



IS A DISABILITY A HINDRANCE OF EMPLOYMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY?

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Abstract

Study objective: The purpose of the study conducted in this context is to identify the problems arising from the employment of disabled individuals employed in the hotel industry and to reveal the problems arising from the disability situations in the business areas from the perspective of the manager.

Methodology/approach: The sampling of this research is a group of fourteen different human resources managers of four- and five-star hotels in Turkey. During the interviews with the sample group between January 5 and March 10, 2021, a semi-structured question form created by the researchers was used and various data were obtained. To make the obtained data meaningful and to reach the research findings, phenomenology and descriptive analyzes were made and results were obtained.

Originality/Value: Disabled people have some handicaps in working life as well as in all areas of individual life. States enact a number of laws for the employment of people with disabilities. But these laws are not sufficient in terms of quality and quantity. In this case, disabled individuals and businesses employing these individuals encounter problems. Studies describing the problems faced by managers regarding the employment of disabled people in hotels are quite limited in the national and international literature.

Main results: It was determined that the participant human resources managers faced problems such as slowdown work, low motivation and adaptation, lack of discipline, low service quality, employee conflict and inefficiency. These problems constitute a major obstacle to the employment of people with disabilities in the tourism sector.

Theoretical/methodological contributions: The study contributes to revealing the deficiencies in current laws and practices in the employment of disabled people.

Keywords: Hotel industry. Disabled labor force. Employment problem. Disability. Mandatory employment of disabled persons.

Cite como

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A DEFICIÊNCIA É UM OBSTÁCULO AO EMPREGO NA INDÚSTRIA DO TURISMO?

Resumo

Objetivo do estudo: O objetivo do estudo realizado neste contexto é identificar os problemas decorrentes do emprego de pessoas com deficiência empregadas na indústria hoteleira e revelar os problemas decorrentes das situações de deficiência nas áreas de negócio na perspectiva do gestor.

Metodologia/abordagem: A amostra desta pesquisa é um grupo de quatorze diferentes gestores de recursos humanos de hotéis de quatro e cinco estrelas na Turquia. Durante as entrevistas com o grupo amostral entre 5 de janeiro e 10 de março de 2021, os pesquisadores utilizaram uma questão semiestruturada e diversos dados foram obtidos. Para dar sentido aos dados obtidos e chegar aos achados da pesquisa, foram feitas análises fenomenológicas e descritivas e obtidos os resultados.

Originalidade/Relevância: As pessoas, com deficiência têm algumas limitações na vida profissional, bem como em todas as áreas da vida individual. Os estados promulgam várias leis para o emprego de pessoas com deficiência. Mas essas leis não são suficientes em termos de qualidade e quantidade. Nesse caso, pessoas com deficiência e empresas que empregam essas pessoas encontram problemas. Na literatura nacional e internacional, os estudos que descrevem os problemas enfrentados pelos gestores em relação ao emprego de pessoas com deficiência em hotéis são bastante limitados.

Principais resultados: Determinou-se que os gestores de recursos humanos participantes enfrentavam problemas como lentidão no trabalho, baixa motivação e adaptação, falta de disciplina, baixa qualidade do serviço, conflito de funcionários e ineficiência. Estes problemas constituem um grande obstáculo ao emprego de pessoas com deficiência no setor do turismo.

Contribuições teóricas/metodológicas: Contribuições teórico-metodológicas: O estudo contribui para revelar as deficiências das legislações e práticas vigentes no emprego de pessoas com deficiência.

Palavras-chave: Hotelaria. Força de trabalho com deficiência. Problema de emprego. Incapacidade. Emprego obrigatório de pessoas com deficiência.

ES UNA DISCAPACIDAD UN OBSTÁCULO PARA EL EMPLEO EN LA INDUSTRIA DEL TURISMO?

Resumen

Objetivo del estudio: El objetivo del estudio en este contexto es identificar los problemas derivados de la contratación de personas con discapacidad empleadas en el sector hotelero y desvelar los problemas derivados de la discapacidad en las áreas empresariales desde la perspectiva del directivo.

Metodología/acercarse: La muestra de esta investigación es un grupo de catorce responsables de recursos humanos diferentes de hoteles de cuatro y cinco estrellas en Turquía. En las entrevistas al grupo de muestra entre el 5 de enero y el 10 de Marzo de 2021 se utilizó un cuestionario semiestructurado elaborado por los investigadores y se obtuvieron diversos datos. Para dar sentido a los datos obtenidos y llegar a los hallazgos de la investigación, se realizaron análisis fenomenológicos y descriptivos y se obtuvieron resultados.

Originalidad/Relevância: Las personas discapacitadas tienen algunas desventajas en la vida laboral, así como en todas las áreas de la vida individual. Los estados promulgan una serie de leyes para el empleo de personas con discapacidad. Pero estas leyes no son suficientes en términos de calidad y cantidad. En este caso, las personas con discapacidad y las empresas que emplean a estas personas encuentran problemas. Los estudios que describen los problemas que enfrentan los gerentes con respecto al empleo de personas con discapacidad en los hoteles son bastante limitados en la literatura nacional e internacional.

Resultados principales: Se determinó que los gerentes de recursos humanos participantes enfrentaban problemas como lentitud en el trabajo, baja motivación y adaptación, falta de disciplina, baja calidad del servicio, conflicto de empleados e ineficiencia. Estos problemas constituyen un obstáculo importante para el empleo de las personas con discapacidad en el sector turístico.

Contribuciones teóricas/metodológicas: El estudio contribuye a revelar las deficiencias de las leyes y prácticas vigentes en el empleo de personas con discapacidad.

Palabras clave: Industria hotelera. Mano de obra discapacitada. Problema de empleo. Discapacidad. Empleo obligatorio de las personas con discapacidad.



Introduction

One of the most important problems for the countries can be considered as the situation of the individuals who cannot be employed. Because the problem of unemployment is seen not only as an economic problem but also as a socio-cultural problem for them (Meyer, 2017, p.178). As a matter of fact, unemployment affects the economic situation of these countries negatively, as well as their social structure (Shah & Khuhawar, 2019, p.8). Employment opportunities of counties are very important for individuals to exist in the society they live in, to hold on to life, to feel themselves as happy individuals and to prove themselves since the employed labor force have an income that they can sustain their lives helps them to feel respected and safe in the society (Górny, 2018, p.54-55). In this context, the concept of employment can be considered as an important criterion in the society, and the issue of employment is a variable that economics and political institutions emphasize (Murat & Eser, 2013, p.95). Because the goal of reducing unemployment is an important reality in terms of economic and social policies. Hence, while employment is related to the use of all production factors in the economy in a broad sense, it can be defined as the participation of labor in production in a narrow sense (Örnek & Akın, 2017, p.346). Another general definition of employment can be stated as to providing opportunities for individuals who are ready to work to engage in production activities (Türkbal, 1993, p.381).

When real GDP increases in a country, economic growth occurs and the amount of goods and services produced increases. In this case, as the demand for labor increases, the number of people employed in the sectors also increases. Aghion and Howitt (1994), examining the period between 1974-1989, found an inverted U-shaped relation between growth and unemployment rates for 20 OECD countries. According to the results of this research, low unemployment is experienced in high-growth processes, and high-level unemployment is experienced in medium-level growth processes. Also, Ball et al. (2017) found a stable relationship between economic growth and employment for the USA and 20 other industrialized countries in the 1948-2013 period. The positive relationship between economic growth and employment has also been demonstrated at the European Union level. It has been determined that the growth in different sectors in the EU between the years 2000-2010 created very high employment. The 1.5% growth in GDP in the EU led to an increase of 0.6% in employment (Herman, 2011, p.42).

Although there is a positive relationship between economic growth and employment, there are many factors that negatively affect employment and increase unemployment. For example, many reasons can be listed such as excess labor supply, inability of the existing workforce to adapt to technology, increase in labor costs, high inflation, increase in interest rates, mistakes made in monetary and fiscal policies, political and economic instability and lack of education (Özcelebi & Özkan, 2017). In their research, Carruth et al. (1998) revealed that unemployment in the USA between 1979-1995 was caused by the increase in the real interest rate and the real price of oil. Similarly, Doğrul and Soytaş (2010) examined the relations between real oil price, real interest rate and unemployment in Turkey for the period 2005-2009 and obtained results parallel to Carruth et al.'s (1998). Agnello et al. (2014) examined the effects of fiscal policies of 17 countries on labor market conditions and unemployment for the years 1978–2009. Researchers have found that tax-based consolidations cause unemployment in these countries. In Turkey, on the other hand, the structural incompatibility of labor supply and demand conditions, national and global financial crises, misapplied monetary and fiscal policies and financial investments due to high interest policies in the country are among the main factors in the increase in unemployment (Aydın, 2012, p.120).

According to the Address Based Population Registration System of The Statistical Institute of Turkey (TUIK) results; Turkey's total population was 74.224.000 people and active labor force was 25.594.000 people in 2011. According to the data of the same period, the number of employed people in the working population is 23.266.000, while the number of unemployed is 2.328.000. Also, the unemployment rate was 9.1% and the labor force participation rate was 46.5% in 2011. According 2020's data, the total population in Turkey was determined as 83.393.000 people and while the *ready to work* population (labor force) was 31.647.000 and 27.447.000 of this group was registered as employed. During this period, the unemployment rate was 12.7% and the labor force participation rate was 50% due to 4.200.000 unemployed people (TUIK, 2021).

When these data are evaluated, employment efforts and policies can be expressed as the services that countries provide to their citizens who built the whole society in accordance with the understanding of social state. In this framework, the high rate of employment in countries is the most important values that disclose the development level of the countries. Because the effect of employment on the growth and development rate of countries is regarded as a certain reality in increasing welfare. Any country is to provide employment opportunities to the disabled individuals in its territory as it provides to other people and to develop effective



policies to protect the disabled workforce from unemployment. Although the employment of disabled people is an important fact that regardless of the development level, being able to employ disabled individuals in both public, private, and mixed institutions.

Studies focusing on disadvantaged groups within the hotel industry mostly discuss the needs and problems of guests with disabilities. However, there are limited research on the employment of disabled labor in the hotel industry and the problems arising from it. The main purpose of this study is to identify the problems arising from the employment of disabled individuals in the hotel industry and to evaluate the difficulties in their work areas from the perspective of their managers. A significant underutilized labor resource consists of people with disabilities. Employers often ignore this large workforce pool for different reasons. Therefore, this study will contribute to the literature examining the low employment rate of the disabled. In addition, this study is valuable because of the awareness perception aimed to be created for disadvantaged individuals. This study also draws attention to the effects of human resources managers on the development of various employment opportunities for the disabled workforce, especially in hotel businesses. However, this study can also help companies and government institutions to create strategies and policies to increase employment of people with disabilities.

Disabled individual employment and tourism industry

Disability is a social phenomenon that defines a social problem regardless of the development levels of the world countries. This situation has continued since the creation of humanity because many different factors such as genetics, wars, occupational accidents, occupational diseases and health problems cause the number of disabled individuals to increase. Disability is used to express the limitations that occur because of the loss of mental or physical functions of the individual. It is generally defined as the limitations of individuals' abilities and powers. Also, for individual who has physical, mental, spiritual, and sensorial abilities is not seen equally in the community compared to other people and is affected by certain social and environmental conditions that prevent active participation in social life (Gazi & Çakı, 2019, p.411). A person with a disability defines the subject and is called a person who cannot be treated or corrected, but who can be rehabilitated (Şen, 2018, p.130-131).

Based on information obtained from the OECD, EU and Turkey can be stated that approximately 15% of the world population consists of people with disabilities. Therefore, there is approximately 1 billion disabled people in the world. The number of people with disabilities

in Turkey is 1.559.222 according to the national database. But it is about 9.000.000 according to unofficial figure is estimated (Eyder, 2021). According to the Population and Housing Survey conducted in 2011, the number of individuals who have at least one disablement been 4.876 million people over age three in Turkey. In addition, while the labor force participation rate of the population with at least one disability is 12.5% for women and 35.4% for men in the relevant year (Turkey Republic Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, 2020). It is necessary to consider the density in the number of people with disabilities in Turkey. However, if disabled individuals are provided with opportunities like those offered to healthy individuals, it is thought that disabled people will be as successful as healthy individuals in business life or even more. Therefore, creating employment opportunities for persons with disabilities or increasing existing opportunities is important within the scope of being a social state. However, the employment of people with disabilities in Turkey, is a social problem to be solved as well as all over the world. In Turkey, like world application, mandatory employment (quota) method is used and targeted, thus reducing the dependence of persons with disabilities, continue their socio-cultural life is provided (Hasırcıoğlu, 2006, p.16).

In this context, it is known that many laws have been enacted by the governments around the world in recent years regarding the employment of them. These laws encourage employers to employ people with disabilities. However, it is thought that the desired results are not acquired despite the laws. Because, within the scope of social prejudices, reasons such as the thought or concern that employers will not be able to get efficiency from disabled individuals in business life. The belief that disabled people will be fragile and vulnerable, the discomfort of imposing punishments on them that it will affect other employees negatively and disabled individuals will not work properly are an obstacle to their employment. In addition, perceptions of employers such as avoiding having human resources without added value and the need to keep them under constant observation during work can be listed as factors that make the employment of disabled people difficult (Coşkun et al. 2009). For this reason, it is very important for the state to provide the necessary legal regulations and sanctions about employment of disabled individuals. One of the most fundamental rights in the Turkish Constitution is the *right to work*. According to Constitution, the right to work is the right of every individual, whether disabled or not. For this reason, having a job, being successful in that job and thus maintaining a dignified life is the fundamental right of disabled people as well as all people. The employment of disabled individuals not only adds relevant individuals but also shapes the economic and social structure. In this context, it is a known that the consumption of



disabled individuals without producing negatively affects the balance between population and resources. It is a necessity for disabled individuals to participate in production to use resources efficiently and effectively (Özaydın & Ölmezoğlu İri, 2020). As a matter of fact, evaluating disabled individuals as producers in proportion to their power is important both economically and socially.

The quota system is the most widely used method in the employment of disabled individuals in the world. This system includes the obligation of workplaces to employ disabled individuals at a certain rate of the number of employees. This application was first used by Germany in 1919, Austria in 1920, Italy and Poland in 1921, France in 1923, and then the application spread to the world in general. Policies regarding the employment of persons with disabilities and the rules regarding the employment of them in Turkey are set out in Article 30 of the 4857 numbered Work Law. According to the law: “Employers should employ 3% disabled individuals in private sector workplaces where they employ 50 or more workers. This ratio is 4% among public institutions. Employers are obliged to employ disabled individuals in jobs suitable for their profession, body and mental status.” The employment rates of disabled individuals in private and public fields are regulated by law (Gazi & Cakı, 2019, p.412) in Turkey.

Table 1.

Employment Performance Data Between 2010-2020

Years	# of Application	Employment			Registered Disabled Workforce
		Public	Private	Total	Total
2010	36.144	295	31.962	32.257	76.449
2011	35.151	455	37.894	38.349	95.976
2012	83.955	398	35.133	35.531	126.615
2013	76.235	287	34.189	34.476	131.806
2014	77.632	232	26.118	20.350	123.930
2015	65.255	258	20.197	20.455	125.999
2016	79.321	236	14.795	15.031	98.962
2017	100.126	192	11.959	12.151	92.766
2018	95.146	722	14.208	14.930	112.346
2019	85.664	917	13.798	14.715	126.670
2020 (Nov.)	-	1.121	15.039	16.160	104.513

Source: İŞKUR (2021).

According to the table, it is seen that the highest employment was realized with 38.349 labor in 2011 and the least employment was realized with 12.151 labor in 2017. When a general

evaluation is made by years, it is obvious that there is a decreasing trend in the employment of persons with disabilities. In addition, it is noteworthy that the people employed in the public sector are less than the private sector.

The tourism industry, which is included in the service sector, is labor-intensive and at the same time has a mixed structure in terms of workforce, is an important source of employment. For this reason, the tourism industry is an important source of employment for people with disabilities in both the world and Turkey. However, tourism investors or tourism industry managers think that the employment of disabled people will add a cost to the business. And the perception that there may be negativities due to the employment of disabled individuals, both from other employees and from guests, can make the employment of disabled individuals difficult. Nevertheless, "Disability in the Workplace: Company Practices" study conducted in 2010 is contributed to the entry of disabled people into the labor market with Accor Hotels Group. In Turkey, where a variety of chain hotels also perform studies on the employment of disabled people and these works are known to contribute to the disabled individuals in the labor market (Kaya, 2017). Even a variety of legal work related to the employment of persons with disabilities, the desired positive results cannot be reached because of the obstacles mentioned above both in the world and in Turkey.

According to 2011 data in Turkey in the tourism industry (accommodation, food and beverage services, airlines, travel agents, tour operators, sports, entertainment, and recreation centers, etc.) the number of registered employees is 1.410.000. This number reached 1.260.000 people in 2019. At the end of 2020, it decreased by 11.7% and realized as 1.119.000. In 2020, 663.325 tourism personnel are employed in food and beverage services, 320.103 in accommodation businesses, 55.871 in sports, entertainment and recreational businesses, 51.645 in travel agency and tour operator services, and 29.050 in airline companies. While employment in the Turkish tourism industry was 8.78% in overall employment in 2019, the same rate was determined as 7.47% in 2020 (Tourism Data Bank, 2021). However, it is thought that both legal regulations and tourism investments do not reach a sufficient level in the employment of disabled individuals. For this reason, it is necessary to decide for disabled individuals to get benefit from their rights, to eliminate the deficiencies in this framework and to provide employment opportunities so that they are not considered as a human resource consuming without producing. In addition, the employment of disabled individuals in the agriculture, private, public and services industries is outside the law, in accordance with the ethics of social responsibility. It is argued that employment is a necessity for people with disabilities to be



combined with the society without being excluded from the society by increasing the welfare of them with the idea that they include a place that cannot be underestimated.

Literature review

The literature review reflects the limited number of academic studies on human resource practices research. A literature review was conducted that reveals the difficulties in employment of the disabled, especially in the tourism sector. It includes the practices, concerns, and problems faced by human resources managers in the recruitment of disabled individuals in the hotel industry. In this context, national and international literature has been systematically scanned through web of science and google scholar. As a result of the literature review, it has been determined that there are a limited number of national and international studies.

Dalagan et al. (2020) conducted a study to demonstrate that disabled individuals, especially individuals with down syndrome, can be employed in food and beverage businesses in line with their disabilities and abilities. Thirty-one units operating in Turkey "Down Cafe" constitute the universe of the study. Twenty-eight "Down Cafes" within the scope of volunteering are the sample of the research. In this study, the data were obtained with the help of a scale that was compiled by making phone calls with businesses that are difficult to reach face to face. In the analysis of the data obtained, the findings, from quantitative research methods; the frequency was reached using the percentage method and the research was concluded. It has been determined that companies with effective systems should be determined for mentally disabled individuals with limited manual skills and within this framework, theoretical and practical training can be provided to individuals with down syndrome to be employed. In addition, it was emphasized that the coordinating role of local governments in both investments and trainings would be effective in the employment of disabled individuals. It has been determined that in general, severe and moderate disabled people are not employed, but mildly disabled individuals are employed. Similarly, a study was conducted by Kaya (2017) to determine the characteristics, working conditions, problems and difficulties of disabled individuals employed in hotels. The data were obtained by conducting a questionnaire with forty-six disabled individuals employed in the 5-star hotels of Antalya. It has been determined that problems related to business life are perceived more intensely in individuals over the age of thirty-six and whose disability rate is over 50%. It has been revealed that individuals with a high rate of disability face more problems before and after work to gain a working opportunity.

Bonaccio et al. (2020) aimed to identify the concerns of 11 different employers about disabled employees in their study. In the study, it was concluded that the concerns of employers do not arise from stereotypes, but from realities based on reasons. It has been determined that managers have concerns about performance, organizational adaptation, attitude and behavior differences, accommodation costs, difficulties in the recruitment and selection process, dismissal and job security. In the study conducted by Lengnick-Hall et al. (2008), it was determined that most of the employers were not proactive about hiring disabled people and had stereotypical beliefs. Aracı & Koçak (2014) similarly conducted a study that reveals the perceptions of human resources managers of 5-star hotel businesses regarding the employment of disadvantaged individuals. It has been determined that the participants have a positive attitude towards the employment of disadvantaged individuals. In addition, the participants, who stated that the tourism sector is an important source of employment, argued that the employment of disadvantaged individuals, especially those with disabilities, should be based on volunteering rather than an obligation. However, it was concluded that the most important obstacle in front of disadvantaged individuals' access to employment is the perception of employer. Jasper & Waldhart (2013) aimed to identify situations that worry accommodation employers who are considering hiring disabled people. In this study, it has been determined that there are concerns about the skills of the employees and workplace arrangements, but these concerns can be alleviated with the financial incentives to be applied for the employment of the disabled. It has been determined that employers' concerns about hiring disabled people vary according to the size of the business, so employers that employ more workers are likely to employ more disabled people. Houtenville & Kalargyroua (2011) also reached similar results. According to this, small hospitality companies are less likely to hire disabled workers than larger companies due to a lack of financial resources and lack of appropriate information. Even though all firms share similar concerns, companies of different sizes use different employment strategies for people with disabilities. It has been determined that small companies prefer flexible working programs, employer tax incentives, mentorship, and disability awareness training.

Kalargyroua (2014) examined disability employment initiatives in high sales volume sectors such as hospitality and retail as a strategy to gain competitive advantage. According to the research, it has been determined that the disabled workforce provides a low level of benefit to the business in terms of earnings, but they are highly valuable in terms of loyalty, reliability and productivity. Paez & Arendt (2014) found that hotel and restaurant managers in the United



States see the inadequacy of the disabled workforce in terms of communication, social and technical skills as a major problem.

Vornholt et al. (2018) concluded in their study that employers should determine the factors that prevent interaction between disabled people, make job analysis for disabled people to work and simplify jobs by separating them. On the other hand, Donnelly & Joseph (2012) aimed to identify solutions to the problems of disabled employment in hotel businesses. According to this, it was determined that the awareness and understanding of human resources specialists on this issue should be increased. In addition, it was argued that organizations working for the employment of disabled people should provide training for disabled individuals. It has been concluded that scenarios should be created for situations such as education and accommodation, and current approaches should be reviewed to solve basic problems.

As a result of the literature review, various studies conducted by Gröschl on the employment of the disabled have been reached. Gröschl (2005) tried to identify the factors that hinder the employment of the disabled by interviewing the human resources managers of the hotels operating in Toronto. His study revealed that managers agree that it is a good practice to hire people with disabilities, but there are many obstacles to increasing employment of people with disabilities. Some of these obstacles are the lack of communication among the employees, the lack of awareness of the effectiveness of the disabled in the business, and the local employment agencies not working in coordination with the hotel enterprises in the employment of the disabled. Gröschl (2007) aimed to identify human resources policies and practices that affect their integration into hotels in Canada. According to this study, it has been determined that the legal regulations and HR practices regarding the employment of the disabled in hotels are very limited. In addition, it has been determined that hotel managers' preferences and traditional understandings in terms of aesthetics and self-presentation skills are an obstacle to their recruitment. Gröschl (2012) conducted a case study at the German Embrace Hotel, where more than 60% of its employees are disabled, to test the validity of negative judgments on this issue. Thus, it has been determined that the physical characteristics of the disabled do not adversely affect the guests' experiences. In addition, they can be integrated into the workplace, but for this, there should be an open and tolerant institutional climate in the business, and disabled employees should be included in the managerial processes.

Kalargyroua & Volis (2014) conducted a study to identify the benefits and challenges of employing disabled people in accommodation and other different sectors. According to this,

it has been determined that integrating disabled people into the workforce increases job performance and job success. Hospitality industry evaluate the difficulties encountered in the employment of disabled people in different ways. However, established human resources systems alleviate these difficulties. It has also been shown that businesses do not express these difficulties much as they fear from the society. However, Luu (2019) revealed that the benevolent leadership behavior of managers towards disabled employees has positive effects on their job satisfaction and emotional team commitment.

Methodology

Interview technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in this study. Interview technique is one of the most available research techniques in social sciences and especially in sociology. The main purpose of using this method is that the subject under investigation has a multidisciplinary scope that includes both tourism science and sociology. In addition, this method offers the opportunity to examine events and facts in depth. In other words, it is the opportunity to explore different points in the research process and analyze the research in more detail in flexibility (Baltacı, 2019, p.370-371).

In this study, phenomenology was used among the research designs. Phenomenology is used in different ways in various branches of science such as architecture, philosophy, archeology, physics and psychology. The concept of phenomenology is to express the phenomena that can be observed in science in general. In phenomenological research, first a phenomenon is determined. It can be an object or any event. Then, it is tried to understand the experiences of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon about what and how they tried. In fact, it is difficult to conduct phenomenological studies, but unique information can be obtained in this way (Cope, 2003, p.11). One of the methods used in phenomenological research is to identify and list important expressions. In this way, unnecessary expressions are eliminated and only the expressions that are thought to be relevant to the research question are used. Another method is to classify expressions as clustering under themes (Güler et al., 2013, p.248-249).

The purpose and importance of the research

One of the most fundamental problems of countries is the employment of disabled people. As a matter of fact, even though the countries carried out various studies for the



employment of disabled people, it is thought that the practices are insufficient. Therefore, it is aimed that to identify the origin of the problems of people with disabilities and the difficulties that disabled individuals face while performing their jobs from the perspective of managers in star hotels operating in Turkey. In addition, it is targeted to bring various suggestions to increase the employment of disabled people.

According to the findings from the literature review, it is remarkable that there are few academic studies on the employment of disabled individuals in the world. Therefore, making suggestions for the employment of the disabled workforce and the solution of various problems related to these individuals makes this study important. Within the scope of the stated purpose and importance, the following questions were sought in the study. The research question was determined as "What are the problems arising from the employment of the disabled in the hotel sector". In this context, the following semi-structured questions were asked to the participants.

- What is the main purpose in employing people with disabilities?
- How many disabled people have been employed in your company and from which disability status, and what is the disability rate of these individuals?
- What is the age range, average age, gender, and education level of employed persons with disabilities?
- In which departments did you employ disabled people? Did these employees experience adaptation problems? Also, what are your countermeasures in case of such problems?
- Are there any problems and difficulties arising from the employed persons with disabilities?
- What are the attitudes and behaviors of your guests and other employees towards employed persons with disabilities?
- What resources are used for the employment of disabled personnel? (Employment agency, resume pool, websites bringing workers and employers together, other)
- Do you receive support / assistance from the state, municipality, chamber of commerce or other relevant institutions for the employment of people with disabilities? What kind of support do you receive from these institutions?

Research universe and sample

This research, which deals with the problems experienced by the managers in the employment of the disabled, was carried out in the case of Turkey. In order for the research to be inclusive, two 4 or 5 star corporate hotels were selected from seven regions of Turkey. These hotels were chosen to collect data because they cover all regions of the country and the hotels are institutional. In other words, the homogeneous distribution of the hotels in the country, their high representation ability and their institutional nature can be expressed as the reasons for choosing them.

The universe of the search is constituted from human resources manager and assistant managers of the four- or five-stars hotel in Turkey. As of the end of March 2020, 833 hotels in Turkey have "4-star business certificate" and 172 of them also have investment certificates. Likewise, there are 678 5-star hotels. Among these hotels, 129 of them have investment certificates (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

Within the scope of the research, easy sampling method was preferred due to the *purposeful sampling method* because it brings speed and practicality to the process. Purposeful sampling method is a sampling method based on in-depth investigation of situations that are thought to have prosperous information (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Based on this, in-depth information was obtained by making face-to-face and telephone interviews with the human resources managers of 14 hotels that employed disabled individuals.

Data collection and analysis technique used in the search

In the study, a *semi-structured question form* was used for data collection. That form prepared by the researchers consists of 6 demographic and 8 open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are listed according to their content from general to specific. In qualitative research, the fact that a study has been examined by experts from various angles increases the validity and reliability of the study (Merriam, 2009; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). For this reason, while creating the semi-structured question form, the opinions of two academicians, two sector representatives and a psychologist were taken. The interview form was finalized after the approval of the relevant persons and was used as a data collection tool. Interview technique, one of the qualitative approaches, was used as the data collection method in the study. The purpose of using the interview technique is to enter the inwardness of the participant, to approach the events from his axis and to increase the validity of the research (Karataş, 2015, p. 71). In qualitative research, it is important to specify the participants and the data collection-analysis process in detail and to present direct quotations regarding the data in increasing the validity of the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). In this context, by paying attention to explaining the participants and the data collection-analysis process in detail, direct quotations were included. Face-to-face interviews were held with the human resources managers of the hotels that are not difficult to reach. Telephone interviews were made with managers who are difficult to reach and have time constraints. Some managers were reached via the internet (e-mail). The data were obtained between January 5th to March 10th in 2021. Percentage frequency



analysis was applied to the demographic questions according to the data obtained from the participants. In this context, qualitative analysis was made within the scope of phenomenology pattern with open-ended questions created according to the purpose of the study. The data obtained were presented descriptively by using the phenomenology method and content analysis was applied to determine the phenomenological codes. The phenomenology method was introduced by Husserl and later developed by Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Pont. It is widely used in the fields of health and social sciences. Phenomenology describes the common meaning of a few people's realized experiences with a phenomenon or concept. In addition, the concept of phenomenology aims to increase personal experiences of a phenomenon to a universal explanation (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

With this research, the experiences of the human resources managers of the hotels were considered as phenomena and it was aimed to explain these phenomena through the commonality of their different experiences within the framework of the research objectives. Within the scope of content analysis, various themes are given in a table, considering their frequency levels. A two-dimensional evaluation was made, and the findings were evaluated not only according to the frequency level of the themes (how many participants stated), but also according to the priority of the participants to indicate themes in their answers.

Findings

In this section, demographic information is given primarily for hotels and managers interviewed in these institutions. The content analysis on the questions on the employment of disabled individuals and the opinions of the managers were given later.

Table 2.

Demographic Data

	HOTELS			MANAGERS		
	STARS	CAPACITY	DESTINATION	POSITION	EDUCATION	GENDER
Hotel 1	*****	100-150	Antalya	HRD Manager	Graduate	Man
Hotel 2	****	100-150	Antalya	HRD Manager	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 3	****	80-100	İstanbul	HRD Manager Ass.	Graduate	Man
Hotel 4	*****	100-150	Gaziantep	HRD Manager	Doctorate	Man
Hotel 5	*****	110-130	İstanbul	HRD Manager Ass.	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 6	*****	110-130	Gaziantep	HRD Manager	Postgraduate	Man
Hotel 7	*****	120-130	Ankara	HRD Manager	Postgraduate	Man
Hotel 8	****	80-90	Van	HRD Manager	Graduate	Man
Hotel 9	****	120-130	İzmir	HRD Manager	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 10	****	70-80	Ankara	HRD Manager	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 11	*****	90-100	İzmir	HRD Manager	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 12	*****	100	Samsun	HRD Manager Ass.	Graduate	Woman
Hotel 13	****	80	Samsun	HRD Manager	Graduate	Man
Hotel 14	*****	100	Van	HRD Manager Ass.	Graduate	Woman

Source: It was created by the authors.

Table 2 contains the demographic data of the hotels and managers included in the study. During the research, 14 authorized personnel from 14 hotels were interviewed. Selected hotels encompass the biggest cities of the seven different geographical regions of Turkey. Two different hotels have been chosen, one of which is 4 and the other is 5 star from each region. In this context, hotels in Istanbul from the Marmara Region, İzmir from the Aegean Region, Antalya from the Mediterranean Region, Samsun from the Black Sea Region, Ankara from the Central Anatolia Region, Gaziantep from the Southeastern Anatolia Region and Van from the Eastern Anatolia Region were included in the study.

Since the research was conducted on disabled employees, the interviews were conducted with human resources managers or their assistants, who are thought to have the most knowledge of disabled personnel. In line with the findings obtained, 4 of the interviewees are assistant managers and 10 are managers. It has been determined that one of the personnel is a doctoral graduate, 2 of them have a postgraduate degree, and 11 of them are university graduate degrees. Seven of them are women and the other seven are men. When the employment capacities of the companies are examined, it is determined that they vary between 80 - 150 personnel.



Table 3.

Main Reasons of Employment of Disabled Individuals (In Order of Priority)

HOTELS	EMPLOYMENT PURPOSE (IN ORDER OF PRIORITY)		
	LEGAL OBLIGATION	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	REINTEGRATION
Hotel 1	*	**	***
Hotel 2			*
Hotel 3	*		
Hotel 4	*		**
Hotel 5	*		
Hotel 6	*	**	
Hotel 7	*	**	
Hotel 8	*	*	
Hotel 9	**	*	
Hotel 10		*	
Hotel 11		*	
Hotel 12	*		
Hotel 13	*		**
Hotel 14	*	**	
PRIORITY OF ANSWERS	EMPLOYMENT PURPOSE (IN ORDER OF PRIORITY)		
	LEGAL OBLIGATION	SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	REINTEGRATION
1st Priority	10	4	1
2nd Priority	1	4	2
3rd Priority	0	0	3
TOTAL	11	8	6

Source: It was created by the authors.

Table 3 gives information about the reasons for hotel managers to employ disabled people. The responses given by the managers were subjected to frequency analysis. In addition, these answers were recorded in order of priority and the degree of importance was also tried to be determined. The responses of the managers are gathered under three different themes as "legal obligation", "social responsibility" and "reintegration". In this context, the first answers that come to the minds of the managers are shown with 1 star (*), the second answers with 2 stars (**), and the third answers with 3 stars (***). Accordingly, it was revealed that the most important reason for managers to employ disabled people is "legal obligation" (N = 11). Among the managers who see legal obligation as the most important reason for the employment of disabled people, 10 participants stated this answer as the primary priority and 1 participant as the secondary priority. Another important factor among the reasons for the employment of disabled employees is the sense of "social responsibility" (N = 8). Among the managers, 4 participants stated the theme of social responsibility as the priority answer, and 4 participants as the secondary priority answer. Another answer given by managers for the employment of



When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that 12 of 14 hotels employ 50 or more employees. Therefore, it has been determined that 12 hotels act in accordance with the legislation in the employment of disabled workforce. The other 2 hotels are exempt from the law on the employment of the disabled, as they employ less than 50 employees. However, although these hotels are exempted from the law, it has been determined that they employ the disabled workforce at a minimum level. In other words, it is seen that all hotels comply with the disability employment rule (disabled employee $>5\% * \text{number of employee}$).

Table 4 contains information about the disability status, disability rates, age ranges, genders, educational status of the disabled employees employed in hotel industry, the sources they are employed and the departments they work in. When the data are analyzed, it is seen that a total of 33 disabled individuals are employed in 14 hotels. In this context, it has been determined that each hotel employs a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4 disabled individuals. It was found that 23 of the disabled employees were physically disabled, 5 had hearing loss, 3 had autism, 1 had epilepsy and 1 had visual impairment. Considering the findings, it is seen that in general 71% of the disabled individuals employed are physically disabled. Therefore, it can be said that disabled people, who are a handicap group in employment, are also divided into handicap groups within their own borders.

In another category in the table, the age ranges of the disabled are given. The age ranges of disabled individuals vary between 18 and 40. Looking at the general average, the youngest disabled individuals' average is 19.5, and the average age of the oldest disabled individuals is 29. Considering the disability status of the disabled employees, the number of employees with 40% disability status is 23 and 30% disability status is 9. As it can be understood from the table, it has been determined that the hotels employ individuals whose disability status is the most suitable for doing job, young people with low disability rates. However, this situation can be interpreted as individuals with disabilities also suffer injustice within themselves.

When the disabled employees are examined in terms of their gender, it is revealed that the number of disabled employees is very close to each other (Male 17, Female 16). Considering the educational status of the disabled employees, only two of the thirty-three disabled employees have a bachelor's degree, and the others have a lower education level. This result can be interpreted as the disabled individuals do not have equal opportunity in education as in employment. When looking at the sources from which disabled employees are employed; According to the responses of the managers, 19 of the 33 disabled individuals were recruited from the Employment Agency, 7 of them were recruited by reference and 7 of them were

recruited via the internet. In this context, it has been determined that the employment of disabled individuals is usually done through the State channel.

When the department where disabled people are employed are examined, it has been determined that 18 out of 33 disabled individuals are employed in the accounting department, while other disabled individuals are employed in departments such as housekeeping (N = 9), counseling (N = 4), reservation (N = 1) and cash register (N = 1). According to the data obtained, it has been observed that disabled employees are employed in jobs that require more restricted movement and attention rather than speed and are generally called desk work.



Table 5.

Problems Arising From Disabled Employment & Solution Recommendations

HOTELS	PROBLEMS ARISING FROM DISABLED EMPLOYMENT						SOLUTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROBLEMS				
	SLOWING THE WORK	LOW MOTIVATION AND ADAPTATION	INDISCIPLINE	POOR QUALITY SERVICE	EMPLOYEE CONFLICT	INEFFICIENCY	INSERVICE TRAINING	ORIENTATION	ROTATION	PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING	ACCURATE JOB ANALYSIS
Hotel 1	*	**					*		**		
Hotel 2	*										
Hotel 3			*								
Hotel 4								***	*	**	
Hotel 5		*	**								
Hotel 6	*			**							
Hotel 7		*			***	**	*				
Hotel 8											
Hotel 9						*	*		**		
Hotel 10	*				**						
Hotel 11				*							
Hotel 12											
Hotel 13						*					
Hotel 14		*					*				
PRIORITY OF ANSWERS	SLOWING THE WORK	LOW MOTIVATION AND ADAPTATION	INDISCIPLINE	POOR QUALITY SERVICE	EMPLOYEE CONFLICT	INEFFICIENCY	ON THE JOB TRAINING	ORIENTATION	ROTATION	PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING	ACCURATE JOB ANALYSIS
1st Priority	4	3	1	1		2	4			1	
2nd Priority		1	1	1	1	1			1	1	1
3rd Priority					1			1			
TOTAL	4	4	2	2	2	3	4	1	1	2	1

Source: It was created by the authors.

Table 5 contains information about the problems faced by disabled people in the employment process and the solution suggestions implemented by the hotels. The first answers that come to the mind of the managers are shown with 1 star (*), secondary answers with 2 stars (**) and third answers with 3 stars (***). In this context, managers face problems such as

"slowdown work", "low motivation and adaptation", "lack of discipline", "low service quality", "employee conflict" and "inefficiency" in the employment of disabled people. The managers of Hotel 4, Hotel 7, and Hotel 12 stated that they did not encounter any problems during the employment process with disabilities. 11 out of 14 hotel managers gave 17 different opinions on current problems. The most repeated of these views are "slowdown work" (N = 4) and "low motivation and adaptation" (N = 4). However, looking at the priority of the answer, it can be said that the "slowdown work" problem is relatively more prior. Other problems mentioned by managers according to their frequency and priority are "inefficiency" (N = 3)', "lack of indiscipline" (N = 2), "low service quality" (N = 2) and "employee conflict" (N = 2). When looking at the solutions produced to these problems, the solution suggestions are respectively seen as "on the job training" (N = 4), "psychological support" (N = 2), "rotation" (N = 1), "correct job analysis" (N = 1) and "orientation" (N = 1).

In the second part of the study, the responses of the managers they encounter in the employment of disabled personnel were examined with a phenomenological pattern approach.

K1: "Employment of disabled individuals is defined in the 30th article of 4857 numbered Labor Law. According to this provision, employment of disabled individuals is made according to the quota system. Within the scope of this law, private sector companies employing 50 or more workers are obliged to employ 3% disabled people and public institutions must employ 4% disabled people. Disabled individuals are employed in jobs according to their profession as well as their physical and mental conditions. While public institutions choose the employees, they will employ with a special examination (EKPS), we generally choose with İŞ-KUR's suggestions, references, and interviews. However, we may experience various problems in the employment of them. These people can be very sensitive and emotional. It makes them difficult to motivate and adapt. Therefore, there may be slowdowns and disruptions in the job process. However, we nevertheless support the employment of people with disabilities. We are trying to solve such problems with various training and support."

K4: "There is no problem encountered on a large scale in the employment of disabled individuals. However, in our work, which is mainly based on physical strength, I believe that employing disabled personnel in back offices is healthier for them and us (even to prevent the emotional evaluation of the guests)."

K7: "The employment of disabled employees is a process that really requires care and responsibility. Since our disabled personnel have some handicaps, there may be inefficiency in the service provided. There may be conflicts between some of our employees who cannot empathize with them. Our task is to ensure this harmony between staff through various training and techniques. We try to empathize with our disabled personnel first and then we create solutions."

K11: "Yes, we meet some problems. However, since the employment of disabled employees is not only a legal obligation but also a social responsibility, we need to tolerate these problems. Disabled personnel have some handicaps such as coming to work late, leaving work early and performing the job more slowly. To deal with such problems, we make a good job analysis and determine job descriptions and job requirements. As a result, we match the right person for the right job. Thus, we minimize the problems."



Conclusion and suggestions

Disabled individuals, the world's most populous minority, have started to gain a place in business life with various incentives in recent years. However, some problems regarding the employment of disabled people continue and await solutions. This study shows the scope of the star hotels operating in Turkey are welded to identify issues of people with disabilities employed in the hotel industry. In addition, it is aimed to determine the difficulties that disabled people faced during their efforts from the perspective of the managers and to make various suggestions that will increase the employment quality of them.

When the results obtained within the scope of the research and the relevant literature are examined together, interesting results have emerged. Regarding the employment of people with disabilities, Lengnick-Hall et al. (2008) determined that the employers do not follow a proactive management style, and similarly, Aracı & Koçak (2014) stated that the biggest obstacles in employment of disabled people stem from the attitudes of the managers. As a result of this research, it is seen that the most important reason for managers to employ disabled people is not their own initiative, but a legal obligation. In this context, it is seen that the employment of people with disabilities is generally carried out through a state institution, İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency). Contrary to this result, according to Gröschl's (2005) analysis, the fact that local employment agencies do not work together with hotels is an important problem for the employment of the disabled. Other important factors among the employment reasons for the disabled are the sense of social responsibility and the desire to integrate them into society. It is obvious that the frequent use of resources outside the state channel in the employment of disabled people is a necessity and important for their future.

It has been determined that the hotels included in the research employ a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 4 disabled individuals. It is observed that all hotels with 50 or more workers employ disabled people up to the minimum level of the legal limit. It has been determined that hotels with less than 50 workers (n=2) employ an insufficient number of disabled personnel (n=1), although there is no obligation. In this context, it can be thought that companies only employ a sufficient number of disabled employees within the scope of the law. As a result of this legal situation, it is seen that the hotels with higher number of workers realize the employment of the disabled at a higher level. These findings are in line with the results of Jasper & Waldhart (2013) and Houtenville & Kalargyroua (2011).

According to the findings obtained in the research, disabled employees consist of individuals with physical disabilities, hearing or vision impairments, autism and epilepsy patients. According to the findings, 71% of employed disabled individuals are physically disabled. Also they are between the ages of 18 and 40 and their disability rates are generally low. This finding is in line with the findings of Kaya (2017) and Dalagan et al. (2020). In this context, it can be stated that the hotels employ those who are most suitable for doing business in terms of disability or those who are young and have low disability. Therefore, it is observed that disabled individuals who are disadvantaged in the society also differentiate among themselves in terms of their handicaps. In this context, when disability situations are evaluated, it is thought that there is no equality of opportunity among individuals with different disability rates.

Within the scope of the research, it has been observed that the education level of disabled employees is generally high school and below. The low number of disabled employees graduated from higher education can be interpreted as they do not have equal opportunities in education. When the gender variable is examined, it is concluded that there is no discrimination among disabled employees in terms of gender.

As a result of the research, it has been determined that disabled individuals are employed in desk jobs that require less movement and attention rather than speed in order to achieve the necessary efficiency. However, although these methods are efficient in terms of disabled people and hotels, they can create the feeling of discrimination among employees. For this reason, it is thought that it would be beneficial to consider not only productivity but also the morale of the employees while conducting job analysis.

Kalargyroua & Volis (2014) determined in their research that integrating people with disabilities into the workforce increases job performance and job success. However, in this study conducted by us, unlike the study of Kalargyroua & Volis (2014), it has been determined that managers face many different problems in the employment of the disabled, such as slowdown, low motivation and adaptation, indiscipline, low service quality, employee conflict and inefficiency. In this respect, the results obtained were similar to the results of Bonaccio et al. (2020). According to Bonaccio et al. (2020), managers have concerns about performance, organizational adaptation, attitude and behavior differences, accommodation costs, recruitment and selection process, dismissal and job security for disabled employment. In other words, the problems experienced in the employment of disabled workers are not only related to the workflow. Gröschl (2007) stated in his study that the aesthetic concerns and traditional mindsets



of managers are problems for the employment of the disabled. Kalargyroua (2014) mentioned both the advantages and disadvantages of employing disabled workers in his study. He stated that the employment of disabled employees causes low sales revenue, but this type of employment provides benefits such as loyalty, reliability and productivity to the business.

Hotel managements evaluate the difficulties encountered in the employment of the disabled in different ways. The human resources systems of these companies play an important role in reducing these difficulties. However, because managers are afraid of social pressures, they cannot express the difficulties they face in their employment. As a result of the research, it has been determined that managers use methods such as in-service training, psychological support, rotation, correct job analysis and orientation in order to minimize these problems.

Vornholt et al. (2018) argues that the necessary job analysis should be made and the disabled people should be given jobs that are suitable for their disability, but no study has been found in the literature that provides solutions for solutions such as rotation, orientation, on the job training and psychological support. Only Donnelly & Joseph (2012) stated that appropriate training should be provided for the disabled to solve the problems arising from employment. Therefore, it is considered that the results of the study will contribute to the literature in this respect.

Based on the results obtained, some suggestions were made within the scope of the study. Since the administrators employ the disabled mostly due to legal obligations, the laws regarding this issue need to be improved. In this context, it is suggested that not only the number of compulsory employment, but also the responsibilities and rights of individuals according to their disability should be clearly stated in the law. In addition, it is considered that the application of a quota covering every disability situation is necessary for them to have equal opportunities among themselves. It is recommended to develop business areas that will provide employment for individuals who are more handicapped in terms of disability, disability level and age. In addition, it is recommended that managers determine job descriptions and requirements and employ people with disabilities in jobs suitable for their disability. It can be said that with the right job analysis, both the work efficiency and the motivation of the disabled personnel will increase. In future studies, it is recommended that researchers investigate the problems experienced by disabled people in their employment. This study is limited to the year 2021, 4 and 5 star hotels and the provinces where data were collected within the scope of the research.



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