.	Author/s (Year)	Aim	Nation	Data Collection	Analysis Approach	Outcomes
1.	Elshaer & Azazz (2023)	This study applies a mediation analysis to see how employment instability affects the mental health of those working in the hospitality and tourism industries' employees.	Egypt	475	PLS-SEM	The results demonstrate that job insecurity significantly affects depressive symptoms, anxious thoughts, and stress levels in the tourism industry and that financial strains on families exacerbate the detrimental impact of uncertain employment on psychological well-being.
2.	Sharma et al. (2021)	To investigate the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on travel through an analysis of the existing scholarly literature in this domain.	India	35	Systematic review methodology	The framework showed that resilient governments, market participants, technological innovators, and industry workers could help tourism evolve post-pandemic.
3.	Gordon & Shi (2021)	To examine the effects of workaholism on the connection between recovery, health, and professional performance in the hotel management field and how successful recovery from vacations influences career advancement.	United States	302	Multiple Regression Analysis	The effects of workaholism and recovery experiences on the perceived professional success and well-being of hotel managers were investigated and evaluated in this research.

Source: Own Elaboration

This research undertook a comprehensive examination of the notion of employee well-being in the T&H business employing a rigorous analysis of existing literature. After the global epidemic, employee well-being has become a buzzword that governments and practitioners must address if businesses are to continue operating successfully. Learnings from COVID-19 may aid in overcoming challenges and thriving after adversity. A number of employee outcomes, including confidence in one's abilities, optimism, hope, resilience, and contentment with the company's reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, have been responsible for favourably influenced by CSR initiatives (Utkarsh & Sigala, 2021). Managers must use a multifaceted approach to enhance psychological capital post-COVID-19. The conclusion drawn is that the aforementioned conditions play a significant role in augmenting the welfare of an employee inside an organisational setting. Employees who get encouragement from both their employers and their families are more likely to feel capable of handling their jobs and personal commitments. This is the key that unlocks the door to a healthy work-life balance for them. Mindfulness training at the individual level is essential for improving employees' health and happiness, which in turn may boost their performance at work. Also, enhancing employee well-being may be facilitated by implementing improved training programmes and wider working possibilities. These initiatives can foster positive change, provide novelty, and contribute to employee job satisfaction. The cultivation and advocacy of employee well-being may provide benefits for both the company and society at large.

5. Implications

5.1 Theoretical Implications

By conducting a thorough analysis of existing literature on employee well-being in the T&H industries, this work provides several significant theoretical advances within the current corpus of information. The paper offers a thorough evaluation of the theoretical evidence of employee well-being in the T&H industry. It encompasses various aspects and delineates the diverse conditions that provide support for the current body of literature on employee well-being. The previously mentioned conditions, which are outlined to enhance the overall well-being of personnel working for T&H, underscore the necessity of addressing these individual concerns distinctly. Practitioners have the opportunity to integrate the subject of employee well-being into their educational and training initiatives, to enhance awareness and foster the concept of employee mindfulness.

5.2 Practical Implications

There are substantial implications for tourism organisations in this research that provide employment opportunities, highlighting the significance of employee well-being. Various factors, such as organisational culture and environment, human resource and job-related policies and regulations, etc. influence this aspect. Understanding the influence of these policies can provide valuable insights for T&H organisations and policymakers. Managers can utilise research on employee well-being as a managerial instrument to evaluate the effectiveness of their business operations and implement suitable practices and strategies to enhance positive behavioural objectives. Women, specifically those more susceptible to the absence of support for balancing work and family responsibilities, can potentially be addressed by focusing on work-family issues. This strategy can potentially address the gender gap in leadership roles and recruit more qualified women (Kim et al., 2023). Professionals and legislators in tourism industries should explore methods to alleviate the financial burden on employees and their families, including implementing aid programs, flexible work arrangements, and supporting company regulations.

5.3 Social Implications

This investigation has significance for tourism and travel industry stakeholders, including governments, employers, and organisations. The statement underscores the theoretical underpinning that demonstrates how important employee well-being is in fostering the development and progress of an organisation. Cooperation among business owners, managers, and legislators is essential for a company's success to reap the long-term socioeconomic advantages of investing in its employees' well-being. As an added bonus to society, this will help coworkers at an organisation get along better by illuminating and facilitating their emotional wellness and personal growth. This study promotes a level of self-awareness in the workforce that, if not addressed, might negatively affect workers' well-being. In addition to providing resources for physical and mental health, organisations may foster a positive and accepting work environment by maintaining frequent check-ins with employees and encouraging open communication.

6. Limitations and Future Research Scope

It is critical to recognise the limits of this study, notwithstanding the contributions and systematic technique used in this investigation. These constraints also offer possible future study directions. Firstly, the scope of this evaluation was limited to those full-length studies indexed in the SCOPUS database. Therefore, there is a need for increased academic focus that draws on findings from different databases. Secondly, the present investigation relies solely on theoretical evidence from existing literature. Future research could investigate the associations between employee well-being and other factors through empirical evaluation using quantitative or qualitative methods. Thirdly, an additional problem pertains to the decision only to analyse publications that have been published in academic journals. This approach limits the ability to investigate the grey literature, which might potentially provide valuable insights into the subject matter. Hence, it is recommended that future research endeavours include additional pertinent literature to obtain comprehensive knowledge of the intricate dynamics implicated in managing the work-life equilibrium of employees and enhancing consciousness about employee well-being within the T&H sector.

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Tracing the Footprints of Quality of Life and Tourism Research in the Scholarly Literature: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation is to examine the current literature on the connection between tourism and quality of life in the Web of Science database. A total of 154 relevant studies were analyzed using predetermined criteria to identify primary areas for assessment and evaluation. The scientific articles were subsequently scrutinized via the VOSviewer software on 20 October 2023 to determine key parameters for analysis and interpretation. The research has revealed that in 2019, the highest number of studies on tourism and quality of life were conducted, with the most cited study being from 2022. Most of the studies on this topic comprise of articles in English publications, with frequently used keywords including "quality of life", "tourism" and "tourism development". Based on the findings, the following results were obtained. The highest number of publications and cooperation related to quality of life and tourism are contributed by the United States of America and the People's Republic of China. "Tourism Management" journal has been the foremost contributor to the literature concerning quality of life and tourism. In this investigation, a neutral evaluation of worldwide research on tourism and its effects on quality of life was carried out. In this context, the research offers a thorough evaluation of quality of life and tourism, outlining opportunities for further investigation.

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1. Introduction

The economic significance of tourism and its numerous international applications have sparked heightened academic interest and subsequently led to increased diversity in the field of tourism studies. Literature reviews demonstrate that researchers tend to analyze tourism from a multidimensional perspective. In this context, the objective of the bibliography is to enhance the potential for development in tourism research, particularly in the social sciences, by compiling tourism studies based on various parameters (Jafari, 1979). Additionally, evaluating the publications and citation data quantitatively to disclose the recent developments in related fields is a common practice utilized by numerous organizations in several countries (Özel & Kozak, 2012, p. 716).

The utilization of quantitative analysis techniques in the tourism industry is progressively increasing, particularly via bibliometric analysis. This method furnishes bibliometric data on scientific communication by means of comprehensive examination and analysis of written sources pertaining to tourism with specific parameters. In the field of tourism, a significant amount of knowledge is being accumulated over time through interdisciplinary research. Bibliometric studies have proven to be particularly helpful in enhancing researchers' perspectives and contributing to the overall advancement of the discipline. The subject of quality of life (QOL), on the other hand, is a topic that is examined from a variety of different angles across various fields of study. On the other hand, the increasing research into the concept of life quality in tourism from different perspectives continuously brings future research possibilities on the topic into discussion. Thus, topical distributions of the subject in the literature could be revealed and possible research directions could be mapped out for future researchers by conducting a bibliometric study on the quality of life and tourism. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the scientific research on quality of life and tourism using bibliometric data sourced from the Web of Science (WoS) between 1991 and 2023. The date ranges for studies on quality of life and tourism was determined based on the earliest and most recent publications on the topic.

As human life expectancy rises, individuals are exploring diverse strategies to enhance their lives, increase fulfilment, and achieve greater quality, rather than simply extending their lifespan. Quality of life has been a perennial concern throughout history and has garnered significant attention in a range of fields, including economic, cultural, political, social, and psychological aspects as it encompasses all facets of life. Quality of life and tourism are comprehensive concepts that can be evaluated from various perspectives. Recent scientific studies have examined the relationship between quality of life and tourism, typically from the viewpoint of both residents and tourists. Quality of life and tourism are comprehensive concepts that can be evaluated from various perspectives. Recent scientific studies have examined the relationship between quality of life and tourism, typically from the viewpoint of both residents and tourists. Recent scientific studies have examined the relationship between quality of life and tourism, typically from the viewpoint of both local residents (Perdue, Long, & Kang, 1999; Kim, 2002; Andereck, Valentine, Vogt & Knopf, 2007; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Aref, 2011; Khizindar, 2012; Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013; Michalkó, Bakucz, & Rátz, 2013; Woo, Kim, & Uysal, 2015; Woo, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2018; Biagi, Ladu, Meleddu, & Royuela, 2019; Bandoi, Jianu, Enescu, Axinte, Sorin, & Firoiu, 2020; Nopiyani & Wiraman, 2021; Wang, Berbekova, & Uysal, 2022) and tourists (Kelly, 1978; Jeffres & Dobos, 1993; Kousha & Mohseni, 1997; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 2007; McCabe, Joldersma, & Li, 2010; McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Woo et al., 2015; Eusébio, Carneiro, & Caldeira, 2016; Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim, 2016; Luo, Lanlung, Kim, Tang, & Song, 2018; Campon-Cerro, Di-Clemente, Hernandez-Mogollon, & Folgado-Fernandez, 2020; Kim, Sirgy, Uysal, & Kim, 2021; Huang, Chen, & Ramos, 2023). Previous researches have explored the quality of life from the viewpoints of both tourists and locals. These have involved examining competitiveness, wellness tourism philosophy, quality, sustainability, well-being, digitalization, motivation, destination marketing and management, loyalty and customer satisfaction and the psychology of both tourist and local stakeholders. There is a need to establish a more comprehensive research agenda for scholars specializing in quality of life and tourism studies. To this end, this study is a crucial milestone in determining past and present research profiles, providing guidance for future studies, and contributing to discipline enrichment.

2. Literature Review

The concept of quality of life profoundly impacts our daily lives, yet its evolution remains subject to changes in living conditions. Historical studies aimed at measuring the quality of life sought to uncover various social life indicators (Biderman, 1974; Parke & Sheldon, 1974). Veenhoven (2005) contends that we can measure quality of life by assessing the duration and intensity of an individual's happiness. Argyle and Lu (1990) assert that quality of life can be assessed based on measures of well-being, life satisfaction, happiness, and health (2015, p. 86).

Quality of life encompasses the overall well-being of individuals in a society evaluated using both objective and subjective measures. It includes emotional happiness, psychological stress reduction, physical health, and social connections with family and friends, in addition to objective evaluations of education and income levels (Luo et al., 2018). According to the World Health Organization, quality of life is the "perception of one's position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and in relation to their goals, standards, and concerns" (World Health Organization, 2023). Michalkó et al. (2013, p. 156) define quality of life as a result of objective factors that shape human existence, and it is also subjectively reflected upon. Therefore, various disciplines address the concept of quality of life, each emphasizing different aspects and offering unique definitions. According to Marans (2012), what these definitions share is that quality of life is a multidimensional approach shaped by both objective variables of a person's life and the subjective variables affected by how these variables are perceived.

According to Keleş & Akmeşe (2022, p. 112), quality of life can be evaluated based on subjective and objective aspects. The subjective dimension involves evaluating certain elements as perceived by individuals, such as their level of happiness, perception of safety, family relationships, social solidarity criteria, and involvement in hobbies and clubs (Petrosillo, Costanza, Aretano, Zaccarelli, & Zurlini, 2013). On the other hand, quality of life should be assessed objectively using criteria such as life expectancy, access to healthcare, crime rates, poverty levels, literacy rates, and gross national product. (Matatolu, 2019, p. 133). To objectively evaluate societal quality of life, consider factors such as individual income levels, availability of nearby parks for leisure, entertainment options, and environmental welfare in residential areas (Uysal et al., 2016). Essentially, QOL includes objectively measured factors, such as income, education, occupation, health, and housing status, as well as subjective responses, including an individual's level of satisfaction with these conditions.

Tourism, which affects the quality of life of individuals in a multidimensional way (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011), was evaluated based on the social, economic, and environmental factors it creates, but today it is seen as a determining factor to improve the quality of life of individuals. In this context, a significant correlation exists between the favourable or unfavourable effects of the tourism industry and the well-being of individuals who participate in creating or using tourism products and services (Uysal et al., 2016, p. 244). In tourism literature, two main perspectives delve into the perceived value of quality of life: the value evaluated by tourists during their travel experiences and the value appraised by local communities because of tourism development and changes in the destination. In this study, the aim is to collect necessary data for effective planning, marketing, and management of current and future tourism strategies by examining the quality-of-life levels for both tourists and residents (Woo et al., 2015, p. 86).

3. Method

Bibliometric analysis was used in this study, which aims to examine publications on tourism and quality of life. Bibliometric analysis is based on the process of analyzing the documents or publications obtained according to certain characteristics and revealing the findings (Ardıç Yetiş & Çokal, 2018). In this context, it enables the examination of studies specific to certain fields according to certain parameters and the presentation of findings according to these parameters (Temizkan, Çiçek, & Özdemir, 2015). Keywords, number of authors, number of publications, and number of citations are some of these findings. Bibliometric analysis, which is also described as text mining, generally provides the reader with information about the relevant field or a specific topic. As a matter of fact, Alan Pritchard defined bibliometrics as "the application of mathematical and statistical methods to books, articles, papers and other communication

media" (Pritchard, 1969, p. 349). Similarly, Diodato (2012, p. 8-9) defined bibliometrics as "a quantitative method preferred for mathematical and statistical analysis of all scientific publications published in print or electronic media."

Within the scope of the study, it is aimed to examine international publications that address tourism and quality of life issues together. Therefore, the study encompasses two variables: "tourism" and "quality of life." However, since the focus of the study is on studies that address tourism and quality of life together, the two variables were analyzed from a holistic perspective. In this context, publications on tourism and quality of life between 1975 and 2023 were analyzed in the Web of Science (WoS) database according to certain parameters required for bibliometric analysis. Since a selection could not be made for the years before 1975 and after 2023 in the relevant database, the years selected for the scan date were selected as allowed by the database. In this context, publications on tourism and quality of life between 1991 and 2023 were analyzed in the Web of Science (WoS) database according to certain parameters required for bibliometric analysis. The reason for choosing this period is that the first publication on tourism and quality of life was published in 1991. As a result of the analysis and examinations, the changes and development of the relevant field until today have been determined and answers to the following questions have been sought with this study:

- What is the distribution of international publications on tourism and quality of life by year?
- Who are the authors/writers who have published the most on tourism and quality of life?
- Which institutions and organizations publish the most on tourism and quality of life?
- Which journal(s) or publisher(s) have the most publications on tourism and quality of life?
- Who is the most cited author (s) on tourism and quality of life?
- What are the most preferred keywords for tourism and quality of life?

To identify international publications related to tourism and quality of life, the Web of Science database was searched on October 20, 2023. The main reason for using the Web of Science as a database is that it contains many publications accepted worldwide and published in the field of social sciences (Jasco, 2005). Furthermore, the inclusion of globally accepted major indices such as "Science Citation Index (SCI), Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI), Conference Proceedings Citation Index- Science (CPCI-S), Conference Proceedings Citation Index- Social Science & Humanities (CPCI-SSH), Book Citation Index- Science (BKCI-S), Book Citation Index- Social Sciences & Humanities (BKCI-SSH), and Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)" underscores the significance of this database (Goodman & Deis, 2005; Vieira & Gomes, 2009; Liu, Zhan, Hong, Niu, & Liu, 2013).

Studies that encompass both tourism and quality of life were searched in the Web of Science database using the "title" criterion in the document search section. The search was conducted using the keywords "tourism" and "quality of life." No specific limitations were imposed during the search, aiming to access all publications related to the topic available in the database. In this context, a total of 154 scholarly publications were retrieved, and these publications were tabulated based on parameters such as publication language, publication year, publication type, countries of publication, institutions, fields of publication, sources of publication, and citation counts. In addition, since the database is updated every day and new publications are added to the database every day in this context, searching using the same keywords in a different time period may lead to different results. Therefore, even if the same data collection technique is used, it is possible to obtain different data (Liu et al., 2013).

Findings from international publications related to tourism and quality of life have been visualized using graphical network maps. In this regard, the free and open-access software program, "VOSviewer", has been selected. VOSviewer is known as a "visual and scientific mapping tool primarily designed for the analysis of bibliometric networks" (Van Eck & Waltman, 2017, p. 1054). The bibliographic data necessary for the program's use was obtained from the Web of Science database and loaded into VOSviewer. As a result, international publications related to tourism and quality of life have been analyzed using the "Co-authorship, Co-occurrence, and Citation" sections in VOSviewer. Thus, the most preferred keywords, the most collaborating authors, the countries where the most publications were produced, the most cited authors and sources were revealed. Consequently, international studies on tourism and quality of life have been comprehensively examined from various perspectives. Nevertheless, the study has some

limitations. The most important of these limitations is that the research was conducted in only one international database. In addition, scientific publications up to the date of the date of the scan were included in the scope of the study. Therefore, the studies that entered the database after that relevant date could not be examined within the scope of the study. In this context, it is possible that the results of the current study may differ from the results of the scan to be conducted on a different date. Furthermore, another limitation of the study is that the 154 studies on tourism and quality of life were searched in the Web of Science database based solely on the *title* criterion.

4. Findings

Within the scope of the study, scientific publications dealing with tourism and quality of life together were scanned in the Web of Science database, subjected to bibliometric analysis and visualized VOSviewer software program was used to visualize the analysis results. This software program uses elements such as rings, lines, colours, clusters, and links to visualize the data. These elements enable the interpretation of the resulting visuals. As can be seen in the figures below, each ring in the visuals represents an element. The number of repetitions of the elements is directly proportional to the size of the rings. In this context, it can be said that the largest ring represents the most repeated item. In addition, items with the same colour group together to form clusters. The common feature of the clusters is that they contain items that are related to each other. Furthermore, there are also lines that show the connection of each ring with the other. The thickness or thinness of these lines indicates the strength of the connection. Therefore, it can be said that thick lines represent strong connections and thin lines represent weak connections (Van Eck & Waltman, 2019).

First of all, the outputs obtained from the Web of Science database are included in the study. Some of these outputs are presented in various formats, including tables and figures. Subsequently, the visual elements provided by the VOSviewer software program are included in this part of the study within the scope of figures. The first output obtained for tourism and quality of life encompasses the distribution of scientific publications by year up to the date of the search, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Scientific Publications by Year

Year	Number of Publications	Year	Number of Publications
2023	9	2012	3
2022	15	2011	7
2021	13	2010	3
2020	13	2009	3
2019	23	2008	2
2018	13	2004	1
2017	8	1999	2
2016	16	1995	1
2015	7	1992	1
2014	6	1991	2
2013	6	-	-
Total Number of Publications: 154			

Source: Own Elaboration

When examining the distribution of international scientific publications dealing with tourism and quality of life together is analyzed according to years, it is seen that the first research was conducted in 1991 (Table 1). It is seen that the number of research studies on the subject varies over different periods, with some periods witnessing an increase in research output and others experiencing a decrease. However,

as can be seen in Table 1, 2019 was the year with the highest number of research studies on the topic. Additionally, Table 1 also indicates that no international scientific publications on tourism and quality of life were found in the Web of Science database before 1991.

Table 2. Most Cited Publications

Title of the Publication	Author	Source	Year of Publication	Number of Citation
Exploring the Nature of Tourism and Quality of Life Perceptions among Residents	Andereck, KL and Nyaupane, GP	Journal of Travel Research	2011	495
How does tourism in a community impact the quality of life of community residents?	Kim, K; Uysal, M and Sirgy, MJ	Tourism Management	2013	475
Quality of life (QOL) and well-being research in tourism	Uysal, M; Sirgy, MJ; Woo, E and Kim, H	Tourism Management	2016	455
Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists	Kim, H; Woo, E and Uysal, M	Tourism Management	2015	232
Boomtown tourism and resident quality of life: The marketing of gaming to host community residents	Perdue, RR; Long, PT and Kang, YS	Journal of Business Research	1999	161
Impact of responsible tourism on destination sustainability and quality of life of community in tourism destinations	Mathew, PV and Sreejesh, S	Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	2017	143
Perceived social impacts of tourism and quality-of-life: a new conceptual model	Ramkissoon, H	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	2023	122
Residents' quality of life and attitudes toward tourism development in China	Liang, ZX and Hui, TK	Tourism Management	2016	121
Understanding the Benefits of Social Tourism: Linking Participation to Subjective Well-being and Quality of Life	McCabe, S; Joldersma, T and Li, CX	International Journal of Tourism Research	2010	120
Tourism and quality of life: Towards a more critical approach	Moscardo, G	Tourism and Hospitality Research	2009	103
Total Number of Citations: 4367 Total Number of Citations (Without self-citations): 3820				

Source: Own Elaboration

The top ten most cited publications that address the concepts of tourism and quality of life under the same title are presented in Table 2. In this context, the article titled "Exploring the Nature of Tourism and Quality of Life Perceptions among Residents", written by Andereck & Nyaupane in 2011 and published in the Journal of Travel Research has been the most cited article so far. This article is followed by "How does tourism impact the quality of life of community residents?" by Kim et al. (2013) with 475 citations. In addition, it is noteworthy that although the number of studies on tourism and quality of life is relatively low in terms of quantity, the total number of citations on this topic is 4367.

Figure 1. Number of Publications and Citations by Year
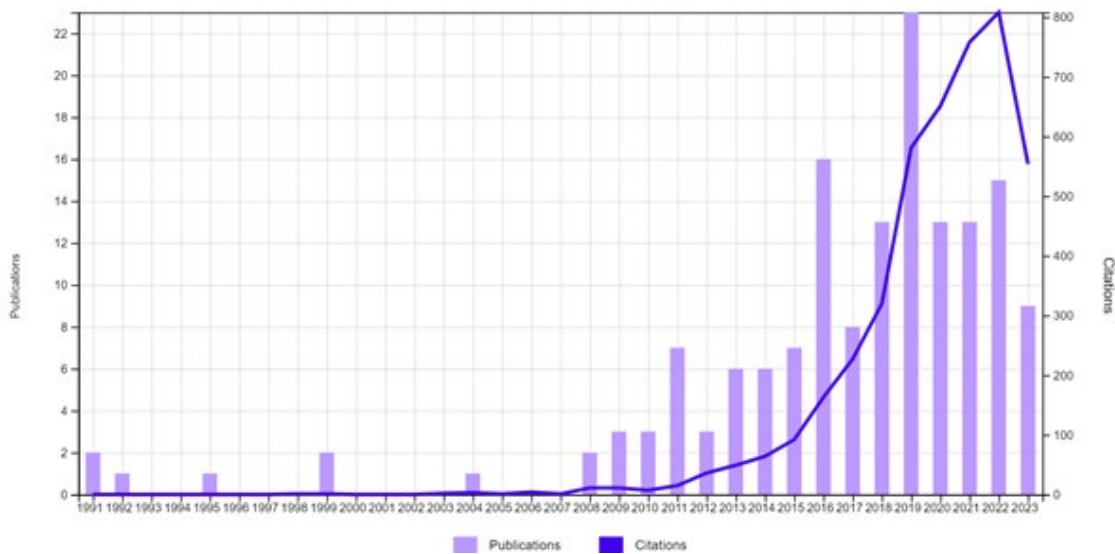
Figure 1 displays the number of publications and citations associated with tourism and quality of life between 1991 and 2023. The graph demonstrates that the initial study concerning this topic was carried out in 1991, with the first citation appearing in 1999. The maximum number of publications was observed in 2019, while 2022 displayed the most significant number of citations, totalling 808 citations attributed to related works in that year, according to both the graph and Table 1. Moreover, it can be deduced from the graph that citation figures pertaining to the topic have consistently increased since 2010.

Table 3. Types and Languages of Related Publications

Publication Type	Number of Publications	Publication Language	Number of Publications
Article	122	English	149
Book Chapter	21	Hungarian	1
Proceeding Paper	20	Malay	1
Early Access	6	Polish	1
Editorial Material	6	Portuguese	1
Book	2	Spanish	1
Book Review	2	Polish	1
Review Article	2	-	-

According to Table 3, which outlines the publication types within the relevant topic area, the article type has the highest number of publications, followed by book chapters and proceedings. It is worth mentioning that the total number of publications under each type exceeds the total number of existing studies. It is possible that this situation is due to researchers publishing their studies in multiple types of publications. Table 3 includes the languages in which the subject publications were published, revealing that English had the highest number of publications.

Table 4. Publishers of the Related Publications

Publisher	Number of Publications
Taylor & Francis	26
Springer Nature	19
Elsevier	18
Sage	15
Mdpi	23
Emerald Group Publishing	11
Varna Univ Management-Vum	6
Cabi Publishing-C A B Int	6
Wiley	5
Cognizant Communication Corp	4

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 4 presents the publishing houses that have published studies on tourism and quality of life. It is noted that *Taylor & Francis*, a publishing house that features academic publications globally, holds the top position with 26 scientific publications under the relevant criterion. It is followed by *Springer Nature* (19 publications) and *Elsevier* (18 publications). All three publishing houses host reputable journals and books within the field of tourism science. Furthermore, these publishing houses contain globally recognized indexed journals, which are deemed to be crucial in the field of social sciences.

Table 5. Countries with the Most Publications

| Countries	Number of Publications
United States of America	45
Peoples Republic of China	17
Spain	15
Australia	11
Portugal	10
Shout Korea	10
Malaysia	7
South Africa	6
England	5
Taiwan	5

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 5 presents the top 10 countries with the most publications among the 53 nations that publish materials on tourism and quality of life. The country with the most publications is the United States of America with 45 scientific papers, followed by the People's Republic of China with 17 publications, Spain with 15 publications, and Australia with 11 publications.

Table 6. Institutions with the Most Publications

Institutions	Country	Number of Publications
Virginia Polytechnic Institute State University	United States of America	10
Indiana University System	United States of America	8
State University System of Florida	United States of America	7
Universidad de Extremadura	Spain	6
University of Central Florida	United States of America	6
University of Massachusetts Amherst	United States of America	6
University of Massachusetts System	United States of America	6
Indiana University Bloomington	United States of America	5
Universidade de Aveiro	Portugal	5
University of Johannesburg	South Africa	5

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 6 displays the highest number of publications on tourism and quality of life by institutions. Virginia Polytechnic Institute State University ranks first with ten publications, followed by Indiana University System (8 publications), State University System of Florida (7 publications), Universidad De Extremadura (6 publications) and University of Central Florida (6 publications). It is supported by the fact that most of these institutions are in the United States of America that the country has the highest number of publications. Moreover, more than 200 institutions have published on the relevant subject according to the information retrieved from the Web of Science database.

Figure 2. Keywords Network
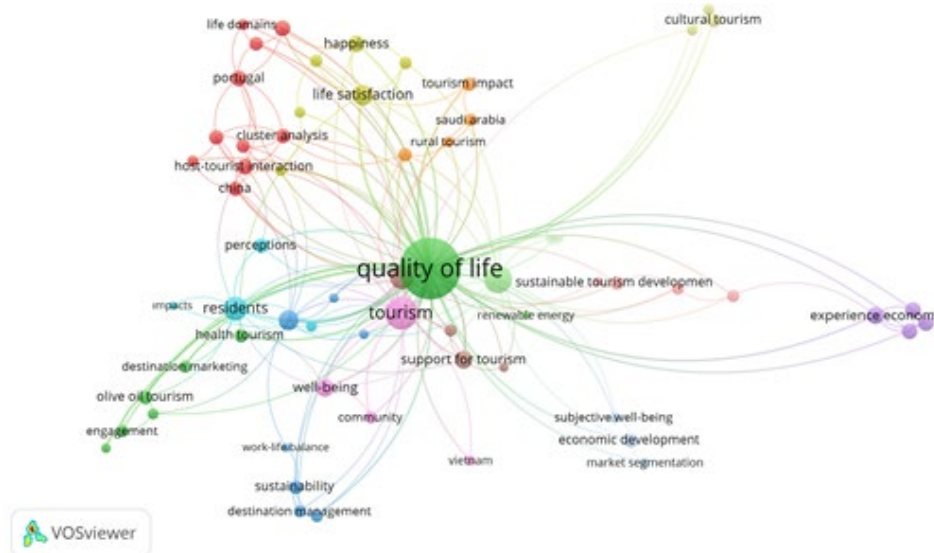
Source: Output from the VOSviewer program

Figure 2 displays the visual network of the most used keywords in studies exploring the intersection of tourism and quality of life. According to data acquired from the VOSviewer software, a total of 443 keywords were identified in the analyzed studies. The program established a threshold value of at least two appearances by other authors, producing a selection of 63 words which are displayed in Figure 2. The authors' preferred keywords suggest that *quality of life* within the largest green ring at the center of the figure is of utmost importance. Subsequently, *tourism, tourism development, tourism impacts,* and *residents*

were the most frequently used keywords. It can be concluded that studies that investigate the correlation between tourism and quality of life are largely focused on tourism development, residents' lives, and tourism impacts.

Figure 3. Most Collaborating Authors Network
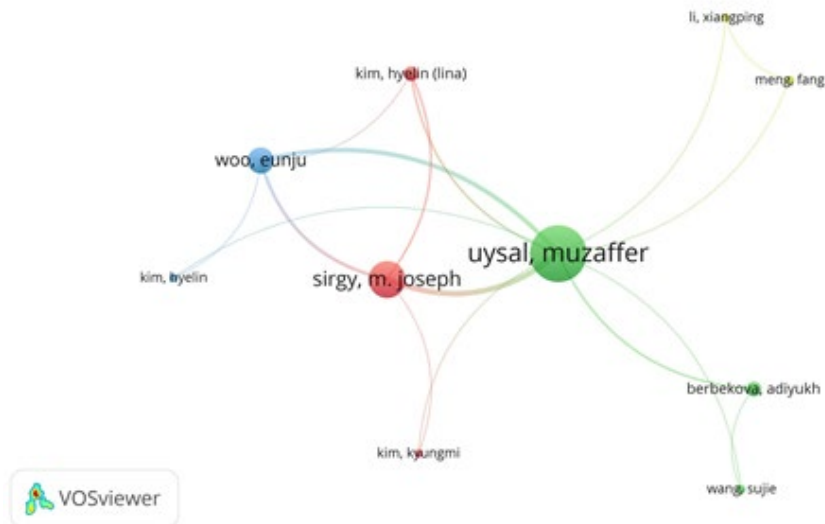
Source: Output from the VOSviewer program

Figure 3 shows the authors with the highest number of collaborations on tourism and quality of life. According to the program's outputs indicate that there are 384 studies on this topic. However, setting the minimum number of documents and citations to 1 result in 285 authors meeting the threshold value. In this context, it is seen that the most collaborative authors form 4 clusters. *Uysal, Muzaffer*, Sirgy, M. Joseph, and Woo, Eunju were identified as the authors who conducted the most studies within the pertinent subject and had the most connections with other authors, as shown in the largest green, red, and blue rings in Figure 3. Additionally, *Li Xiangping* and *Meng Fang*, who form the fourth cluster and are in the two yellow rings, have an equal number of documents and links.

Table 7. Authors' Impact Factors

Rank	Author	h_index	Sum of Times Cited
1	M. Joseph Sirgy	49	11276
2	Muzaffer Uysal	37	7233
3	Eunju Woo	16	2289
4	Kim Hyelin (Lina)	19	2426
5	Kim Hyelin	-	-
6	Kim Kyungmi	3	176
7	Li Xiangping	12	592
8	Wang Suije	-	-
9	Adiyukh Berkova	8	324
10	Meng Fang	21	1416

Source: Own Elaboration

Table 7 presents a compilation of authors based on their H-index, spotlighting the top 10 contributors with the highest H-index scores. The H-index serves as a fundamental metric in the realm of scientific

evaluation, establishing a quantitative relationship between the number of authored publications and the corresponding citation counts garnered by the authors. The H-index is a metric that gauges the scholarly output of authors by considering both their publication and citation records. Calculated from a list of publications arranged in descending order by Times Cited, the H-index is defined as the number of articles in the list with N or more citations, denoted as H = N (Clarivate, 2024). Some authors like Kim Hyelin and Wang Suije could not be included because they were not registered on the Web of Science. The author with the highest H index and total citations is Sirgy, M. J. and Sirgy, M. J. has 185 publications in Web of Science with 11276 sum of times citations between 1982-2024. Also, the other author with the highest H-index and total citations is Uysal, M. and Uysal, M. has 87 publications in Web of Science with 7233 sum of times citations between 1990-2024.

Figure 4. Network of Most Cooperating Countries
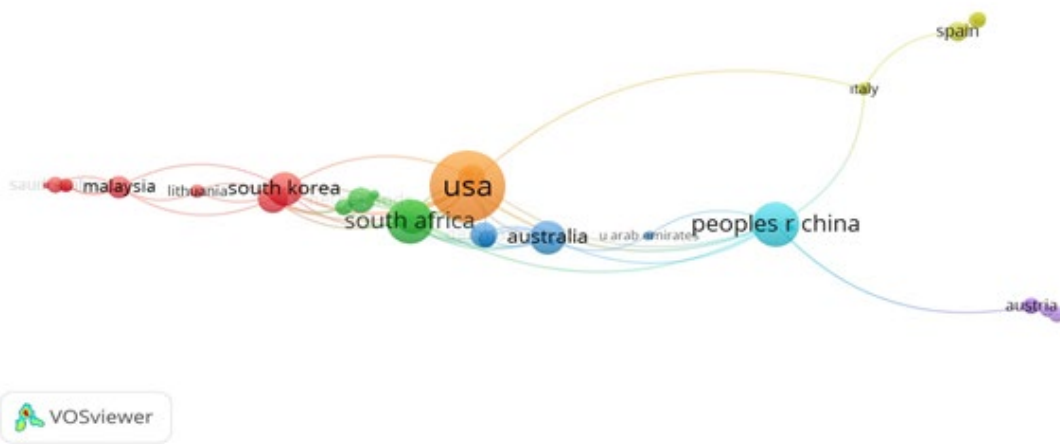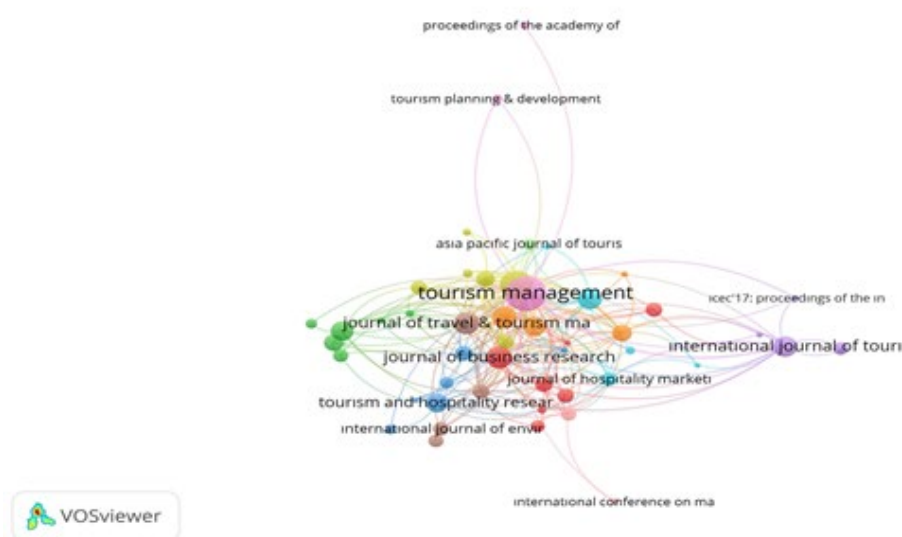

Source: Output from the VOSviewer program

When constructing the network of countries that exhibit the highest degree of cooperation on the pertinent subject, the minimum requirement for documents and citations was set at 1. In this regard, 46 out of the 53 countries included satisfied the threshold. On close examination of Figure 4, it becomes apparent that the foremost collaborative countries are constituted of 7 clusters. Based on the program's outputs, the United States of America is situated in the largest orange circle as it represents the country with the highest quantity of collaborations. The United States of America has 45 publications, 2746 citations, and connections with 25 different countries regarding the relevant subject. Figure 4 is consistent with the findings in Table 6. The number of publications on the relevant subject is higher in many institutions in the United States compared to other institutions. This fact contributes to the increase in studies on the subject in the United States. Additionally, the country's diverse states and regions also support its effectiveness in academic study areas. Meanwhile, the People's Republic of China ranked in second place with 17 publications, 450 citations, and connections with 14 different countries. In terms of the number of links, South Africa, Australia, and South Korea follow the People's Republic of China.

Figure 5. Network Map of the Most Cited Sources

Source: Output from the VOSviewer program

When constructing the network map of highly cited sources, a minimum threshold of 1 document and citation within the subject's scope was applied. In total, 61 out of 83 journals satisfied this criterion. As presented in Figure 5, Tourism Management was the most frequently cited journal with 1399 citations. This was followed by the *Journal of Travel Research* with 572 citations and the *Journal of Business Research* with 235 citations.

5. Conclusion

In tourism studies, quality of life is examined from two perspectives. The first perspective concentrates on the correlation between a destination's tourism activities and the quality of life of visitors. Participating in tourism activities and traveling can positively impact an individual's physical and mental well-being, ultimately enhancing their quality of life. The second perspective is to examine the impact of tourism on the quality of life of residents residing in tourist destinations. The local inhabitants are the ones who are mainly influenced by the optimistic or pessimistic impacts of tourism operations in destinations (Griffin & Stacey, 2011). Therefore, the impact of tourism on the quality of life and relevant research holds significant importance for sustainable tourism development in destinations. The main purpose of this study is to assess the current status of literature regarding the correlation between tourism and quality of life. Hence, a bibliometric analysis method was utilized in this research, investigating publications in the Web of Science database between 1991 to 2023, which feature the terms "tourism" and "quality of life" in their titles, adopting a systematic viewpoint.

Upon analysis of international scientific publications regarding tourism and quality of life, the article type was found to have the highest number of publications. It is noteworthy that the number of publications in book chapters and proceedings was lower and comparable to each other. The majority language used in the publications related to the topic was English. The study concluded that the United States of America had the largest contribution to the field of research as it ranked first in both the countries with the most publications and the countries with the most cooperation. Similarly, the People's Republic of China followed the United States of America in both rankings. Additionally, we examined the organizations that have published the highest number of works in the field of tourism and quality of life. Virginia Polytechnic Institute State University and Indiana University System took first place with consistently high publication numbers.

Based on the research findings, Taylor & Francis, Springer Nature, and Elsevier have published the most works related to tourism and quality of life. These publishing houses are widely respected for their significant contributions to the fields of social sciences and tourism (Vieira & Gomes, 2009). However, it is

noteworthy that despite the small number of publications on tourism and quality of life, there are several citations. The number of publications has fluctuated over time, with some periods showing an increase while others a decrease compared to the previous year. While 2019 saw the greatest number of publications, the highest number of citations occurred in 2022. The study, *Exploring the Nature of Tourism and Quality of Life Perceptions among Residents*, carried out by Andereck and Nyaupane in 2011 has to date accumulated the largest number of citations with 495. The most popular keywords in related research include *quality of life, tourism, tourism development, tourism impacts,* and *residents*. This article explores the correlation between tourism and quality of life in existing literature. The authors with the most publications and interaction with other scholars on this topic are *Uysal, Muzaffer, Sirgy, M. Joseph,* and *Woo, Eunju*. Similarly, the United States of America and the People's Republic of China are identified as having the highest volume of publications and the most interaction with other countries on the related topic. This is explained by both countries prioritizing the quality of life of their respective populations. Additionally, it has been determined that the journal, *Tourism Management*, has the most publications on the related topic.

International publications on the topics of tourism and quality of life have been assessed according to various criteria in this study. Previous developments and changes in these fields have been elucidated, and the obtained data contributes to a better understanding of the research area and the advances made in relevant literature. Tourism has significant socio-economic and cultural impacts on both tourists and destinations. Quality of life is therefore an essential aspect of tourist destinations. Studies conducted in this area gain importance and contributed to local people's awareness and proper tourism management. Consequently, it is believed that research on this topic will remain significant both currently and in the future. This study provides valuable insights for researchers on the evolution of the subject, its interdisciplinary linkages, and the identification of literature gaps. Consequently, it serves as a roadmap or guide for the respective scholars. The theoretical implications reveal that despite the rise in tourism research in recent years, the number of studies pertaining to this subject remains limited. Therefore, it is advised to conduct a more thorough investigation on the subject matter. In terms of practical applications, it is advisable for destinations to comprehend the correlation between tourism and quality of life by considering the outcomes of the pertinent study and arranging to unite visitors and local inhabitants on common ground.

Based on the results of the study, some recommendations were developed. Most studies included in the research used subjective indicators to measure the quality of life of tourists and locals. However, some studies used objective indicators such as income, physical health, or well-being, and standard of living. However, these studies do not represent a sufficiently large proportion of the total number of studies. The implementation of more of these studies would be helpful in the monitoring of structural and physical changes. For this reason, future studies should focus on objective indicators. In addition, in order to examine the relationship between quality of life and tourism in more depth and detail, mixed studies using subjective and objective indicators should be conducted. It is worth noting that the analyzed studies only explored the relationship between quality of life and tourism through tourism development. Therefore, future studies should examine the relationship between quality of life and tourism as different variables, such as individual, family, community, or country, to contribute to the development of the field (Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim, 2016). Thus, the literature will be supported by examining the relationship between quality of life and tourism not only as an individual as well-being, but also as a society or country. In future studies, it is recommended to evaluate not only the physical health but also the psychological well-being and satisfaction of both tourists and local residents in relation to the quality of life and tourism. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The study has some limitations. First of all, it is a limitation that the research was conducted in a single database. For this reason, the subject can be evaluated from different databases in future studies. In addition, the language used in the study was determined as English only. In future studies, this situation can be preferred in different languages to provide a broader framework on the subject. In addition, VOSviewer program was used for analysis in the study. In future studies, it will be possible to reach different results visually by using the R-Studio program. In addition to bibliometric analysis, researchers can obtain more in-depth information on the subject by choosing methods such as Hybrid Metric, Systematic Review, Meta Analysis.

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Perceptions of Quality of Work Life in Hospitality Jobs: The Role of Interpersonal and Supportive Relations at Work

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the concept of quality of work life (QWL) in the tourism and hospitality industry, emphasising its significance for employee well-being and retention. The focus is on the psychosocial working environment, particularly interpersonal and social interactions at the workplace, described in the existing literature as stressors and coping mechanisms crucial for managing high job demands. This is especially relevant considering the long working hours, heavy workloads, and high pressure that typify tourism and hospitality jobs. The study draws on 56 in-depth interviews with three groups of purposefully selected participants at various career stages in the hotel sector to examine the role of interpersonal and supportive relations in the workplace and its impact on the perceived QWL. Findings indicate that a positive working environment and strong social capital are pivotal in buffering job demands. Participants highly value workplace social relations, considering them essential aspects of their work life. Interpersonal and supportive relations at work emerge as the most influential dimension positively affecting QWL. These findings may have implications for organisational practices and policies that foster a supportive workplace culture, ultimately contributing to the well-being and retention of employees in the industry.

KEYWORDS

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1. Introduction

The tourism and hospitality (T&H) sector is a rapidly growing and job-intensive industry in numerous countries' GDP. Despite its resilience during economic downturns and contribution to job creation, it is not without challenges (Aynalem et al., 2016; Gössling et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2021). The sector's reputation for high turnover rates and challenging working conditions raises questions about the quality of jobs created regarding employee retention and well-being (Yang et al., 2012; Stacey, 2015). Work constitutes a significant aspect of human life, and individuals' appraisals of their work circumstances, whether positive or negative, profoundly resonate across various domains of their lives (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). The concept of quality of work life (QWL), considered an essential dimension of quality of life, has evolved significantly in recent years, with a growing focus on factors like happiness and well-being in the workplace. This shift has sparked extensive discussions, highlighting a growing concern for employees' work experiences (Burchell et al., 2014; Jones et al., 2017; Vinopal, 2012).

QWL has been gaining visibility as an important construct within human resource management. Beyond shaping individuals' career decisions, perceptions of QWL are recognised as an essential human resource management strategy for successfully attracting and retaining valuable employees and fostering high employee retention and satisfaction, thereby substantially impacting organisational effectiveness (Sirgy, 2019; Leitão et al., 2019). Despite this recognition, studies focusing on T&H employees are still scarce, and the subjective experiences of the quality of work life among T&H employees remain an underexplored area. Empirical research addressing quality of life and well-being in tourism has traditionally focused on residents of host communities and tourists or has focused on the costumer's perspective (e.g., Uysal et al., 2016; Roberts et al., 2022). The psychosocial working environment, which pertains to interpersonal and social interactions at the workplace, is one of the most critical aspects of work (Durão, 2021). Social interactions at work cover various types of workplace relationships and different types of social support. In the literature, these interactions are simultaneously described as stressors and buffers or coping mechanisms to deal with high job demands (Jolly et al., 2021). In the T&H sector, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, the psychological working environment profoundly impacts employee well-being due to the high-stress levels and demanding customer interactions (Mensah, 2021; Yu et al., 2021). A supportive psychological environment facilitates effective stress management and enhances T&H employees' ability to handle challenging interactions, which is crucial for maintaining well-being and mental health (Kurniawaty et al., 2019; Yu et al., 2021; Demirović Bajrami et al., 2022). Additionally, it fosters strong team dynamics and career adaptability, boosts job satisfaction and engagement, and reduces turnover rates by instilling a sense of value and loyalty among employees (Lee et al., 2021; Abdou et al., 2022). Social integration in the work organisation is a fundamental dimension of employees' identity and self-esteem (Lait & Wallace, 2002; Karatepe, 2009). Ultimately, cultivating a positive psychological working environment is paramount for ensuring exceptional service delivery to customers in the T&H sector (Jung et al., 2023).

The main objective of this work is to contribute to a deeper understanding the role of interpersonal and supportive relations in the workplace and its impact on the perceived quality of work life among highly educated individuals within in the T&H industry. Following a constructivist–interpretivist stance with a critical orientation, in-depth semi-structured interviews were applied to 56 informants with different job positions in the Portuguese hotel sector, at different career stages, thus purposively selected. A thematic analysis combined with narrative elements was employed to explore the perceptions and experiences of these individuals.

This study focuses on how participants perceive the significance of their social relations at the workplace and their impact on their work experiences in the T&H industry, particularly in the hotel sector. In the broader research developed by Durão (2021), interpersonal and supportive relations at work stood out as one of the most relevant aspects of people's working life and the most valued aspect within the quality of work life. Various studies demonstrate the importance of formal and informal relations in organisations (Amjad et al., 2015; Yakubovich & Burg, 2019; Pihl-Thingvad et al., 2022; Sigursteinsdottir & Karlsdottir, 2022) but found with lesser extent applied to T&H organisations (Karatepe, 2015; Omuris, 2019; Abbas et al., 2021). The study also explores how attributes such as gender, age, and educational level are considered by research participants to impact relationships in the workplace, delving into the

complexities of interpersonal relations in professional settings. The role and influence of social atmosphere and interactions at work in the participants' perceived quality of work life (QWL) is also discussed. This study has, therefore, practical implications for managerial practices. Understanding these dynamics is essential for hospitality managers to implement effective strategies for creating a positive workplace culture, promoting individual well-being within the hotel sector, improving employee retention, and ensuring that the T&H industry remains competitive and sustainable in the long run.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Quality of Work Life

Job quality is a contextual phenomenon that varies not only among individuals, with individual assessments influenced by personal circumstances such as age, life stage, family/personal relationships, location, and personal values on life and work, but also among occupations, labour market segments, societies, and historical periods (Findlay, Kalleberg, & Warhurst, 2013; CIPD, 2017).

Quality of work life (QWL) may be deemed as a general state of well-being at the workplace, which is closely related to – yet, different from – job satisfaction, and can influence other spheres of one's life (Nadler & Lawler, 1983; Kahn, 1992; Sirgy et al., 2001). QWL is a pivotal dimension for employee retention and satisfaction, exerting significant influence on employees' work adjustment, psychological bonds at work, and consequently, on organisational effectiveness. This is necessarily a multidimensional concept and translates into the sum of multiple aspects that one person values, affecting both the employment relationship and the work itself. The evolution of the concept of QWL has been mirrored by several studies and theoretical approaches devoted to measuring the concept, with different authors differing views on the core constituents of QWL (Van Laar et al., 2007). Although a range of features can be easily identified as contributing to job quality to some extent, getting to a shortlist of the most relevant dimensions will always be influenced by the backgrounds and perspectives of each author (Jones et al., 2017). Thus, different disciplines make different interpretations and focus on different measures: economists typically focus on pay (e.g., Clark, 2005), psychologists favour job satisfaction (Holman, 2010), and sociologists – underpinned by 'the intrinsic quality of work' – consider skill, autonomy or job content, instead (e.g., Gallie, 2007). Even within the same discipline, there might be divergences (Muñoz de Bustillo et al., 2011; Findlay, Kalleberg, & Warhurst, 2013; CIPD, 2017).

The Need-Satisfaction Theory is a prominent approach in the QWL literature, positing that an individual's satisfaction with their work life is influenced by the fulfilment of their fundamental psychological needs (Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991; Sirgy et al., 2001). Grounded in psychological principles, particularly Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg et al., 2011) Two-Factor Theory of work motivation, this theory suggests that employees have various needs, ranging from basic physiological requirements to higher-level needs for autonomy, recognition, and personal growth. Organisations that recognise and address employees' diverse needs are likely to create a positive work environment, fostering higher job satisfaction, motivation, and overall quality of work life.

Several authors have focused on the impact of psychosocial demands, as evident in theories and models such as the Effort-Reward Imbalance theory, which emphasises the importance of norms of reciprocity rather than the control structure of work (Siegrist, 1996, 2017); the Job Characteristics Theory, that suggests that specific job dimensions lead to psychological states and on-the-job outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1980); the Spillover Theory, that proposes that satisfaction in one life domain may influence satisfaction in another (Sirgy et al., 2001); the Areas of Work-life model, that focuses on the congruence between the person and different domains of the job environment (Leiter & Maslach, 1999, 2004); the Job Demands-Control model, that posits that job control can buffer the impact of high job demands, reducing strain and enhancing employee satisfaction (Karasek, 1979; Karasek & Theorell, 1990); or the Job Demands–Resources model, that explains the relationship between job demands, job resources, and employee well-being based on a health impairment process and a motivational process (Demerouti et al., 2001).

Despite the increasing recognition that investigating factors contributing to employees' well-being is crucial for promoting positive work-related behaviours such as work engagement, organisational commitment, or intention to stay, studies addressing the quality of work life of T&H employees are scarce. The findings of a study developed by Durão (2021), coupled with an examination of the extant literature, both generic and industry specific, allowed the identification of a set of six major dimensions (made up of 12 subdimensions): job structuring and work organisation (including organisational policies, job content, scheduling and working time arrangements); reward and recognitions systems (pay and fringe benefits, recognition and appreciation for work); achievement and development (promotion and advancement, skill development, learning and growth, and job security); psychosocial working environment (interpersonal and supportive relations at work, leadership style); health, job stress and emotional demands; and work-life balance.

2.2 Interpersonal and Supportive Relations at Work

Social support is an important dimension of several QWL theories and models. Interpersonal and social interactions at the workplace are deemed one of the most important job resources, specifically in the form of social integration, when considering the nature and influence of personal relationships at work in individuals' well-being (Walton, 1973), and social support (from peers, co-works, and supervisors), that not only alleviates job demands and associated costs but is also instrumental in accomplishing work-related goals and fostering personal growth, learning and development (Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Demerouti et al., 2001). Karasek's (1979) original proposal for the Job Demands–Control (JCD) model focused on two dimensions of the work environment: psychological job demands (related to workload, primarily concerning the intensity and time pressures of work) and job control (referring to a person's ability to control their work activities). This model hypothesised that high-strain jobs result from the combination of high job demands and low job control, while active-learning jobs result combination of high job demands and high job control. As research progressed to overcome some limitations, a third dimension – social support – was later added to the model, and the model was renamed to Job Demand–Control–Support (JCDS) model (Johnson & Hall, 1988; Karasek & Theorell, 1990). The expanded model hypothesises that iso-strain jobs are characterised by high demands, low control, and low support (or isolation); therefore, the JDCS model states that social support moderates the negative impact of high job strain.

The nature of personal relationships is an inherent dimension within the framework of social organisations and significantly influences employees' identity and self-esteem. Social interactions are not only frequently perceived as common work stressors, but employees' job evaluations are also shaped by their perceptions of the support provided by their organisations (Walton, 1973). As a result, the dynamics between an individual and their peers may lead to adjustment and attachment or alienation from the workplace (Porter & Steers, 1973). These interactions encompass various types of workplace relationships and different forms of support (e.g., reciprocal help, socio-emotional support, instrumental support, openness, respect). Therefore, social support itself can be considered a multidimensional concept, including variables such as organisational support (support from the employer/management), supervisor support, support from co-workers, and support from customers.

Perceived Organisational Support (POS) lies at the heart of Organisational Support Theory, which analyses relationships between employers and employees through the lens of social exchange. POS pertains to the extent to which employees perceive that their work organisation values their contributions and demonstrates a genuine concern for their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Social support encompasses various elements, including fostering a friendly atmosphere among staff, fostering a sense of community, recognizing the value of employees' contributions, and providing opportunities for employees to interact, make friends, and collaborate on work-related tasks (Walton, 1973; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Warr, 1999; OECD, 2017). It also implies organisations being perceived as valuing their personnel, remunerating them fairly, and attending to their needs and expectations. Supervisors are expected to show interest in employees' goals, personal growth, and well-being (Daskin & Tezer, 2012). Sirgy (2012) also notes the impact of teamwork on work satisfaction, highlighting that a certain degree of felt interdependence in functions, tasks, and shared decision-making fosters reciprocal trust and respect among team members.

Social support serves as a buffer against the negative consequences of both extensive job demands and workplace stressors such as intimidation (malicious behaviour aiming to instil fear) and discrimination (less favourable treatment or prejudice based on factors like race, gender, religion, origins, disability, lifestyle, or physical appearance) (Walton, 1973; OECD, 2017). While workplace discrimination and stereotyping are more commonly associated with factors like gender or race, Wilks and Neto (2013) argue that age, particularly concerning older individuals, can equally influence work-related well-being.

In work environments characterised by abusive supervision, co-worker support becomes particularly relevant as it reinforces positive behaviour with the goal of fostering positive relationships. In the T&H context, workplace environments are often described as 'violent', with dictatorial, unfriendly, uncivil, and hostile behaviour being associated with supervisors, especially in high power distance cultures (Xu et al., 2015). Employee representation and voice also hold significance in this context, allowing workers to communicate and discuss work-related issues with management, thereby enhancing employers' awareness of their needs (Williamson et al., 2009; OECD, 2017).

It is also deemed relevant to reference appropriate styles of leadership – positive and effective – and good managerial practices as essential components of this dimension (Kara et al., 2013; OECD, 2017). "Good management practices include taking (good) actions to organise work, resolve conflict, treat workers with respect, and encourage them to take part in organisational decisions" (OECD, 2017, p. 132). Jones et al. (2017) further emphasise the necessity for managers to provide recognition and to be fair and reasonable. As a management tool, leadership style is linked to a broad spectrum of organisational processes and outcomes, including organisational climate, interpersonal relations, work attitudes, acceptance of innovation and change, and service performance (Kara et al., 2013; George, 2015).

The availability of support also aids employees in reducing customer-related stressors, dealing with customer requests and complaints, and resolving service failures, particularly for employees who have intense face-to-face or voice-to-voice interactions with customers (Karatepe, 2012). Work stress can be particularly acute in customer-oriented fields because employees often experience conflicting demands from customers. For contact employees, providing friendly service at all times, especially when dealing with angry or uncivil customers and having to restrain their temper, can be emotionally draining (Deery & Jago, 2009; O'Neill & Davis, 2011; Kao, Cheng, Kuo, & Huang, 2014; Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016; Partington, 2017). This is often referred to as emotional labour, a concept that has been well-documented among hospitality employees, as they are expected to express feelings such as enthusiasm, friendliness, and cheerfulness despite negative emotions that they may experience (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

Social support is not exclusively work-related and may include support from family, spouses or partners (Seiger & Wiese, 2009). It also encompasses supervisor work-family specific support, which is considered to alleviate work-family conflict experiences, such as approving family-related requests or alleviating high workloads (Goh, Ilies, & Wilson, 2015).

3. Methodology

This study is grounded in qualitative research as part of a doctoral thesis. A constructivist-interpretivist perspective with a critical orientation was adopted, and, in line with the researcher's reflexivity, data collection relied on an interactive and cooperative relationship between the researcher and participants. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 56 informants (52% female and 48% male; mean age 32). Research participants occupied at the time various job positions within the Portuguese hotel sector at different career stages: 30 *employees*, T&H graduates currently employed in the industry (with a minimum of 12 months experience); 14 *leavers*, T&H graduates formerly employed in the industry, who voluntarily left their job with the deliberate intention of securing employment in a different occupational field (with a minimum of two years in the industry or two employers); and 12 *newcomers*, students majoring in T&H-related degrees who already had their first contact with hospitality work (e.g., internship) and could potentially become future workers in the industry.

3.1 Selection and Profile of Research Participants

Research participants were purposely selected based on the primary criterion that all interviewees held a higher education degree in the T&H field or, in the case of *newcomers*, were approaching graduation and completing their degrees. A purposeful sampling method combined with snowballing techniques was used in this study. Maximal variation sampling was applied to select individuals displaying different dimensions of some characteristics or traits to get a higher variation on dimensions of interest. This sampling technique allowed the researcher to capture a wider diversity of views, perceptions, and experiences while balancing out the participants' demographic profiles, work experience, and roles in the hospitality industry. Within the hospitality industry, participants were specifically chosen from the same occupational field, namely, the hotel sector. Within the hotel sector, only individuals with working experience in Hotel Establishments (according to the Portuguese Tourist Accommodation Legal Framework) were considered eligible; however, these could be hotels with any size or classification (ranging from one to five stars or *Pousadas*) and affiliation (independent hotels, local/national chain hotels or international chain hotels), so that the existence of patterns associated with business scale of operations, and their corresponding human resource policies, could be eventually identified. The choice of hotels as the research setting was motivated by the pivotal role of accommodation in the T&H industry regarding job creation. The hotel sector was also selected due to its highly structured employment hierarchy, which facilitates tracing career patterns (Ladkin & Kichuk, 2017).

The diversity within the *employees* and *leavers* groups was due to the inclusion of both back and front-of-house staff in the sample, encompassing various functional levels (staff/operational, supervisory, and managerial) and different job positions (up to 15 different positions). *Newcomers* participated in 1 to 4 different internships throughout their higher education program, hosted by up to 6 different departments and ranging from 2 to 15 months in duration. A short profile of each group of respondents is presented in Table 1.

This research was conducted nationwide. An attempt was made to recruit informants all over Portugal to have the country's seven regions (NUT II) represented: North of Portugal (29%), Central Portugal (18%), Lisbon (16%), Alentejo (2%), Algarve (7%), Madeira (5%) and the Azores (13%). Different regions exhibit differences in tourism development and destination structure, which is reflected in various patterns and challenges in tourism employment; by recruiting informants working in different geographical contexts, some valuable insights were expected to emerge from the collected data. Eventually, no regional differences were analysed as a balanced number of participants per region was not observed.

Table 1. Main Characteristics of the Study's Informants

Employees	Leavers	Newcomers
43% female and 47% male	79% female and 21% male	42% female and 58% male
Average age: 33	Average age: 38	Average age: 22
80% Millennials (20-39 years old)	57% Gen Xers (40-59 years old)	100% Millennials (20-31 years old)
Average years in the industry: 10	Average years in the industry: 7	Average number of internship experiences: 2
53% in operational positions	Average years out of the industry: 7	Average duration of internships: 6 months
30% in top management positions	14% in operational positions	
	50% in top management positions	

Source: Own Elaboration

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Interviews provided an opportunity to explore participants' views on their career initiation, informed by their personal expectations, experiences, and conceptions. Data collection took place between November 2018 and June 2019. The interviews took a minimum of 25 minutes and a maximum of 100 minutes. Face-to-face meetings were privileged, but some interviews were conducted by web conferencing. The interview script covered five major thematic areas with a variable number of questions, as follow-up questions were made regarding specific issues when the participants did not spontaneously address these: career story (and corresponding career paths since graduation/accounts of first work experiences); career plan-

ning and initiation (interests and motivations to pursue a T&H career; the role of education and training; career aspirations and plans/(un)met expectations); career construction and critical moments (determinants to pursue, move on from, or return to a T&H career; perceived costs and alternatives; awareness of gender and age-related influences); perceptions on employee retention and future prospects; conceptions of quality of work life; and participants' profile (professional background and socio-demographics). Three versions of the same interview were prepared, with minor adjustments, according to the targeted groups, i.e., *employees* were asked to focus on both past experiences and experiences with the current employer, *and newcomers* were asked to focus on their professional experiences to date.

Data analysis ran concurrently with data collection, and interim analysis informed adaptations to the interview guide and ongoing participant selection. Data was analysed using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 12. Interview transcripts were subject to case classification, each coded as a case and classified into the corresponding group of participants. The research themes were broken down into nodes and sub-nodes, and the interviews were coded within the nodes and sub-nodes. The tree node structure referring to 'interpersonal relations at work' as a dimension of quality of work life is presented in Figure 1. When no new insights emerged from the analysis of an additional case, data saturation or informational redundancy was considered achieved. An adapted thematic analysis, combined with narrative elements (Ayres, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2013), was employed to offer new or deeper explanations about the proposed research topics.

Figure 1. Diagram of the Hierarchy of Research Themes and Relations used through the Coding Process in NVivo 12 for the Dimension 'Interpersonal Relations at Work'
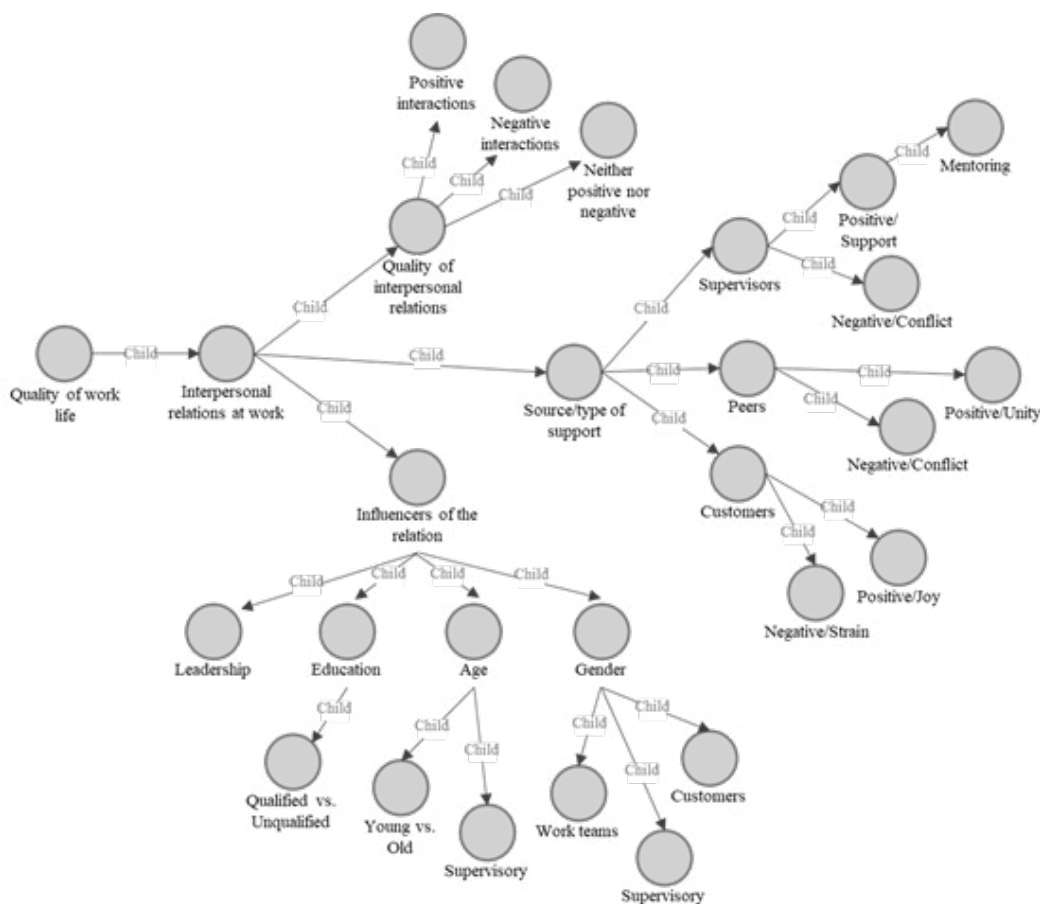
Source: Own Elaboration

4. Results

4.1 Perceptions on Interpersonal Relations and Support at Work

Good interpersonal relations emerge as one of the most favourable aspects of working in the hospitality sector for the majority of research participants. Only two participants, overall, perceive this aspect as irrelevant to their work lives. When participants were queried about their conception of QWL, they consistently highlighted the significance of relationships with their co-workers, supervisors/ managers, teamwork, and support. Work group relationships, in particular, are also described as being related with employees' social needs, which Sirgy et al. (2001) describe as the need of positive interactions, friendships, membership and being-in-the-know in a significant social group. Positive mentions are made to three social group relationships and primary sources of support: peer/co-worker, management/supervisor, and customer support.

Peer relationships are consistently highlighted as the most significant among all workplace connections: 15 participants regard this relationship positively, while only four reported negative experiences. Three other participants neither evaluate peer relationships as positive nor negative, considering that high staff turnover does not afford them sufficient time to form strong bonds with colleagues. Not only is the experience of working with people in general mentioned several times as one of the industry's best aspects, but co-worker support is also described as fundamental for enhancing individual performance (with multiple references from participants to teamwork, trust, and joyful atmosphere) and coping with other workplace stressors, such as workload or extended working hours. These challenges are often attributed to prevalent under-staffing practices in the industry. A *leaver* (ex-receptionist, 7 years with her last employer), particularly emphasized how companionship enables her and her co-workers to deal with some shortcomings of their workplace: "There were not enough staff so if we all left on time or enjoyed certain flexibilities with shift times, everything would fall on the other colleagues. We were the ones who respected each other and helped each other. If a group arrived at the end of a shift, we would no longer leave, we would be there for an hour or two helping, so as not to leave other colleagues dealing with things alone."

While the relationship with managers and supervisors is not so extensively discussed, nine interviewees described their relationship with their immediate managers as very good, while five described it as negative. One of the most frequently mentioned aspects of supervisor support relates to ease of communication, constructive criticism and encouragement, openness to dialogue, and a willingness to take their side or alleviate their burden when necessary. Overall, the majority of positively described experiences with managers and supervisors are characterized as supportive, as exemplified by some *employees'* testimonies: "We had a fantastic manager, who allowed us to manage our time, manage our tasks and who trusted in us. There was a list of tasks that we had to do, and it was not even necessary to assign them, we took the initiative ourselves" (receptionist, 6 years in the hotel industry); "I was very blessed to get my supervisor, she is outstanding, she is in the trenches with us. She works like us, takes calls like us, talks to customers like us; she does everything we do and more. She gives us a lot of support." (reservations clerk, 3 years in the industry). Mentoring relationships are frequently found in literature as an important determinant of career development (Kim et al., 2015), but only one participant mentioned how receiving such type of support contribute to his personal and professional growth.

The most negative account came from a *leaver* (ex-assistant F&B manager) who detailed the deterioration of her relationship with her supervisor, the general manager of the independent hotel where they worked. This participant described her former supervisor as insecure; considering their organisational tenure and qualifications, she often felt perceived as 'competition'. The supervisor was portrayed as authoritarian, highly critical, and focused on absolute control, undervaluing the competencies of others. This dynamic led to tensions, resentments, and demotivation among the staff. Her portrayal of this relationship, ultimately a key factor in her decision to leave, aligns with what Kara, Kim and Uysal (2015) refer to as manager mobbing behaviour.

According to some participants, conflicts, when they arise, are primarily attributed to intense competition among co-workers, particularly when supervisory roles are in consideration. Conflict is also noted

in relation to the dynamics between work groups from different departments, typically between front office and housekeeping, or between restaurant and kitchen teams. According to two participants, tipping can be a source of conflict, especially in low-paid departments. A *newcomer* recalls how tips cause friction between regular and casual employees in his hotel's F&B operations, resulting in a poor working environment. Regular employees describe the distribution of tips as unfair, as casual workers are paid a higher hourly wage compared to regular employees, whose overtime is not fully compensated but rather banked. Mixed feelings are observed regarding the role of supervisors in managing tip distribution, with some participants believing that oversight is necessary, while others prefer that these issues be left to employees' discretion. Conflict, whether hierarchical (e.g., between workers and supervisors) or lateral (e.g., among workers in the same department), is identified as a significant cause of turnover. This occurs when differences cannot be resolved, leading one of the conflicting parties to leave or be compelled to leave (Staw, 1980; Mobley, 1982), as previously exemplified.

Although less frequently mentioned and more often described as a source of workplace stress, customer interaction was positively highlighted by five research participants in the context of workplace interpersonal relationships. Interacting with people, enjoying customer orientation, or avoiding a monotonous work-life are all significant motivators for individuals interested in T&H jobs. Previous research supports the notion that establishing trusting relationships with customers can enhance organisational commitment and reduce turnover intentions (Walsh, 2016). Several interviewees mentioned frequently hosting regular guests, often business travellers, who became familiar acquaintances. These guests knew the staff members by name, inquired about their families, and even occasionally offered small gifts: "[When I was a receptionist] I loved the contact with the client. As I was in a business hotel, there were always the same faces, every week. It was very good, because after a while you already knew their names, they already knew your name, they already trusted you, and they always come to talk to you. It was a very good relationship" (*employee*, 6 years in the hotel industry).

Customer interaction serves as both a source of joy and strain for many research participants. Interestingly, all accounts from *newcomers* regarding work stressors are related to the challenge of managing relationships with customers, which they categorise as highly stressful and emotionally demanding. Previous research has also noted that hotel restaurant frontline service employees perceive interactions with customers as sources of both positive and negative emotions (Yang et al., 2020). Particularly for contact staff, such as receptionists or waiters, regular job duties involve dealing with customers of diverse profiles, moods, and attitudes, making them prone to emotional labour. Two interviewees specifically mention that working in hotels that frequently host last-minute guests due to flight delays and cancellations is highly stressful, as customers may already be in a bad mood due to circumstances completely unrelated to the hotel staff.

Emotional labour becomes emotionally draining when employees are expected to express feelings such as enthusiasm, friendliness, and cheerfulness despite experiencing negative emotions when dealing with angry or uncivil customers (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). Customer incivility has also been found to have a positive relationship with frontline service employee job burnout (Han et al., 2016; Nitzsche et al., 2018). Han et al. (2016) have also observed that organisational and supervisory support moderates the relationship between customer incivility and burnout, whereas Erenler Tekmen and Kaptangil (2022) suggest supervisory support may impact employees' willingness to deal with various situations. The importance of supervisory support (or in this case, the lack of it) in mitigating the negative impacts of customer service problems was highlighted by three interviewees. They expressed feeling consistently left alone to handle complaint resolution or lacking adequate support from other departments (considering that complaints are typically directed to the front-desk and may not necessarily pertain to front-desk service and performance). Only one interviewee (*employee*, receptionist), who works for an international hotel group, mentioned having received special training, specifically oriented for the hotel sector to deal with difficult customers and emotional self-regulation.

Other *employee* (assistant manager) also mentions how the positive work environment that characterizes her current organisation has played a decisive role in retaining or re-attracting employees. She believes that this is especially evident in low-paid areas, such as housekeeping, the restaurant, or the kitchen, where staff may easily switch organisations for a slight salary increase. the working environment

in her organisation is so positively regarded that many individuals return after having less favourable experiences in other organisations.

4.2 Factors Influencing Interpersonal Relations at Work

Three sociodemographic variables are presented by interviewees as influencing interpersonal relations at work, both at horizontal and vertical levels, namely gender, age, and educational level.

Gender is cited by some participants as a factor influencing certain attitudes and behaviours in the workplace. Both male and female interviewees (n=5) perceive women to be more competitive than men, contributing to conflicts with peers, exacerbated when these peers are also women. Several female participants express reservations about the prospect of joining exclusively female teams. Three interviewees believe that teams comprised solely of women exhibit a degree of animosity, citing jealousy, gossip, and stressful working environments as the primary reasons. A female *employee* (reservations clerk) states that women are highly judgmental of each other, an attitude that she does not find as prevalent in male co-workers. At the same time, she acknowledges that the poor working environment in her department is more likely to be due to the work values of the people who work there than to their gender or the fact that it is a team mostly comprised of women. One of the *leavers* (male, general manager) believes that this phenomenon is not exclusive to women-only teams, as teams made up exclusively of men are also not as productive and functional as mixed teams. Other *leaver* (female, receptionist), despite agreeing with the competition-driven conflict thesis, highlights that women are simultaneously more proactive than men in getting together and standing out for each other when necessary. They exhibit a strong sense of friendship and mutual support, either to solve a common problem or to improve women's rights in the workplace. Some female interviewees (namely an ex-assistant manager and a deputy manager) report instances when customers exhibited sexist attitudes, asking to 'speak to the director', assuming that the company's representative was a man, and feeling disregarded when brought before a woman in a supervisory position. Four other female participants, all in supervisory/managerial positions, report difficulties in dealing with subordinates who they felt questioned their authority and management skills due to being women. Some of them also believe that such attitudes were due to the intersectionality of their gender and age (Holgate et al., 2006; Jyrkinen & McKie, 2012), as they were both women and considerably younger than some or most of the staff reporting to them. One of these interviewees admits having adjusted her leadership style to be better accepted. These testimonials strongly support findings from previous research that have demonstrated the existence, in T&H organisations, of gender discrimination, gender stereotyping, and delegitimization of women as leaders (Costa et al., 2012; Walsh, 2016; Mónica Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019).

In turn, age is referred to by participants from three different perspectives. On the one hand, older age is associated with a lower predisposition for training and openness to welcome younger members in work teams. For example, an *employee* (receptionist, 21 years old at an early career stage) recalls how much younger colleagues were willing to share their knowledge and guide her through organisational procedures when she joined the organisation, compared to older co-workers. Other *employee* (waiter, 9 years in the industry) offered other perspective on this issue, stating that it becomes excessively tiring and stressful to be constantly training new entrants. This happens not only because turnover rates are high but also because he is assigned this role cumulatively to his regular duties. Age is also cited as influencing interpersonal relations at work, particularly when supervisors are younger than those they supervise. A female employee recalled her experience as deputy housekeeper when she was 21 years old, having to supervise a group of employees much older than herself. She remembered how difficult it was to 'be heard' and the struggle to prove to her team that she was knowledgeable about the job and capable of holding a supervisory position despite her lesser operational experience.

Also mentioned by participants is the educational level, which, in the opinion of five female interviewees, indicates that the higher the academic qualification, the smoother interpersonal relations are. According to these participants, conflict tends to be more prevalent in lower-skilled departments (such as housekeeping) and even between these departments and others. According to a *leaver* (female, ex-assistant manager) and an *employee* (male, hotel deputy manager), both in supervisory positions, it is also more challenging to maintain the divide between professional and personal spheres. Less qualified indi-

viduals may have more difficulty distinguishing between sympathy/openness and permissibility/lowering of job requirements. A *leaver* (female, receptionist) also attributes the origin of conflict with her peers to the fact that she was only employee with a university degree in her department and her co-workers always made the point that attending university does not make people more knowledgeable than work experiences do. This reinforces the notion that higher education degrees are not particularly valued in the T&H industry (Petrova & Mason, 2004; Costa et al., 2012).

In addition to these sociodemographic influences, various research participants emphasise, either directly or indirectly, the impact of leadership on numerous dimensions of work and career development. Managers are identified by several interviewees (n=8) as the primary individuals responsible for fostering a positive working environment and cultivating a strong work community. Particularly, mid-level managers, such as immediate supervisors, are perceived as having a key role in mediating interpersonal relationships and averting potential conflicts, all while maintaining a level of supervision that is not overly restrictive. Most participants express a preference for being granted autonomy to make decisions related to their daily work (e.g., scheduling, tip distribution). Some highlight the positive impact on team spirit, particularly in small teams, when they have the freedom to choose their working schedules or decide who works on holidays like Christmas or New Year. This autonomy, however, should not be interpreted as *laissez-faire* or an abdication of responsibilities. Instead, it indicates increased empowerment, as supervisors are still expected to oversee and intervene when necessary to ensure fairness and equity among team members or to make decisions when consensus is not reached.

Supervisors are also expected to mediate employees' relationships with customers, especially in the face of potential complaints and disrespectful attitudes. One *leaver* (ex-receptionist) and an *employee* (previously working as a bar waiter) recount multiple instances when they lacked adequate supervisory support when dealing with challenging customers. They believe that this lack of support ultimately impacted the working environment in their respective departments.

Despite the belief of several interviewees that promoting a positive working environment is largely dependent on leadership, one of the *employees* (receptionist, 38 years old) argued that people should view interpersonal relations in the workplace not merely as something experienced or acquired but as something that should be actively cultivated by each employee: "The working environment must also be built between colleagues. For example, if I receive a tip, I share it with my colleague. He may get surprised, but the next time, he also shares his tip with me. Or being open to exchange work schedules (…) This is how everything starts to improve."

In analysing the differential influence of the abovementioned factors in interpersonal dynamics within the workplace across the three participant groups, it is observed that gender was identified as influential by both *employees* and *leavers*. Although both female and male participants acknowledge gendered influences in interpersonal relations, many women (particularly those holding supervisory positions) portray the nature of these relations as conflictive or detrimental to their well-being, particularly regarding the relationship with managers and supervisors. No noteworthy differences were found among the participants concerning the attributes of age and education; however, most testimonies refer to career initiation moments, which may suggest that these issues were particularly pressing when entering the labour market. Despite qualifying for entry-level management positions, recent graduates are frequently assigned to operational roles, a situation several studies have shown to be recurrent over time (Raybould & Wilkins, 2005; Robinson et al., 2016), which can also explain the relevance attributed to age and education as factors influencing the relationship with peers and supervisors. Leadership style was also identified as influential by *employees* and *leavers*, but more specifically by participants holding middle-level managerial positions when depicting their career paths. Despite acknowledging the importance of a supportive work environment, *newcomers* are the group that explored these nuances the least due to their relatively limited experience in the labour market.

4.3 The Role of Social Atmosphere/Interactions at Work in Perceived QWL

Research participants were directly asked about their own conception of the *quality of work life*, and a specific closing question aimed to unveil the multiple meanings that this concept holds for the different interviewees. In the research conducted by Durão (2021), the psychosocial working environment, referring to

interpersonal and supportive relations at work and leadership style, was found as one of the dimensions comprising the multidimensional concept of QWL. When considering the order of importance assigned by the participants (measured through the number of references made to each aspect of work in T&H), social atmosphere/interactions at work is one of the most relevant aspects of work (with 25 mentions), following recognition and appreciation (deemed the most important aspect, with 26 mentions), but at the same level as pay (also with 25 mentions). Interpersonal and supportive interactions at work gathered the greatest consensus as a highly valued aspect of people's working life, which was again supported by the participants' own definition of QWL.

Although the QWL dimensions were not assessed based on their sequence in participants' narratives, it is evident that when it comes to a positive working environment, interviewees almost always expressed it as a priority by stating "In the first place…". This suggests that this aspect of work stands out in comparison to others and is deemed particularly significant in their evaluations.

Several participants highlight the importance of a strong team spirit, solidarity, enjoyment, honesty, and mutual trust among colleagues. They also stress the significance of having supportive supervisors, voice (feeling free to express doubts and ask questions without receiving detrimental comments), and a generally positive working environment. These elements are seen as crucial buffers or coping mechanisms to address high job demands, including extensive working hours, a fast work pace, heavy workloads, and high job stress. The participants believe that positive social interactions at work contribute significantly to their psychological well-being, job involvement, willingness to invest effort in their work, and persistence in the face of difficulties, as illustrated by the following testimonies:

> "We spend so much time at the workplace that the hotel becomes our home and the way we get along with colleagues is very important. If everything is okay, we always carry a smile and everything has higher chances of going well, you have another mood. If not, then it's terrible." (*leaver*, ex-guest relations, 46 years old)

> "For me, QWL is to have a good working environment, it's to have a good team. That's essential. Because, whether there's work overload, whether there's a thousand and one problems, if you have a good team, if people know how to work together, if there's a good team spirit, everything goes well, everything can be solved, and we all go home happy at the end of the day. If there is no good atmosphere, we won't be motivated to go to work, we won't give our best, we won't be there 100%. I think that's key to a company's success." (*employee*, web sales executive, 31 years old)

> "QWL starts right at the moment when our manager, who is responsible for us and the company, tells us 'you can count on me for everything'. That's the basic. When you have a person or a department that lets you know they are there for you, to back you up, that's QWL; everything else comes after that." (*employee*, receptionist, 28 years old)

> "Having a director who looks you in the eye and says 'Hello, good morning! Everything okay? So how are we doing today? Is there any problem?'. But beyond just saying, it's really being interested to know. And that's important, knowing that if you have a problem and you need help, you'll get it, because they care for you." (*employee*, receptionist, 24 years old)

One of the general managers interviewed asserts that fostering a positive social atmosphere at work and enhancing working conditions are crucial strategies for earning the admiration and trust of colleagues. Additionally, half of the *newcomers* (*n*=6) identify a psychosocial working environment as a significant dimension in shaping QWL. These results are consistent with previous studies, asserting that high social support from colleagues and supervisors, as an element of the work environment, have a positive impact on employees' well-being at work (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2022) job control, and social support and quality of work life (Baker & Kim, 2020).

When participants in the research were queried about the potential sacrifices they would have to make if they were to leave their current jobs (*leavers* were specifically asked about the most significant loss in changing jobs), 18 interviewees highlighted their work group relationships, emphasizing the importance of the people they work with. Both the constructs of Job Embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001) and Organisational Commitment (Hom et al., 2017) contemplate dimensions associated with the perceived costs of leaving the organisation: *sacrifice*, in the former, which refers to the ease with which links with the organisation can be broken; and *continuance commitment*, the latter, referring to both financial and non-financial costs of leaving and side-bets individuals make. While some participants point out the lack of alternatives that could match their current employment terms and conditions, social relations in the workplace are consistently emphasized as a crucial aspect of work life. Participants have invested significantly in these relationships, and the potential loss of these connections would complicate the decision to change jobs. Even though not all interpersonal relationships are positive or free of conflict, they remain among the most valued sources of support and motivation at work, as the following quote reveals:

> "[The thing I would miss the most if I left the job would be] some of the people I work with. Companies are the people who work there. And you have to be lucky to be in the right place at the same time as the right people. We never get along 100% with everyone, but if we are lucky enough to meet, at that moment, with X or Y, and we are able to work well with these people, it is halfway to making you want to go to work every day." (female *employee*, sales and events executive, 32 years old).

According to the findings of previous studies, the work environment significantly affects employees' turnover intentions (Kurniawaty et al., 2019; Abdou et al., 2022).

5. Conclusion

Quality of work life (QWL) refers to the general state of well-being in the workplace, which is different from job satisfaction and can influence other aspects of one's life. QWL is a multidimensional concept and varies among individuals, occupations, and societies (Sirgy et al., 2001). There is no consensus on the core constituents of QWL, and different authors propose various factors that contribute to positive evaluations of the work experience. While different disciplines focus on different measures, some key dimensions of job quality include pay, job security, work-life balance, and psychosocial working environment. In general terms, the quality of a job refers to the extent to which a set of work and employment-related factors contribute to, or detract from, workers' well-being and foster positive attitudes towards one's job-occupation (Muñoz de Bustillo et al., 2011; Holman, 2012; CIPD, 2017). The objectives of the present study are particularly aligned with the strand of literature that postulates that individuals' affective responses to work essentially determine QWL. QWL is crucial for employee retention and satisfaction, impacting work adjustment, psychological bonds at work, and organisational effectiveness (Sirgy et al., 2001; Wan & Chan, 2013; Bednarska, 2013).

The concept of perceived organisational support underscores the importance of employees feeling valued and supported by their organisations. This encompasses fostering a friendly atmosphere, recognizing employees' contributions, and providing opportunities for interaction and collaboration (Omuris, 2019). Moreover, supervisors' interest in employees' personal growth and well-being is crucial for creating a supportive work environment. This aspect of work is especially relevant when considering the culture of long working hours, heavy workloads, intense work pressure, tight time constraints, challenging working conditions, and insufficient training and safeguards for health and safety that typify hospitality jobs (Rowley & Purcell, 2001; Page et al., 2018). Social support is, therefore, a core constituent of models of QWL such as the Job Demand–Control–Support (JCDS) model (Karasek & Theorell, 1990), which ascertains that social support moderates the negative impact of high strain, especially in jobs which are characterised by high demands, such as those in T&H. This buffering role of social support over high strain jobs is also a central tenet in Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory or Karasek's (1979) job strain model. Positive social interactions at work are posited as one of the factors that can contribute significant-

ly to employees' psychological well-being, job involvement, and willingness to invest effort in their work (Demerouti et al., 2001; OECD, 2017).

Based on the interviews conducted with purposely selected participants from the T&H industry, results from this study suggest that a positive work environment, characterised by supportive relationships with co-workers and supervisors, emerges as a decisive factor in retaining employees, both in their jobs as in the T&H industry. Participants' narratives underscore the critical role of supportive relationships with co-workers, supervisors, and customers in creating a positive work environment. Rewarding, supportive, and trusting coworker and supervisor relations have also been positively associated with psychological safety (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004), whereas the lack of social support is related to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Supportive interpersonal relations are deemed particularly relevant by participants occupying frontline job positions. Frontline employees in T&H must deal with frequent customer interaction while managing the pressure to deliver high service quality and effectively resolve complaints. Supportive relations in the workplace may help them better manage these high job demands (Karatepe, 2009).

Peer relationships are consistently highlighted as the most significant among all workplace connections, contributing to enhanced individual performance and the ability to cope with various workplace stressors. Previous research supports that coworker support reduces strain (Viswesvaran et al., 1999), has the ability to attenuate the adverse effects of abusive supervision (Xu et al., 2015), and influence turnover rates within the hospitality sector, particularly among entry-level employees, by potentially offsetting less favourable employment terms and conditions (Tews et al., 2013a). The positive impact of supervisor support, including ease of communication, constructive criticism, and encouragement, is also evident, with mentoring relationships identified as an essential determinant of career development. Previous research has also provided evidence that supervisors are important in improving employees' daily lives by alleviating work-family conflict (Goh et al., 2015) and may positively affect both employees' organisational commitment and career satisfaction (Kang et al., 2015).

Emotional labour, particularly in the context of customer interactions, can be emotionally draining for employees, especially when dealing with customer incivility (Lam & Chen, 2012). While customer interactions can serve as a source of joy, they can also be a significant strain for employees, particularly those in contact staff roles. Among Portuguese hotel employees, supervisor and co-worker incivility were found to be significant positive predictors of emotional exhaustion (stronger for supervisor incivility) and cynicism (strongly reported for co-worker incivility) (Nitzsche et al., 2018). However, the presence of organisational and supervisory support has been observed to buffer the strain from customer relations, highlighting the crucial role of support systems in mitigating the negative impacts of customer service challenges.

Attributes such as gender, age, and educational level can also significantly impact interpersonal relations in the workplace. Gender dynamics, in particular, were found to play a role in shaping attitudes and behaviours, with some interviewees perceiving women to be more competitive than men, leading to conflicts with peers, especially when those peers are also women. Additionally, some participants suggest that all-female teams can exhibit animosity, jealousy, and gossip, leading to stressful working environments. However, previous research supports the idea that women are always in conflict with each other, which generates conflicts in organisations is more of a stereotype than a fact (Carvalho, 2017). On the other hand, female interviewees also report a strong sense of friendship and mutual support among women in the workplace, highlighting the need for further research to understand better how gender influences social support dynamics at work, as to the findings of previous studies, in male-dominated environments, women tend to value being in contact with other women (Wahl, 2010).

Age was also considered to influence interpersonal relations, with older workers being less predisposed to training and less open to welcoming younger members into work teams. This finds support in existing literature, as Pološki Vokić and Hernaus (2005) found that although they have hypothesised that interpersonal skills can improve throughout life, which would make older employees able to handle distressing emotions better, to listen and empathize with younger ones, their research had proven this assumption not to be true. The same study by Pološki Vokić and Hernaus (2005) also found that employees with higher levels of education tend to have a more positive attitude towards interpersonal relations at work. Likewise, educational level was cited by the interviewees as an indicator of smoother interpersonal relations, with higher academic qualifications leading to fewer conflicts in the workplace.

Research participants have also highlighted that leadership plays a crucial role in fostering a positive working environment and cultivating a strong work community. Mid-level managers, in particular, were perceived as having a pivotal role in mediating interpersonal relationships and averting potential conflicts while maintaining a level of supervision that is not overly restrictive. Based on a study with non-supervisory hotel and restaurant employees in the US, Kim and Jogaratnam (2010) reported that intrinsic motivation and supervisory leadership emerged as the most significant predictors of employees' intent to stay. Autonomy was also found to be important, with employees expressing a preference for being granted the freedom to make decisions related to their daily work. Discretion and autonomy are related to personal control, together with the absence of close supervision, self-determination/self-control, participation in decision-making, and freedom of choice, and therefore constitute a relevant attribute of job quality (Holman, 2012). This study highlights the importance of understanding the impact of sociodemographic attributes on workplace interpersonal relations, particularly when it comes to gender and age stereotyping (Wilks & Neto, 2013) and leadership's role in fostering a positive working environment.

Of all QWL dimensions, interpersonal and supportive relations at work have the most significant consensus on a positive perspective. Although QWL dimensions were not evaluated according to their sequence in participants' narratives, it is perceived that when it comes to a good working environment, interviewees almost always refer to it first, which suggests that this aspect of work stands out compared to others and is more importantly evaluated. Social interactions at work are seen as significant sources of support and motivation, and participants value the connections they have made at work. Also, as described in the literature review, social support may have multiple foci, which were all referred to by the participants in this study. For most research participants, good interpersonal relations are one of the most positive aspects of hospitality work, especially concerning peer relationships and customers/guests (the latter not as consensual as the former).

In contrast, the relationship between managers and supervisors receives mixed reviews. Both at horizontal (e.g., between peers) and vertical (e.g., between employees and supervisors) levels, gender, age, and educational level are presented by several interviewees as influencing interpersonal relations at work. Research participants were also asked about the most significant loss (or was, for *leavers*, when quitting their career) if they left their jobs/organisations. Any other mention was so considerable as those referring to the people they work with. The potential loss of social connections and relationships in the workplace is a significant factor that influences participants' decisions to stay in their current jobs. They have invested in these relationships and consider them crucial aspects of their work life. Interpersonal relationships are, therefore, the highest perceived costs of leaving. The decision to change jobs and/or careers also relies on the extent to which individuals perceive the material or psychological costs of leaving as too high or worth taking. The more an employee perceives to be giving up on benefits and advantages that usually are associated with tenure, to be incurring personal losses (e.g., giving up colleagues or projects), or losing the sense of belonging to a community or desirable community attributes, the more difficult it is to switch jobs (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ghosh & Gurunathan, 2015).

Following the happy-productive worker thesis, which is founded on the belief that individuals who are happy and maintain high levels of psychological well-being are likely to be more productive compared to their less happy counterparts (DiMaria et al., 2020), T&H employers and managers would benefit from this study in understanding the conceptions that employees make of the concept of *quality of work life*. Gaining a better understanding of employees' expectations regarding their *quality of work life* may help organisations in attract and retain valuable employees, ultimately enhancing organisational effectiveness. More specifically, the practical value of this research lies in underscoring the importance of social support at work. Recognising the significance of a positive work environment and mobilising endeavours to create them can contribute to employees' well-being.

From the findings, it is evident that the support from co-workers and supervisors significantly influences individuals' perceptions of quality of work life, making them more able to handle negative and stressful situations in the workplace and less prone to the adverse effects of emotional labour (Lam & Chen, 2012). This is particularly relevant for frontline employees who are more susceptible to negative and stressful customer interactions. This emphasizes the need for supervisors and those tasked with employee well-being to prioritise fostering rewarding, supportive, and trusting relations. Concerning supervisory

support, organisations may provide supervisors with the necessary tools and resources to enhance their communication and mentoring skills, namely by investing in training programs that promote effective communication and conflict resolution skills. Supportive actions may involve delivering regular and constructive feedback sessions to address employee concerns and encourage task completion while demonstrating empathy and concern for employees' needs. Encouraging peer support can involve implementing peer recognition programmes to foster a positive work environment (Chang et al., 2023) or promoting team-building activities to strengthen bonds among co-workers (Tews et al., 2013b). Organisations may also craft policies tailored to promote a supportive workplace culture, encouraging teamwork, mutual respect, and collaboration, taking into particular consideration personal attributes such as gender, age, and educational level. These efforts may be achieved by recognising and rewarding positive interpersonal interactions among employees, establishing channels for open communication and feedback to address any issues promptly (including reporting uncivil behaviour from customers), and defining clear policies and procedures for handling complaints and disputes (also concerning customers).

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of social atmosphere and interactions at work in shaping employees' perceptions of QWL. Creating a positive and supportive work environment (characterised by team spirit, solidarity, enjoyment, honesty, and mutual trust), fostering strong relationships among colleagues, and providing effective leadership can enhance employees' well-being and job satisfaction.

Using qualitative research methods, this study emphasises the importance of personal experiences in understanding work-related issues. It underscores the significance of social support at work, a concept described in the existing literature as both a stressor and coping mechanism crucial for managing high job demands, supporting previous findings (Karatepe, 2009; Tews et al., 2013a) and suggesting that a positive work environment can contribute to employees' well-being (Joseph Sirgy, 2019; Jolly et al., 2021). By exploring the significance of social relations at the workplace and their impact on work experiences, this study adds valuable insights to the broader research on the quality of work life in the T&H industry (Wan & Chan, 2013; Domínguez Albiter et al., 2021). Like other studies, this research also has limitations. The major limitation of the research is its scale. Qualitative studies offer rich and more profound perspectives but are also context-specific and not easily generalisable. Participants were purposively selected from the Portuguese hotel sector, which may limit the diversity of perspectives and may not be directly applicable to other industries within the tourism sector. The research presented in this article is part of a broader study, so it may not capture all the complex ramifications of these themes.

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