

Are they really overqualification? Evaluation of perceived overqualification by the employees

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Perceived overqualification,
Employees,
Tourism,
Hotel businesses,
Behavior,

This study aimed to examine the self-perception of hotel industry employees regarding their overqualification, the factors that contribute to overqualification, and the attitudes and behaviors of managers and colleagues towards overqualified employees. To achieve the research objective, a qualitative research approach was used, involving interviews with personnel to collect data. During the interviews, employees were asked four main questions. Thematic analysis was used to examine the participants' responses to the inquiries. Eight distinct themes were identified based on the examination of responses to the multiple-choice questions. The analysis revealed that a significant portion of employees felt they were overqualified for their roles. The perception of employees as overqualified is primarily influenced by factors such as education, experience, and foreign language proficiency. As per employees, this attribute distinguishes them from their peers. Moreover, a substantial portion of the workforce often perceives individuals to have excessive qualifications, as observed by their supervisors and peers. In conclusion, most participants, except for one, demonstrated a clear preference for overqualification. Employees engage in activities to enhance their qualifications in their pursuit of overqualification. These activities involve enhancing their education, enrolling in vocational training programs, obtaining work-related certifications, attending seminars, and improving their foreign language proficiency. In a broader context, there is a concept of improving employee overqualification by promoting higher education and foreign language proficiency.

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1. Introduction

Businesses require different job requirements in the course of the employment process. These requirements are usually required to carry out the work independently of the employees. There is only one passion for this desire. This desire is to answer to the job in question and to the customer's satisfaction. As a result, businesses focus solely on business requirements and set these requirements solely to perform the business. However, there is one aspect that has been neglected. Employee qualifications remain on the back burner. Employees are now able to improve their qualifications. Increased education, technology development and easy access to courses and training allow employees to increase their abilities. In addition to these positive developments, employees are obliged to accept any job due to not being unemployed (Thompson et al., 2013). Consequently, the qualifications of employees go beyond the requirements of the position. This is regarded

as overqualification in the literature (Khan & Morrow, 1991). Employees perceive overqualification when they see inconsistencies between their abilities and the requirements of their job (Fine & Nevo, 2008).

Perceived overqualification prevents employees from working and staying in the business once they are hired (Erdoğan et al., 2018). Perceived overqualification leads to inadequate employment and unemployment (Demir et al., 2022). Because perceived overqualification causes negative emotions and behavior on the part of employees (Harari et al., 2017). Perceived overqualification reduces employee cooperation (Sierra, 2011) and creates counterproductive behavior among employees. (Fine & Edward, 2017; Luksyte et al., 2011). The main reason for counterproductive behavior is that perceived overqualification leads to anger and unhappiness among individuals (Liu et al., 2023). Perceived overqualification

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also has a negative effect on employee life satisfaction (Gkorezis et al., 2019)

In addition, perceived overqualification results in a decline in employee job satisfaction (El-Sawalhy et al., 2022; Johnson et al., 2002; Lobene & Meade, 2013; Maynard et al., 2006; Verhaest & Omev, 2006). Perceived overqualification also results in lower employee performance (Akbiyık, 2016; Aydoğan & Olgunçelik, 2022; Onat & Eren, 2020). On the other hand, Khassawneh et al. (2023) draws attention to the fact that perceived overqualification has a more negative impact on job satisfaction in a situation where managers are jealous. Again, according to the results of the same study, perceived overqualification has a positive impact on turnover. Cyberloafing (Cheng et al., 2020) and the social loafing behavior of employees who consider themselves overqualified is increasing (Gizlier & Yıldız, 2021). Furthermore, the perceived overqualification of employees also causes the withholding of information (Shafique et al., 2022; Yeşiltaş et al., 2023). Perceived overqualification undermines the organization's citizenship behavior (Erdoğan et al., 2018). Empowering employees in the company reduces the negative effects of perceived overqualification on job satisfaction, intention to stay and thoughts of leaving work (Erdoğan & Bauer, 2009). More importantly, the perceived overqualification causes turnover (Harari et al., 2017; Yıldız et al., 2017).

The perception of overqualification has no permanent negative impact on employees. Research in the literature indicates that perceived overqualification has several positive effects. Perceived overqualification increases the positive impact of employee job crafting on personal achievement and development. (Han & Hwang, 2021). Zhang et al. (2016) state that perceived over-qualification enhances proactive employee behavior. Lin et al. (2017) mention that over-qualified employees are highly creative. Demir et al. (2022) indicate that perceived overqualification positively impacts job crafting, job performance, and proactive employee behaviors. It is also said that overqualified employees may have higher performance. (Fine, 2007; Holtom et al., 2002).

The subject of perceived overqualification due to positive and negative effects continues to be investigated in different fields. One of these areas is the tourism area. In tourism, some individuals have bachelor's and college degrees from other departments. Some of these individuals also continue their postgraduate education. Some of these individuals work primarily in hotel businesses. In addition to these individuals who are educated and have a certain level of qualification, individuals who have yet to receive tourism education and low-quality work in hotel businesses. In this case, qualified and unqualified individuals are in the same working environment. A qualified individual working in such a working environment may perceive themselves as overqualified (Akbiyık, 2016). As a result of perceived overqualification,

the employee may have positive and negative behaviors. Different points have been mentioned in the research on perceived overqualification in tourism. In these studies, the perceived overqualification of hotel employees is proactive behavior and job crafting (Demir et al., 2022), personality traits (Karaman & Çetinkaya, 2019), information hiding (Shafique et al., 2022; Yeşiltaş et al., 2023), performance (Akbiyık, 2016; Onat & Eren, 2020), job satisfaction (El-Sawalhy et al., 2022), work and leisure activities (Han & Hwang, 2021). It is seen that the research has increased after 2016.

However, in these studies, no study explains why employees consider themselves overqualified after being hired and whether managers' and colleagues' approach overqualified employees. Finding out the reasons for employees' perceptions of overqualification other than education and experience may expand the scope of the use of the concept of overqualification. In addition, learning the perception of the overqualification of employees and the perception of managers and coworkers with the employees' thoughts may be beneficial in determining the consistency of perceptions and their reasons. Finally, it is not known whether the employees make efforts to be overqualified. It is not a correct understanding to perceive that every employee is overqualified. In this context, this research aims to reveal whether hotel business employees see themselves as overqualified, the reasons for overqualification, and the approach of managers and colleagues to employees about overqualification. A literature review was conducted as part of the research, and the design structure related to the subject was presented. Afterward, face-to-face interviews were carried out with employees working in hotel companies. The data obtained were analyzed using content analysis. Following the research, employee opinions about perceived overqualification were determined.

2. Perceived Overqualification

Overqualification is conceptually first mentioned in a book by Freeman (1976) (Khan & Morrow, 1991). Since then, overqualification has been investigated in various ways (Erdoğan & Bauer, 2009). Perceived overqualification is the belief that the employee's ability, education, and experience level are superior to the employee's job (Erdoğan et al., 2011). In perceived overqualification, the experience period of the employees and their technical knowledge is also influential factors (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013). In particular, the employee realizes that their work experience and knowledge are too much for the job after starting the job (Liu & Wang, 2012). Overqualification is evaluated in two different ways objective and subjective (Luksyte et al., 2011).

Objective overqualification is the ability and education level of the employee to be in a superior position to the job qualifications (Fine, 2007). Objective overqualification is usually measured by education level. Education is the main criterion in the measurement of objective

overqualification. Employees with above-average education in the working environment may see themselves as overqualified (Hung, 2008). In the measurement of objective overqualification, job analysis requirements are used (Akbiyik, 2016).

Subjective overqualification is the employee's belief and perception that their abilities go beyond work (Maltarich et al., 2011). Employees assess their professional qualifications and competence at the same time. Following this evaluation, subjective perception of over-qualification develops (Erdoğan et al., 2011). However, this evaluation of the employee can sometimes be disconnected. Sometimes employees may not see themselves as superior (Maynard et al., 2015). The subjective measure of over-qualification takes place in the recruitment and post-employment phases. Overqualification at the recruiting stage is defined as a predictable situation. This overqualification is determined by the individual applying or by the hiring manager. If it is excessive after employment, overqualification is determined based on the thoughts of the employee, manager and co-workers (Akbiyik, 2016).

The perceived over-qualification is also a rupture between the employee and the position (Maynard et al., 2006). This incompatibility is based on a comparison between employment and their qualifications. (Liu et al., 2015). This situation, defined as a person-job mismatch, is explained by the person-job fit theory. According to the person-job fit theory, the employees' qualifications and the job requirements should be equivalent (Brkich et al., 2002). The demand-ability fit is one dimension of the person-job fit theory (Edwards, 1996). Demand-ability is the narrowness of the employee's knowledge and abilities and the job requirements (Kristof, 1996). In such harmony, employees will carry out their work in a more disinterested way (Vogel & Feldman, 2009). Employees felt overqualified in case of inconsistency (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013).

When an employee who considers himself overqualification starts a job below their qualifications, experiences deprivation (Wu et al., 2022). This is because the employees cannot actively and adequately use their characteristics that enable them to be overqualified (Khan et al., 2023). More limited features do their jobs. This situation leads to the idea that the characteristics of the employees, which they consider as important gains, are meaningless and that they are making efforts in vain. In other words, employees are in relative deprivation (Schreurs et al., 2021). Employees experiencing relative deprivation are exposed to negative thoughts and experience stress intensely. At the end of this process, employees may find themselves in an exhausted state of mind (Khassawneh et al., 2023). Conceptually, this state is explained as ego depletion. Ego depletion is a state in which the ego level, voluntary behaviors and resources of the employees decrease (Xia et al., 2020). Within the scope

of overqualification, both relative deprivation and ego depletion have negative effects on employees. For example, Yeşiltaş et al. (2023) explain that perceived overqualification leads to relative deprivation, which in turn causes employees to withhold information. This relationship is higher when employees experience ego depletion. As such, the negative behaviors of employees who are not compensated for overqualification increase. For example, employees' innovative behaviors (Fan et al., 2023), job satisfaction (El-Sawalhy et al., 2022) and organizational citizenship behaviors decrease (Erdoğan et al., 2018).

3. Method

This research aims to reveal whether hotel business employees see themselves as overqualification, the reasons for overqualification, and the approach of managers and colleagues to employees about overqualification. The qualitative research method was adopted within the scope of the purpose of the study. Qualitative research allows evaluating of the analyzed events from a holistic perspective (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). An interview technique was used to obtain the data. With the interview technique, detailed information can be obtained on a subject. Thus, individuals' thoughts on the subject are learned (Lune & Berg, 2017). A semi-structured interview form was prepared within the scope of the interview technique. There are four questions in the interview form. The authors determined the interview questions as a result of the literature review by the purpose of the study. After determining the questions, Demir et al. (2022), who researched overqualification, were consulted. In line with the suggestions, the interview form was finalized, and interviews were conducted. The interview questions are as follows:

1. When you evaluate yourself, do you consider yourself overqualification for your job?
 - *If yes, what factors cause you to evaluate yourself as overqualification?*
 - *If no, why don't you consider yourself overqualification?*
2. Have you heard words from your managers that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?
 - *If yes, can you give examples of these words?*
 - *If no, why could such words not have been said?*
3. Have you heard words from your colleagues that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?
 - *If yes, can you give examples of these words?*
 - *If no, why could such words not have been said?*
4. Do you try to be an overqualification employee in your job?
 - *If yes, what are you doing to increase your quality?*

- If no, why don't you do something to increase your quality?

Interviews were carried out with 17 employees. When similar responses begin to be expressed in the interviews, and the data obtained reaches a satisfactory level, there is no need to increase the number of participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Creswell (2013) emphasizes that between 5 and 25 interview participants can be considered sufficient. Marshall (1996), on the other hand, explains that the number of participants is sufficient at the level where the responses become saturated and begin to repeat. In line with these views, interviews were completed with 17 participants, and data were obtained.

Thematic analysis was used in the responses to the questions. Thematic analysis requires researchers to review the literature and comprehensively obtain information for different codes. The study developed themes and codes using Braun and Clarke (2006) and Gavin (2008). Interview data were analyzed systematically. The analysis process consists of grasping the data, assigning preliminary themes and codes to express the content obtained from the data, searching for preliminary themes and codes frequently mentioned in the content, checking preliminary themes and codes, naming themes and codes, and reporting the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 1 shows information about the participants. Interviews were conducted from February 13 to February 20, 2023; before completing the interviews, ethics committee approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Isparta

University of Applied Sciences with the decision dated 13.02.2023 and numbered 02. Before the interviews, participants were informed of the purpose of the research. The interviews were taped with the participants' acquaintances. Interviews averaged between 15 and 20 minutes. To keep confidential the identity information of participants who contributed to the study, participants were randomly numbered P1-P2-P3....P17. Notes and records from the interviews were double-checked and recorded before the analysis. Content analysis was used in the written interview notes. As a result, themes and codes were created.

Demographic characteristics of 17 participants are shown in Table 1. 10 of the participants are female, age ranges are 22-49, 8 of them are undergraduate graduates. The working experience of the participants varies between 1-19 years. Participants appear to vary in terms of gender, age, education and work experience.

4. Findings

In the interviews, the participants were asked, "When you evaluate yourself, do you consider yourself overqualification for your job?" Participants who answered yes were asked the question, "What factors cause you to evaluate yourself as overqualification?" At the end of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons of Perceived Overqualification" was determined. The participants who answered no were asked the question, "Why don't you consider yourself overqualification?" At the end of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons for Not Perceiving Overqualification" was determined.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Education	Working Experience
P1	Female	27	Undergraduate	3 years
P2	Female	28	Undergraduate	6 years
P3	Female	26	Master's Degree	5 years
P4	Female	25	Master's Degree	4 years
P5	Female	25	Master's Degree	1 years
P6	Male	29	High School	6 years
P7	Male	28	Doctorate	2 years
P8	Male	38	Undergraduate	13 years
P9	Male	31	Undergraduate	6 years
P10	Male	25	Undergraduate	5 years
P11	Female	27	Master's Degree	6 years
P12	Male	22	Associate Degree	2 years
P13	Female	29	Undergraduate	5 years
P14	Female	25	Associate Degree	2 years
P15	Female	25	Undergraduate	6 years
P16	Male	49	High School	19 years
P17	Female	26	Undergraduate	2 years

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Fourteen participants answered yes to the question, “When you evaluate yourself, do you consider yourself overqualification for your job?” Only three participants answered no, stating they did not see themselves as overqualified. Table 2 shows the responses.

Table 2. Perceived overqualification of the employees

When you evaluate yourself, do you consider yourself overqualification for your job?	
Answers	Participants
Yes	P1, P2, P3, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P13, P14, P15, P16
No	P4, P12, P17

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' opinions on the theme "Reasons of Perceived Overqualification" are as follows:

- “I carry out my duties extremely well.” (P1)
- “My ability to persuade is at a high level relative to others, my greatest characteristic which sets me apart from others.” (P2)
- “I have a certificate in international language. I have certificates.” (P3)
- “I think my tourism education is high quality and I can stand out from the sarcastic employees in my place of work.” (P5)
- “I got enough experience to work.” (P6)
- “Because when I consider my education, foreign language knowledge, computer skills, and previous work experiences, I am above and beyond the qualifications required by the position I am currently working in.” (P7)
- “I am knowledgeable and experienced in business.” (P8)

Education, experience, and knowledge of foreign languages are often emphasized as why participants consider themselves overqualifications. Participants believe that having tourism training is an advantage over those not involved in tourism. At the same time, knowledge of foreign languages, developed with tourist education and individual effort, is also effective in perceiving overqualification. Because knowing a foreign language permits a more frequent dialogue with customers of hotel companies. In addition, it offers employees career opportunities in the most important departments of the hotel business. That is why employees consider it a privilege to know foreign languages. Beyond education and knowledge of foreign languages, experience is another reason for overqualifications. Employees who have been in the industry for a long time and have different experiences consider overqualification. They think their experience is a privilege and a reason to work in the industry for a long time and be accepted by companies. There are also reasons for occupational certificates and knowledge for employees to rate themselves overqualification. Indeed, these reasons stem from employee education and experience. The ability to persuade and the perfect execution of work are the employees' differences. These differences create a perception of overqualification because every employee may need the ability to persuade or not to try to do the job completely.

Table 3. Reasons for perceived overqualification

Codes	Theme
Education	Reasons for Perceived Overqualification
Experience	
Foreign Language Skills	
Persuasion Skill	
Doing The Job Perfectly	
Business Information	
Having Certificates	

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons for Not Perceiving Overqualification" are stated as follows:

“I think that I need to improve myself both theoretically and practically. In particular, I think that I need to develop my professional experience more.” (P4)

“I think I am young so I have little experience. I did not study tourism, so I consider myself inadequate. I know professional English; I need to improve my foreign language.” (P12)

“At the beginning, I think my foreign language is very inadequate. In this period, a single foreign language is no longer enough. Afterward, I worked in different departments in the hotel industry both during my internship and throughout my working life. I can say that the disadvantage of this was that I could not specialize myself in a department.” (P17)

Among the reasons why the participants do not perceive themselves as overqualification, the lack of foreign language knowledge, experience, and education is at the forefront. These results are consistent with why the participants perceive themselves as overqualification. In both cases, foreign language, education, and experience are common in the perception of overqualification. When employees see themselves as deficient in these matters, they may experience a loss of motivation and self-confidence. They position themselves in the background. Therefore, they think that they are not overqualification. Lack of specialization is also seen as an obstacle to overqualification. Since employees work in different departments in hotel businesses, gaining expertise in a field takes time. Employees with little knowledge in each department cannot gain expertise in a department. This is an obstacle to overqualification.

Table 4. Reasons for not perceiving overqualification

Codes	Theme
Foreign Language Deficiency	Reasons for Not Perceiving Overqualification
Lack Of Experience	
Lack Of Education	
Failing To Specialize	

Source: Elaborated by Authors

During the interviews, the participants were asked the second question, "Have you heard words from your managers that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?" Participants who answered yes were asked the question "Can you give examples of these words?" At the end of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons for Managers to Perceive Employees as Overqualification" was determined. The participants who answered no were asked the question "Why could such words not have been said?" At the end of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons Why Managers Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification" was determined.

Twelve participants answered yes to the question "Have you heard words from your managers that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?" Five participants gave no answer. Among these five participants, there are also P4-P17 participants who do not see themselves as overqualification. These participants both did not see themselves as overqualification and stated that they did not receive a word from their managers that they were overqualification.

Table 5. Managers to perceive employees as overqualification

Have you heard words from your managers that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?	
Answers	Participants
Yes	P1, P2, P3, P6, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12, P14, P15, P16
No	P4, P5, P10, P13, P17

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons for Managers to Perceive Employees as Overqualification" are stated as follows:

"They say I'm good at taking care of people. I heard briefly that I'm very knowledgeable in business." (P8)

"For example, when a trainee was recruited into the department, I was told that my knowledge and experience were good, and I was asked to train them." (P9)

"My customer relations are seen as good." (P11)

"You are much better. You learn fast." (P12)

"You can do this even though you have no experience. You know, it's like you were trained on this job." (P14)

"There was a dinner for 3,000 people, and I realized that in 3 hours ensuring customer satisfaction. And our executive director congratulated me across from my other friends with words like that: you do your work with love and good will; you see the benefit of being organized and organized." (P16)

Most participants claimed to have heard the words "overqualification" from managers. However, the reasons

why managers feel employees are overqualification vary. When we look at the participants' responses, we see that managers value the criteria to do business. Managers attach more importance to their employees' professional skills. And they see employees with those skills as overqualification. Moreover, for managers, educating employees is not a condition of overqualification.

Table 6. Reasons for managers to perceive employees as overqualification

Codes	Theme
Employee meticulousness Employee communication skills Employee potential Employee personnel management skills Employee job skill Employee experience Employee foreign language skills Employee job information	Reasons for Managers to Perceive Employees as Overqualification

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons Why Managers Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification" are stated as follows:

"They can be jealous of my studies because they generally have directors of regimental groups and consider themselves superiors." (P4)

"Maybe it's because the institution I work for is not an institution, a hotel chain." (P5)

"My managers are self-serving." (P10)

"They have nothing to be congratulated for. They could be from the regiment." (P13)

"They may fear the employee will be spoiled when words of jealousy, ego, self-worth, and praise are uttered." (P17)

Employees who do not hear from their managers that they are overqualification, base this situation on remarkable reasons. These employees evaluate managers as jealous and state that managers see themselves as superior. In fact, employees evaluate themselves as overqualification, but they think that managers do not have this evaluation for the reasons stated.

Table 7. Reasons why managers don't perceive employees as overqualification

Codes	Theme
Managers see themselves as superior Managers are jealous The managers are not from the tourism sector. Non-corporate business	Reasons Why Managers Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification

Source: Elaborated by Authors

In the interviews, the third question was, "Have you heard words from your colleagues that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?" Participants who

answered yes were asked, "Can you give examples of these words?" The participants who answered no were asked, "Why could such words not have been said?" at the end of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons for Colleagues to Perceive Employees as Overqualification" was determined. The theme of "Reasons Why Colleagues Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification" was determined at the end of the analysis.

Twelve participants answered yes to the question, "Have you heard words from your colleagues that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?" Five participants did not answer. It is noteworthy that P4-P12-P17 participants, who do not see themselves as overqualification, are perceived as overqualification by their colleagues.

Table 8. Colleagues to perceive employees as overqualification

Have you heard words from your colleagues that you are overqualification in the businesses you work for?	
Answers	Participants
Yes	P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P10, P12, P13, P14, P15, P16, P17
No	P1-P2-P5-P9-P11

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons for Colleagues to Perceive Employees as Overqualification" are stated as follows:

"I hear from my friends that I am good at crisis management and that I can be a good manager in the future." (P3)

"I get compliments on the fact that I can work in better positions than my current position due to my good education." (P4)

"When there is a problem, it is said that I speak quickly and solution-oriented." (P6)

"Due to the equipment, I have professionally and in terms of education, in the face of my current position, by my colleagues, what are you doing here? Try your luck in this business; this place will not add anything to you; you can't improve yourself; I'm sorry for your effort." (P7)

"I had a friend who said, "I can't be as selfless as you. I had friends who said that I can't work as much as you; you do the job by owning it." (P16)

"You have studied this business since high school; why are you still not in a managerial position? You have grasped the system very quickly; it is obvious that you have received training for this job." (P17)

The majority of the participants state that they have heard the words of their coworkers that they are overqualification. For co-workers, employee training is one of the main reasons for overqualification. In addition, when the answers of the participants are examined, their colleagues also care about the skills related to the process of doing business. This is especially important for

colleagues working in the same department. Because the higher the job skills of an employee, the more successful the work in the department will be and the workload of other employees will be lighter. For this reason, colleagues give importance to employees' work-related skills.

Table 9. Reasons for colleagues to perceive employees as overqualification

Codes	Theme
Employee Crisis Management Skill	Reasons for Colleagues to Perceive Employees as Overqualification
Employee Education Level	
Employee communication skills	
Employee Business Skills	
Employee meticulousness	
Employee's business enthusiasm	

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons Why Colleagues Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification" are stated as follows:

"We are not sincere because there is a constant change in staff." (P1)

"Maybe it's because I'm being insincere with everyone at work." (P2)

"It may not even occur to me because of the hard work of praising one another in the workplace." (P5)

"The reason is that it's a competitive environment." (P9)

"They are the people who view themselves as superior, and jealous." (P11)

Employees who have yet to hear from their colleagues that they are overqualification base this situation on both the work environment and the personal characteristics of their colleagues. For example, they evaluate their co-workers as jealous or express that they are not sincere with their co-workers. In the working environment, busy work and rapid change of colleagues are other reasons. Particularly during the busy season, the sharing of things by the employees decreases. And with hotel businesses' high employee turnover rate, sincerity needs to develop among colleagues.

Table 10. Reasons why colleagues don't perceive employees as overqualification

Codes	Theme
Change of colleagues	Reasons Why Colleagues Don't Perceive Employees as Overqualification
Not being sincere with colleagues	
Workload	
Competitive environment	
Jealousy	

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Finally, the participants were asked the question, "Do you try to be an overqualification employee in your job?" Yes, the answer to the participants who answered the question, "What are you doing to increase your quality?" At the end of the analysis, the theme of "Efforts to be overqualification" was determined. To the participants who answered no, the "Why don't you do something to increase your quality?" question was directed. At the end

of the analysis, the theme of "Reasons for not being overqualification" was determined.

Sixteen participants yusuf.karakusrdogan.edu.tr 29Kasim.84answyusuf.karakusrdogan.edu.tr 29Kasim.84ered yes to the question, "Do you try to be an overqualification employee in your job?" One participant gave no answer.

Table 11. Overqualification effort

Do you try to be an overqualification employee in your job?	
Answers	Participants
Yes	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P14, P15, P16, P17
No	P13

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Efforts to be overqualification" are stated as follows:

"I constantly read and follow the resources related to my department. I follow the training held in seminars, workshops, and public education centers." (P4)

"I got business law and English certificates. I attend career days to improve myself." (P5)

"I am trying to improve myself by taking foreign language education. I try to attend every training at the hotel." (P6)

"Yes, I have an effort, but this effort is not for my current position, but to reach a higher position. I am taking supervision training, and at the same time, I am trying to learn the operation of different departments and to learn the computer systems used there." (P7)

"I search for new and current recipes. I try to keep myself updated. I am doing research on decor." (P14)

"I am taking lessons to add German to my English and Russian. I participate in the training given and applied at the hotel. For example, I am currently taking master teacher training." (P15)

Almost all of the employees strive to be overqualification. These occupations are nearly the same as the reasons why employees see themselves as overqualification. Examples are increasing the education level, having certificates, attending various seminars, and developing a foreign language. As a result, when we evaluate, the common reasons that employees think of being overqualification are education level and foreign language knowledge. These two reasons are the elements that employees give common importance to.

Table 12. Efforts to be overqualification

Codes	Theme
Increasing the general education level	Efforts to be overqualification
Participating in vocational training	
Obtaining job-related certifications	
Attending seminars-workshops	
Foreign language development	

Source: Elaborated by Authors

Participants' views on the theme of "Reasons for Not Being Overqualification" are stated as follows:

"I know it's necessary, but I'm not trying at this point. I'm unhappy because I can't do a job that fits my qualifications." (P13)

Only one of the participants is not trying to be overqualification. This participant states that she is already overqualification. And she thinks that her abilities are too much for the present. Therefore, she expresses her unhappiness.

Table 13. Reasons for not being overqualification

Codes	Theme
Employee is unhappy	Reasons for not being overqualification

Source: Elaborated by Authors

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to investigate the self-perception of hotel industry employees on their overqualification, the underlying factors contributing to overqualification, and the attitudes and behaviors of managers and colleagues towards overqualified employees. In light of the research objectives, a qualitative research approach was employed, wherein interviews were performed with the personnel. During the interviews, a set of four primary inquiries were posed to the employees. Each primary question is accompanied by two additional optional questions that are contingent upon the respondent's affirmative or negative response. A total of eight themes were identified from the analysis of the responses provided to the multiple-choice questions. The tables also display the sub-codes corresponding to each theme. The direct quotations of the participants' perspectives on the codes within each subject were included.

Based on the first findings of the study, it was ascertained that a majority of the employees (specifically, 14 employees) perceived themselves as being overqualified, whereas three employees did not perceive themselves as overqualified. The researchers conducted interviews with employees who self-perceived as being overqualified in order to ascertain the factors contributing to this phenomenon. The issue of "reasons for perceived overqualification" was established at the conclusion of this inquiry. Within the context of this topic, the factors contributing to the perceived overqualification of employees encompass educational background, professional experience, proficiency in foreign languages, persuasive abilities, exceptional job performance, knowledge of business operations, and possession of relevant certifications. The perception of employees as being overqualified is mostly influenced by factors such as education, experience, and proficiency in foreign languages. According to employees, this characteristic sets them apart from their counterparts. The researchers

inquired about the reasons for the perception of overqualification among employees who did not identify themselves as such. The theme pertaining to the factors for the lack of perception of overqualification was identified towards the conclusion of this inquiry. In the context of this topic, various variables, including inadequate foreign language skills, limited professional experience, insufficient educational background, and a lack of specialization, contribute to the perception of employees as being underqualified rather than overqualified. The prominence of education, experience, and proficiency in foreign languages in both themes aligns with the prevailing literature on overqualification.

Research has indicated a significant correlation between the perception of being overqualified and the educational attainment of individuals. There is a prevailing belief that as one's level of education increases, individuals tend to perceive themselves as overqualified (Erdoğan et al., 2017; Guerrero & Hatala, 2015; Harari et al., 2017; Peiró et al., 2010; Ramos & Sanromá, 2013; Ye et al., 2017; Støren & Wiers-Jenssen, 2010; Vaisey, 2006; Zhang et al., 2016). The perception of perceived overqualification is favorably associated with individuals' work experiences. According to several studies (Burke, 1997; Erdoğan & Bauer, 2009; Maltarich et al., 2011; Maynard et al., 2006; Peiró et al., 2010), as individuals accumulate experience in their respective fields, their business acumen and talents tend to improve, leading to an enhanced sense of confidence and qualification. In conjunction with educational attainment and professional experience, proficiency in foreign languages also contributes to the sense of overqualification among individuals employed in the hotel industry. Due to the fact that employees within the tourism sector engage in direct interactions with customers from foreign countries. Furthermore, effective communication is facilitated by individuals who possess proficiency in foreign languages. Hence, it is inherent for individuals possessing foreign language proficiency to consider themselves as being overqualified.

Based on other findings derived from the research, it has been observed that a considerable proportion of employees (specifically, 12 individuals) are acknowledged by managers for possessing qualifications that exceed the requirements of their respective positions. The present study focuses on the evaluation of words and praises within the context of the reasons that managers see employees as overqualified. In this study, we aimed to identify the factors contributing to managers' assertions of being overqualified in relation to their subordinates. Several factors contribute to the success of employees in the workplace. These factors include the meticulousness of employees, their communication skills, potential, people management abilities, job skills, experience, foreign language proficiency, and access to job-related information. Five employees do not receive verbal acknowledgment or commendation from their bosses regarding their level of qualifications exceeding the

requirements of their respective positions. The viewpoints of these employees were assessed within the framework of "factors influencing managers' lack of recognition of employee overqualification." Based on the accounts provided by the employees, it is observed that managers refrain from expressing words of appreciation or praise towards individuals perceived as overqualified. This behavior can be attributed to several factors, including the managers' perception of their own superiority, feelings of jealousy, lack of familiarity with the tourism sector, and the non-institutional nature of the enterprises in question.

The absence of an educational component in the managerial practice of praising personnel is observed as a contributing cause to the sense of overqualification. Managers conduct comprehensive evaluations of employees' job performance and ascertain their job requirements. The primary emphasis is placed on the meticulousness and competence exhibited by personnel in their execution of tasks and delivery of high-quality service. In conclusion, a performance-based assessment is present. The scholarly literature has provided an explanation for this particular situation in the following manner. According to previous research conducted by Erdoğan and Bauer (2009) and Fine and Nevo (2008), managers primarily assess individuals based on their performance, which then leads to the identification of perceived overqualification. It is worth acknowledging that employees who perceive a lack of acknowledgement from their superiors regarding their overqualification tend to interpret this as indicative of selfishness and jealousy on the part of their bosses. As part of the research study, it was observed that two employees (P4-P17) who are unable to perceive these verbal cues do not perceive themselves as being overqualified for their respective positions. The absence of communication from the management to the remaining three employees (P5-P10-P13) regarding their over-qualification could potentially be attributed to variations in the evaluation process. The three employees expressed their perception of being overqualified based on their educational attainment. Nevertheless, managers do not take into consideration the educational context when assessing individuals for overqualification.

Based on an additional research conclusion, a notable percentage of employees (12 individuals) express being overqualified for their current positions and yet have been hired. The present analysis focuses on the evaluation of words and compliments in relation to the overarching issue of "factors contributing to colleagues' perception of employees as overqualified." In this study, we aimed to ascertain the factors contributing to employees perceiving their co-workers as overqualified. The factors contributing to these causes encompass the crisis management aptitude, employee training proficiency, communication acumen, professional expertise, attention to detail, and employee commitment to their work. Five employees do not receive any verbal acknowledgement or commendation from their colleagues regarding their level of qualifications exceeding

the requirements of their respective positions. The viewpoints of these employees were assessed within the framework of the topic "factors contributing to colleagues' perception of employees as being underqualified." Based on employee accounts, managers refrain from expressing words of appreciation or acknowledgment in situations involving perceived overqualification due to concerns related to changes in colleague dynamics, insincerity towards colleagues, high work intensity, a competitive work environment, and potential feelings of envy.

The evaluation criteria utilized by peers to assess employee overqualification bear resemblance to those employed by managers. The primary distinction resides in the manner in which colleagues assess the overqualification of employees based on their educational attainment. Furthermore, it is worth noting that colleagues perceive employees as being overqualified due to their exceptional performance and ability to effectively mitigate potential crises within the work environment. In the event that this task is not executed proficiently, one must consider the potential adverse consequences that may extend beyond the individual responsible, affecting coworkers as well in the event of an error. Due to this rationale, it is at the forefront of assessments pertaining to overqualification that employees effectively perform their job responsibilities and fulfill their duties diligently. There are multiple reasons why employees who are overqualified may not perceive their colleagues acknowledging this fact. The frequent rotation of personnel within hotel enterprises poses challenges in fostering a congenial atmosphere and cultivating interpersonal connections among employees. Due to this rationale, it may be challenging for employees to cultivate a positive perception of their colleagues (Tütüncü & Demir, 2003).

According to recent research findings, a majority of the interviewed employees (specifically, 16 employees) are actively seeking to enhance their qualifications and potentially attain a level of education or skill set that beyond the requirements of their current positions, a phenomenon commonly referred to as overqualification. It is imperative that an individual employee does not possess excessive qualifications. It can be argued that a considerable proportion of the participants exhibit a congruence between their individual characteristics and the requirements of their respective jobs. This phenomenon can be attributed to the participants' lack of perception regarding the overqualification of their existing job positions. A solitary participant encountered a situation where there was a discrepancy between their skills and the requirements of the job. The participant expressed that her qualifications surpassed the work criteria and conveyed her dissatisfaction. The personnel engage in various activities aimed at achieving overqualification, including enhancing their general education level, participating in occupational training programs, acquiring work-related certifications, attending seminar workshops, and gaining proficiency in foreign languages. Furthermore, it adheres to the perceived

literature surrounding the concept of overqualification. Employees aspire to enhance their qualifications by engaging in activities that augment their educational attainment and skill set. The rationale behind the sole employee (P13) lacking this inclination is rooted in her perception of being overqualified and holding a sense of superiority towards her current job role. Due to this rationale, she also asserts her discontent.

Upon evaluating the outcomes of the survey, it becomes evident that there is a notable prevalence of perceived overqualification among employees. Furthermore, a significant number of individuals report instances of being labeled as overqualified by both their supervisors and colleagues. Several ideas were formulated taking into account the issue of over-qualification and the preferences of employees. The following:

- It is recommended that organizations empower their employees and assign them the responsibility of mitigating the negative consequences associated with employee perceptions of being over-qualified. By implementing this approach, it is possible to mitigate the incongruity between an individual and their occupation, thereby fostering a sense of commitment and dedication from the employee towards their profession.
- The inclusion of employees in a job rotation for certain periods may yield benefits. Specifically, an employee may be obligated to perform tasks and acquire knowledge associated with a more advanced role. In this particular scenario, it is possible to mitigate employee unhappiness.
- Grant employees autonomy in their allocated activities inside the organization to allow for the demonstration of their talents and the facilitation of good contributions. By identifying and leveraging their qualifications, employees have the potential to mitigate their professional discontent.

This study provides valuable contributions to the existing body of literature. To begin with, this study stands out due to its complete approach in addressing the issue of perceived overqualification among employees in the tourism industry. The authors are unaware of any research conducted in this manner as documented in the national and international literature. Hence, an alternative and novel viewpoint on the matter is proffered. Additionally, there exist several drawbacks in this study. The present study was conducted to assess the perceived overqualification among hotel personnel employed in the hotel industry. In subsequent investigations, it would be beneficial to do a comparable analysis inside enterprises working in other sectors of the tourism industry. Furthermore, conducting similar studies pertaining to guides within the field of guidance could prove beneficial. An analogous examination can be undertaken on personnel inside all enterprises engaged in service-oriented operations. Furthermore, a structured interview protocol was employed as a data collection tool in the present study. In future research endeavors, it is possible to enhance the

quality and scope of studies by refining the study questions and plans, hence enabling the integration of qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

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INFO PAGE

Are they really overqualification? Evaluation of perceived overqualification by the employees

Abstract

This study aimed to examine the self-perception of hotel industry employees regarding their overqualification, the factors that contribute to overqualification, and the attitudes and behaviors of managers and colleagues towards overqualified employees. To achieve the research objective, a qualitative research approach was used, involving interviews with personnel to collect data. During the interviews, employees were asked four main questions. Thematic analysis was used to examine the participants' responses to the inquiries. Eight distinct themes were identified based on the examination of responses to the multiple-choice questions. The analysis revealed that a significant portion of employees felt they were overqualified for their roles. The perception of employees as overqualified is primarily influenced by factors such as education, experience, and foreign language proficiency. As per employees, this attribute distinguishes them from their peers. Moreover, a substantial portion of the workforce often perceives individuals to have excessive qualifications, as observed by their supervisors and peers. In conclusion, most participants, except for one, demonstrated a clear preference for overqualification. Employees engage in activities to enhance their qualifications in their pursuit of overqualification. These activities involve enhancing their education, enrolling in vocational training programs, obtaining work-related certifications, attending seminars, and improving their foreign language proficiency. In a broader context, there is a concept of improving employee overqualification by promoting higher education and foreign language proficiency.

Keywords: Perceived Overqualification, Employees, Tourism, Hotel Businesses, Behavior

Authors

Full Name	Author contribution roles	Contribution rate
Emre Yaşar:	Conceptualism, Methodology, Software, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing	50%
Nesrin Aydın Alakuş:	Conceptualism, Methodology, Software, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing	50%

Author statement: Author(s) declare(s) that All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. **Declaration of**

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Ethics Committee Satatement: Ethics committee report is available for this research and it has been documented to the journal.

Ethics committee: Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Isparta University of Applied Sciences

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