



DANIEL PUCIATO

WSB Merito University in Wrocław,
Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-2390-6038

PIOTR OLEŚNIEWICZ

Humanitas University, Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-0426-0630

DOMINIK BOREK

SGH Warsaw School of Economics,
Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0002-4359-9426

KAROL ROZPARA

Jagiellonian University in Kraków,
Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0003-3571-6677

TERESA KUPCZYK

Humanitas University, Poland

ORCID iD: 0000-0003-0361-2128

FACTORS SHAPING HOTEL EMPLOYEES' CHOICE OF A GOOD PLACE TO WORK IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (SDG 8)

ABSTRACT

The main objective of the article is to identify the factors shaping hotel employees' choice of a good workplace (SDG 8) in the context of sustainability, with particular reference to Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG 8): Decent Work and Economic Growth. The study involved six hotels located in Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, and Opole (Poland), encompassing a total of 193 employees. Quantitative research was conducted using the diagnostic survey method and a questionnaire technique, with a random-time sampling approach. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics such as absolute frequency of respondents (n), proportion of respondents ($\hat{p}_1$), response proportions ($\hat{p}_2$), and 95% confidence intervals for $\hat{p}_1$ (95% CI). Additionally, Cochran's Q and Dunn tests with Bonferroni correction for simple comparisons were performed. Only 1.6% of hotel employees identified personal ecological beliefs as a factor in their workplace selection. For hotels, efforts should focus on providing employees with adequate professional development opportunities and increasing the importance of environmental considerations in the workplace selection process.

KEYWORDS: work, workplace selection, hotels, Human Resource ManagementHRM, Sustainable Development, SDG 8

INTRODUCTION

The unfavorable demographic situation prevalent across most European countries has created a labor market that primarily favors employees. This demographic challenge also significantly impacts the hotel industry, which suffered permanent workforce losses during the pandemic. Additionally, the nature of hotel work often entails relatively low wage levels. Consequently, the economic success of hotel enterprises depends not merely on attracting employees with high professional qualifications but primarily on providing development opportunities to the existing workforce. Appropriate development programs enable employees to enhance their competencies and competitiveness in the labor market while ensuring that hotel enterprises have the necessary quantity and quality of human resources to achieve their economic goals and mitigate risks (Borek, Puciato, 2023). As Strzelczyk-Lucka (2019), aptly notes, even in roles involving simple tasks, the demands placed on employees are constantly increasing. The list of essential skills required to perform assigned tasks effectively expands. Technological progress is also contributing to the elimination of routine and repetitive tasks.

Consequently, only employees who continuously improve their skills can seize opportunities and address the challenges and issues arising from labor market transformations. A significant trend in the modern labor market is the identification and operationalization of sustainable human resource management. This approach entails strategies and practices that aim not only at achieving economic objectives but also at addressing social and environmental goals (SDG 8) (Bugdol, Goranczewski, Kądziałowski, 2021; Gross-Gołacka, Kupczyk, Wiktorowicz, 2022). Adopting a sustainable approach to human resource management extends its focus beyond the organization's internal operations to include its external environment. It involves a long-term perspective and allows for the control of unintended side effects (e.g., external costs) and negative feedback loops associated with organizational functioning. A critical capability of this approach is the ability to meet the current needs of the organization and stakeholders optimally, without compromising the ability to fulfill future needs (Ehnert et al., 2016; Kupczyk et al., 2024). Authors identify several key goals of sustainable human resource management (Cohen, Taylor, Müller-Camen, 2012; Budziński et al., 2024; Kupczyk et al., 2023):

1. Supporting the organization's sustainable development strategies.
2. Ensuring fair treatment, development, and well-being of employees.
3. Building employee skills, values, and trust while increasing their commitment to sustainable development principles.
4. Focusing on both internal and external stakeholders.
5. Promoting environmentally friendly organizational practices.

It should be noted that Poland ranks tenth in 'The 2024 SDG Index Score and Ranking', indicating the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, with a score of 81.7 (Sachs, Lafortune, Fuller, 2024) and still faces significant challenges in achieving SDG 8. Efforts to achieve sustainability in hotel organizations, including in human resource management, can contribute not only to non-economic goals (social and environmental) but also to making such organizations more attractive to potential employees (Bugdol, PuciatoBorys, 2019; Szromek et al., 2023; Puciato, Szromek, Bugdol, 2023). Professional development opportunities can also serve as significant workplace selection factors for potential employees. Research by the authors

(Leńczuk-Gruba et al., 2010; Gross-Gołacka et al., 2023; Kupczyk et al., 2023) confirmed this, highlighting that work aligned with personal interests and offering opportunities for development and professional advancement was the most frequently cited factor for workplace selection. Respondents also emphasized factors such as challenging tasks, a friendly team atmosphere, job security, proximity to home, salary levels, young colleagues, fixed working hours, prestige, recognition, and promotion opportunities. Similarly, El Koussa et al. (2016) noted the importance of professional development as a motivating factor for workplace selection among physicians. Other significant factors included financial incentives, infrastructure and staffing, a professional work environment, workload, and autonomy.

Kähler et al. (2012) also observed that among physicians, key workplace selection factors included personal impact on their work, the ability to provide the best possible patient care, challenging professional tasks, and alignment with personal values. Jiao et al. (2015) identified the importance of the distance between home and work as a critical factor in workplace selection. Various aspects of transportation – such as commuting distance, parking availability and costs, public transportation accessibility, and commute time within 30 minutes – were highlighted as essential workplace selection factors in studies conducted by Pfertner et al. (2023). Waddell et al. (2007), and Ho and Hensher (2016). Increasingly, the possibility of performing tasks remotely or in a hybrid manner is being recognized as an important workplace selection factor. However, in the hotel industry, this applies primarily to employees not involved in operational activities (e.g., marketing, finance, or sales) (Wall, Crowe, 2024).

In light of the introductory observations, the primary objective of this study is to identify the factors shaping the choice of a good workplace determine the role of professional development in workplace selection among hotel employees. This main goal is specified through the following research questions:

1. Which workplace selection factors were the most important for the surveyed hotel employees?
2. Did workplace selection factors relate exclusively to economic considerations, or did they also encompass social and environmental aspects?
3. What were the correlations between workplace selection factors and selected socio-economic status elements of the respondents?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Quantitative research was conducted using the diagnostic survey method and questionnaire technique. The sampling was based on a random-time approach. Poland was selected as the study area based on the criterion of cost-effectiveness. The sampling frame consisted of a list of hotels generated from the Central Register of Hotel Facilities. Additional hotel selection criteria included: location in a large city with a population exceeding 100,000 inhabitants, a medium standard rating (three-star hotels), and consent from senior management for participation in the study. Subsequently, six hotels were randomly selected. As one of the selected hotels declined to participate, a replacement hotel was randomly chosen. The study covered six hotels located in Warsaw, Krakow, Wroclaw, and Opole (Poland). The selection factors for the hotels included location in a large city with a population exceeding 100,000 inhabitants, a medium standard rating (three-star hotels), and consent from senior management for participation in the study. All employees working at the selected hotels were invited to participate in the study. A total of 193 employees consented to participate, representing approximately 88.1% of the total workforce. The sampling was based on a random-time approach. The survey questionnaire comprised 21 questions addressing the research problem and 15 socio-demographic questions. Both single-choice and multiple-choice response formats were used. Disjunctive and conjunctive cafeterias were applied. The questions were mostly test-type, with some being short-answer-type. The research instrument was developed based on a literature review. The article utilizes survey questions concerning solely the dependent variable (factors influencing the choice of workplace) and the independent variables (gender, age, education, place of residence, marital status, having minor children, and financial status). These variables were also selected based on the literature review. Not all questions are presented in this article. The questionnaire underwent a pilot study. A pilot study was conducted on a sample of 20 employees, and the results were used to develop the final version of the questionnaire. Statistical analysis of the collected data included calculations of the absolute number of respondents (n), proportion of responses the proportion of respondents ($\hat{p}$), calculated as a percentage of the total number

of respondents), and the proportion of respondents' responses ($\hat{p}_i$), calculated as a percentage of the total number of responses).

The differentiation in factors influencing hotel employees' workplace selection was assessed using the Cochran's Q test (omnibus test) and Dunn's test (post-hoc test) with Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. The adjusted odds ratio (R) was used as a measure of the magnitude of differences between compared proportions (Berry, Johnston, Mielke, 2007). Dunn's test was specifically designed for multiple (post-hoc) comparisons and allows for the comparison of all possible pairs within a single analysis. It is methodologically consistent with Cochran's test, as it relies on the same assumptions regarding related ranks for dichotomous data. Performing Dunn's test following Cochran's test is considered a standard and methodologically sound procedure – the *gold standard* for non-parametric variables (Conover, 1999).

Correlations between workplace selection factors (dependent variables, DV) and selected socio-demographic variables (independent variables, IVs) were evaluated using Pearson's chi-square test of independence. Cramer's V was calculated to assess the strength of observed correlations (Cohen, 1988; Jann, 2005). Statistical inference was conducted at a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$. Statistical computations were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0).

The study surveyed a total of 193 employees, including 134 women (69.4%) and 59 men (30.6%). Half of the respondents were aged 35 or younger, while the other half were older than 35. Education levels included vocational or secondary education (45.1%) and higher education (54.9%). A majority of respondents (66.8%) resided in large cities, while 33.2% lived in small to medium-sized towns or rural areas. Regarding marital status, 61.1% were married, while 38.9% were single. Most employees (57%) did not have children under the age of 18, while 43% had children in that age group. Material status was reported as average or above average by 82.9% of respondents, with 17.1% describing it as below average (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Hotel Employees (N=193)

Variables		N	$\widehat{p}_1[\pm 95\% \text{ CI}]$
Gender	Female	134	69.4% [62.7, 75.6]
	Male	59	30.6% [24.4, 37.3]
Age	≤35 years	96	49.7% [42.7, 56.8]
	>35 years	97	50.3% [43.2, 57.3]
Education	Higher	106	54.9% [47.9, 61.8]
	Vocational/Secondary	87	45.1% [38.2, 52.1]
Place of Residence	Large city	129	66.8% [60.0, 73.2]
	Small/Medium town/Rural	64	33.2% [26.8, 40.0]
Marital Status	Single	75	38.9% [32.2, 45.9]
	Married	118	61.1% [54.1, 67.8]
Children under 18	No	110	57.0% [49.9, 63.8]
	Yes	83	43.0% [36.2, 50.1]
Material Status	Below average	33	17.1% [12.3, 22.9]
	Average and above	160	82.9% [72.7, 95.6]

Notes: n, number of respondents; $\widehat{p}_1$, proportion of respondents; CI, confidence interval for proportion of respondents.
Source: own study.

RESULTS

The analysis of the study results indicates that the largest group of respondents (80.8%) identified salary level as the primary factor in selecting a workplace. For 46.6% of respondents, the workplace atmosphere was important, while 34.7% of surveyed hotel employees highlighted professional development opportunities as a key factor for workplace selection. Additionally, respondents pointed to flexible employment conditions (28.5%), hotel reputation (25.4%), work-life balance (21.8%), the scope and level of benefits offered (20.2%), and the opinions of others (10.4%). Only 1.6% of hotel employees cited personal ecological beliefs as a factor for workplace selection.

Based on the Cochran's Q test results, the proportions of the nine factors influencing workplace selection among hotel employees differed significantly (χ^2 (8, N=193) = 356.96, $p<0.001$), with an effect size of $R = 0.22$. Post-hoc comparisons using Dunn's test revealed no significant differences ($p>0.05$) for the following pairs of factors: 1) Professional development opportunities vs. workplace atmosphere, flexible employment conditions, hotel reputation, work-life balance, or the scope and level of benefits offered; 2) Flexible employment conditions vs. work-life balance or the scope and level of benefits offered;

3) Hotel reputation vs. work-life balance, the scope and level of benefits offered, or the opinions of others; 4) Work-life balance vs. the scope and level of benefits offered or the opinions of others; 5) The opinions of others vs. the scope and level of benefits offered or personal ecological beliefs. Other comparisons between factors were statistically significant ($p \leq 0.05$) (see Table 2).

Table 2. Factors Influencing Workplace Selection among Hotel Employees ($N=193$)

Variables	<i>N</i>	$\hat{p}[\pm 95\% \text{ CI}]$	$\hat{p}_1$
Salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.)	156	80.8% [74.8, 85.9]	29.9%
Workplace atmosphere	90	46.6% [39.7, 53.7]	17.3%
Professional development opportunities	67	34.7% [28.3, 41.6]	12.9%
Flexible employment conditions	55	28.5% [22.5, 35.2]	10.6%
Hotel reputation	49	25.4% [19.6, 31.9]	9.4%
Work-life balance	42	21.8% [16.4, 28.0]	8.1%
Scope and level of benefits offered	39	20.2% [15.0, 26.3]	7.5%
Opinions of others	20	10.4% [6.7, 15.2]	3.8%
Personal ecological beliefs	3	1.6% [0.4, 4.1]	0.6%
Total	521	270%	100%
$\chi^2 (8, N=193) = 356.96, p < 0.001, R = 0.22$			

Notes: *n*, number of responses; $\hat{p}$, proportion of responses; CI, confidence interval for proportion of respondents; $\hat{p}_1$, proportion of respondents; χ^2 , Cochran's Q test statistic; *p*, Cochran's Q test probability value; *R*, effect size measure for Cochran's Q test, where: $R \leq 0.20$, weak effect, $R = 0.21-0.40$, sufficient effect, $R = 0.41-0.60$, medium effect, $R = 0.61-0.80$, large effect, $R \geq 0.81$, very large effect (Berry et al., 2007).

Source: own study.

The study observed limited correlations between workplace selection factors and socio-economic status variables such as gender, education level, and place of residence ($p \leq 0.05$).

Hotel reputation as a workplace selection factor was indicated by 40.7% of male respondents and 18.7% of female respondents. Men were statistically significantly more likely to cite this factor compared to women ($\chi^2 = 10.49$, $p = 0.009$), with a small effect size ($V = 0.23$).

Flexible employment conditions as a workplace selection factor significantly differed by education level ($\chi^2 = 10.70$, $p = 0.009$). This factor was cited by 40.2% of respondents with vocational or secondary education and 18.9% of those with higher education. The effect size was small ($V = 0.24$). Education level also significantly influenced the choice of professional development opportunities ($\chi^2 = 11.59$, $p = 0.009$). This factor was selected by 45.3% of employees with higher education and 21.8% with vocational or secondary education ($V = 0.25$).

Professional development opportunities as a selection factor significantly varied by place of residence ($\chi^2 = 12.98, p<0.001$). Residents of large cities were more likely to cite this factor (43.4%) compared to those from small to medium-sized towns or rural areas (17.2%). The effect size was small ($V=0.26$). Place of residence also significantly influenced the choice of others' opinions as a workplace selection factor ($\chi^2 = 22.09, p<0.001$). This factor was cited by 25% of respondents from small to medium-sized towns or rural areas and 3.1% from large cities ($V=0.34$), indicating a medium effect size. However, none of the socio-economic factors taken into account in the study statistically significantly differentiated the ecological beliefs of the surveyed hotel employees as a motive for choosing their place of work (Table 3-6).

Table 3. Factors Influencing Workplace Selection vs. Gender and Age of Hotel Employees (N=193)

Variables		Gender		Age	
		Female	Male	≤35 lat	>35 lat
		<i>n</i> (<i>p</i> ₁)	<i>n</i> (<i>p</i> ₁)	<i>n</i> (<i>p</i> ₁)	<i>n</i> (<i>p</i> ₁)
Salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.)	No	29 (21.6%)	8 (13.6%)	17 (17.7%)	20 (20.6%)
	Yes	105 (78.4%)	51 (86.4%)	79 (82.3%)	77 (79.4%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.73, p = 1.00, V = 0.09$		$\chi^2 = 0.26, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$	
Workplace atmosphere	No	72 (53.7%)	31 (52.5%)	56 (58.3%)	47 (48.5%)
	Yes	62 (46.3%)	28 (47.5%)	40 (41.7%)	50 (51.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.02, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 1.89, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$	
Professional development opportunities	No	86 (64.2%)	40 (67.8%)	61 (63.5%)	65 (67.0%)
	Yes	48 (35.8%)	19 (32.2%)	35 (36.5%)	32 (33.0%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.24, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$		$\chi^2 = 0.26, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$	
Flexible employment conditions	No	92 (68.7%)	46 (78.0%)	69 (71.9%)	69 (71.1%)
	Yes	42 (31.3%)	13 (22.0%)	27 (28.1%)	28 (28.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.74, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$		$\chi^2 = 0.01, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$	
Hotel reputation	No	109 (81.3%)	35 (59.3%)	73 (76.0%)	71 (73.2%)
	Yes	25 (18.7%)	24 (40.7%)	23 (24.0%)	26 (26.8%)
		$\chi^2 = 10.49, p = .009, V = 0.23$		$\chi^2 = 0.21, p = 1.00, V = 0.03$	
Work-life balance	No	99 (73.9%)	52 (88.1%)	74 (77.1%)	77 (79.4%)
	Yes	35 (26.1%)	7 (11.9%)	22 (22.9%)	20 (20.6%)
		$\chi^2 = 4.89, p = .243, V = 0.16$		$\chi^2 = 0.15, p = 1.00, V = 0.03$	
Scope and level of benefits offered	No	110 (82.1%)	44 (74.6%)	81 (84.4%)	73 (75.3%)
	Yes	24 (17.9%)	15 (25.4%)	15 (15.6%)	24 (24.7%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.43, p = 1.00, V = 0.09$		$\chi^2 = 2.49, p = 1.00, V = 0.11$	
Opinions of others	No	117 (87.3%)	56 (94.9%)	87 (90.6%)	86 (88.7%)
	Yes	17 (12.7%)	3 (5.1%)	9 (9.4%)	11 (11.3%)
		$\chi^2 = 2.55, p = .990, V = 0.11$		$\chi^2 = 0.2, p = 1.00, V = 0.03$	
Personal ecological beliefs	No	132 (98.5%)	58 (98.3%)	94 (97.9%)	96 (98.97%)
	Yes	2 (1.5%)	1 (1.7%)	2 (2.1%)	1 (1.03%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.01, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 3.08, p = .711, V = 0.13$	

Notes: *n*, number of responses; *p*₁, proportion of respondents. χ^2 , chi-square test of independence; *p*, χ^2 test adjusted probability value; *V*, effect size measure for χ^2 test of independence, where: $V< 0.10$, negligible effect, $V = 0.10 < 0.30$, small effect, $V = 0.30 < 0.50$, medium effect, $V> 0.50$ large effect (Cohen, 1988).
Source: own study.

Table 4. Factors Influencing Workplace Selection vs. Education and Place of Residence of Hotel Employees (N=193)

Variables		Education		Place of Residence	
		Higher	Vocational/Seco ndary	Large city	Small/Medium town/Rural
		n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)
Salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.)	No	22 (20.8%)	15 (17.2%)	18 (14.0%)	19 (29.7%)
	Yes	84 (79.2%)	72 (82.8%)	111 (86.0%)	45 (70.3%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.38, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$		$\chi^2 = 6.83, p = .081, V = 0.19$	
Workplace atmosphere	No	57 (53.8%)	46 (52.9%)	63 (48.8%)	40 (62.5%)
	Yes	49 (46.2%)	41 (47.1%)	66 (51.2%)	24 (37.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.02, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 3.21, p = .059, V = 0.13$	
Professional development opportunities	No	58 (54.7%)	68 (78.2%)	73 (56.6%)	53 (82.8%)
	Yes	48 (45.3%)	19 (21.8%)	56 (43.4%)	11 (17.2%)
		$\chi^2 = 11.59, p = .009, V = 0.25$		$\chi^2 = 12.98, p < .001, V = 0.26$	
Flexible employment conditions	No	86 (81.1%)	52 (59.8%)	87 (67.4%)	51 (79.7%)
	Yes	20 (18.9%)	35 (40.2%)	42 (32.6%)	13 (20.3%)
		$\chi^2 = 10.70, p = .009, V = 0.24$		$\chi^2 = 3.15, p = .084, V = 0.13$	
Hotel reputation	No	71 (67.0%)	73 (83.9%)	90 (69.8%)	54 (84.4%)
	Yes	35 (33.0%)	14 (16.1%)	39 (30.2%)	10 (15.6%)
		$\chi^2 = 7.23, p = .063, V = 0.19$		$\chi^2 = 4.82, p = .252, V = 0.16$	
Work-life balance	No	85 (80.2%)	66 (75.9%)	103 (79.8%)	48 (75.0%)
	Yes	21 (19.8%)	21 (24.1%)	26 (20.2%)	16 (25.0%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.53, p = 1.00, V = 0.05$		$\chi^2 = 0.59, p = 1.00, V = 0.06$	
Scope and level of benefits offered	No	84 (79.2%)	70 (80.5%)	97 (75.2%)	57 (89.1%)
	Yes	22 (20.8%)	17 (19.5%)	32 (24.8%)	7 (10.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.04, p = 1.00, V = 0.02$		$\chi^2 = 5.10, p = .216, V = 0.16$	
Opinions of others	No	95 (89.6%)	78 (89.7%)	125 (96.9%)	48 (75.0%)
	Yes	11 (10.4%)	9 (10.3%)	4 (3.1%)	16 (25.0%)
		$\chi^2 < 0.01, p = 1.00, V < 0.01$		$\chi^2 = 22.09, p < .001, V = 0.34$	
Personal ecological beliefs	No	105 (99.1%)	85 (97.7%)	128 (99.2%)	62 (96.9%)
	Yes	1 (0.9%)	2 (2.3%)	1 (0.8%)	2 (3.1%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.57, p = 1.00, V = 0.05$		$\chi^2 = 1.54, p = 1.00, V = 0.09$	

Notes: n , number of responses; $\hat{p}_1$, proportion of respondents. χ^2 , chi-square test of independence; p , χ^2 test adjusted probability value; V , effect size measure for χ^2 test of independence, where: $V < 0.10$, negligible effect, $V = 0.10 < 0.30$, small effect, $V = 0.30 < 0.50$, medium effect, $V > 0.50$ large effect (Cohen, 1988).
Source: own study.

Table 5. Factors Influencing Workplace Selection vs. Marital Status and Having Children of Hotel Employees (N=193)

Variables		Marital Status		Children under 18	
		Single	Married	No	Yes
		n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)
Salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.)	No	13 (17.3%)	24 (20.3%)	25 (22.7%)	12 (14.5%)
	Yes	62 (82.7%)	94 (79.7%)	87 (77.3%)	71 (85.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.27, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$		$\chi^2 = 2.09, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$	
Workplace atmosphere	No	42 (56.0%)	61 (51.7%)	58 (52.7%)	45 (54.2%)
	Yes	33 (44.0%)	57 (48.3%)	52 (47.3%)	38 (45.8%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.34, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$		$\chi^2 = 0.04, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$	
Professional development opportunities	No	52 (69.3%)	74 (62.7%)	77 (70.0%)	49 (59.0%)
	Yes	23 (30.7%)	44 (37.3%)	33 (30.0%)	34 (41.0%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.89, p = 1.00, V = 0.07$		$\chi^2 = 2.51, p = 1.00, V = 0.11$	
Flexible employment conditions	No	55 (73.3%)	83 (70.3%)	73 (66.4%)	65 (78.3%)
	Yes	20 (26.7%)	35 (29.7%)	37 (33.6%)	18 (21.7%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.20, p = 1.00, V = 0.03$		$\chi^2 = 3.32, p = .018, V = 0.13$	
Hotel reputation	No	51 (68.0%)	93 (78.8%)	78 (70.9%)	66 (79.5%)
	Yes	24 (32.0%)	25 (21.2%)	32 (29.1%)	17 (20.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 2.83, p = .832, V = 0.12$		$\chi^2 = 1.85, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$	
Work-life balance	No	57 (76.0%)	94 (79.7%)	82 (74.5%)	69 (83.9%)
	Yes	18 (24.0%)	24 (20.3%)	28 (25.5%)	14 (16.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.36, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$		$\chi^2 = 2.05, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$	
Scope and level of benefits offered	No	62 (82.7%)	92 (78.0%)	93 (84.5%)	61 (73.5%)
	Yes	13 (17.3%)	26 (22.0%)	17 (15.5%)	22 (26.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.63, p = 1.00, V = 0.06$		$\chi^2 = 3.58, p = .025, V = 0.14$	
Opinions of others	No	64 (85.3%)	109 (92.4%)	94 (85.5%)	79 (95.2%)
	Yes	11 (14.7%)	9 (7.6%)	16 (14.5%)	4 (4.8%)
		$\chi^2 = 2.45, p = 1.00, V = 0.11$		$\chi^2 = 4.82, p = .252, V = 0.16$	
Personal ecological beliefs	No	74 (98.6%)	116 (98.3%)	108 (98.2%)	82 (98.8%)
	Yes	1 (1.33%)	2 (1.7%)	2 (1.8%)	1 (1.2%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.94, p = 1.00, V = 0.10$		$\chi^2 = 0.12, p = 1.00, V = 0.02$	

Notes: n , number of responses; $\hat{p}_1$, proportion of respondents. χ^2 , chi-square test of independence; p , χ^2 test adjusted probability value; V , effect size measure for χ^2 test of independence, where: $V < 0.10$, negligible effect, $V = 0.10 < 0.30$, small effect, $V = 0.30 < 0.50$, medium effect, $V > 0.50$ large effect (Cohen, 1988).
Source: own study.

Table 6. Factors Influencing Workplace Selection vs Material Status of Hotel Employees (N=193)

Variables		Material Status	
		Below average	Average and above
		n ($\hat{p}_1$)	n ($\hat{p}_1$)
Salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.)	No	3 (9.1%)	34 (21.3%)
	Yes	30 (90.9%)	126 (78.8%)
		$\chi^2 = 2.61, p = .956, V = 0.12$	
Workplace atmosphere	No	19 (57.6%)	84 (52.5%)
	Yes	14 (42.4%)	76 (47.5%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.28, p = 1.00, V = 0.04$	
Professional development opportunities	No	21 (63.6%)	105 (65.6%)
	Yes	12 (36.4%)	55 (34.4%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.05, p = 1.00, V = 0.02$	
Flexible employment conditions	No	21 (63.6%)	117 (73.1%)
	Yes	12 (36.4%)	43 (26.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.21, p = 1.00, V = 0.08$	
Hotel reputation	No	27 (81.8%)	117 (73.1%)
	Yes	6 (18.2%)	43 (26.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 1.09, p = 1.00, V = 0.08$	
Work-life balance	No	22 (66.7%)	129 (80.6%)
	Yes	11 (33.3%)	31 (19.4%)
		$\chi^2 = 3.13, p = .069, V = 0.13$	
Scope and level of benefits offered	No	26 (78.8%)	128 (80.0%)
	Yes	7 (21.2%)	32 (20.0%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.02, p = 1.00, V = 0.01$	
Opinions of others	No	32 (96.97%)	141 (88.1%)
	Yes	1 (3.03%)	19 (11.9%)
		$\chi^2 = 4.6, p = .032, V = 0.15$	
Personal ecological beliefs	No	32 (96.67%)	158 (98.8%)
	Yes	1 (3.03%)	2 (1.2%)
		$\chi^2 = 0.63, p = 1.00, V = 0.06$	

Notes: n , number of responses; $\hat{p}_1$, proportion of respondents. χ^2 , chi-square test of independence; p , χ^2 test adjusted probability value; V , effect size measure for χ^2 test of independence, where: $V < 0.10$, negligible effect, $V = 0.10 < 0.30$, small effect, $V = 0.30 < 0.50$, medium effect, $V > 0.50$ large effect (Cohen, 1988).
Source: own study.

DISCUSSION

The present study revealed that the most frequently cited factor for workplace selection among hotel employees was salary level. Respondents also identified other significant factors, including workplace atmosphere, opportunities for professional development, flexible employment conditions, hotel reputation, work-life balance, the scope and level of offered benefits, and others’ opinions. The least commonly mentioned factor was personal ecological beliefs.

Financial incentives were also a key workplace selection factor in studies conducted by El Koussa et al. (2016). The importance of salary in workplace selection was similarly demonstrated by Lenczuk-Gruba et al. (2010), Freedman and Kern (1997), and Heikkilä et al. (2014). Similar results regarding hospitality sector employees were reported by Heimerl et al. (2020) and Wisnom and Janes (2023). This applies not only to base salary levels and bonus schemes but also to non-wage benefit packages, which chain hotels often use to compete for staff. Other studies have highlighted workplace proximity to home as an indirectly

related financial factor, encompassing transportation costs and the cost of commute time (Leńczuk-Gru et al., 2010; Naess et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2015; Batabyal, Nijkamp, 2020; Couch et al., 2021). Batabyal and Nijkamp (2020) analyzed the impact of wage taxation on workplace selection and commuting costs among urban and rural residents, finding that respondents chose workplaces offering the highest net post-tax income after deducting commuting expenses. Conversely, Naess et al. (2019) observed that individuals might opt to travel further distances if necessary to find more suitable employment, particularly those with specialized qualifications. Transportation mode was also critical, with preferences for time efficiency, flexibility, comfort, and stress avoidance encouraging the use of public transport for city-center workplaces and private vehicles for suburban locations. Gupta et al. (2015) showed that dual-income households do not always prioritize shorter commutes for one partner at the expense of the other. Factors such as residence location, job commitment (full-time or part-time), and income levels were found to be key modifiers of such decisions. Previous research also underscored the significance of workplace selection factors such as infrastructure quality, colleagues, professional work environments, workload, autonomy (El Koussa et al., 2016), challenges, team atmosphere, job security, fixed working hours (Leńczuk-Gruba et al., 2010) workplace quality (Heikkilä et al., 2014), organizational structure, prior professional experiences, and personal factors (Couch et al., 2021). The findings of other studies corroborate the significant role of professional development opportunities observed in this research as a workplace selection factor. Lenczuk-Gruba et al. (2016) noted that employees primarily considered alignment with personal interests and the opportunity for professional growth and development when selecting their first workplace. Heikkilä et al. (2014) found that employees were more interested in professional development, training quality, career growth, and education than salary. Similarly, career advancement was a crucial factor for workplace selection in studies by El Koussa et al. (2016). Couch et al. (2021) examined the impact of selection factors on both workplace choice and retention, highlighting professional development as a key factor influencing recruitment and employee retention. Research in the hospitality industry also demonstrates that training and development programs enhance an employee's market value, making the hotel a preferred place of employment

(Shikha et al., 2025). Clear criteria for vertical advancement – specifically well-defined organizational hierarchy levels – are also important, as they attract highly motivated individuals, particularly recent graduates (Brown et al., 2014). Furthermore, Coelho et al. (2026) highlight the significant role of autonomy and job crafting in creating attractive jobs. The work environment is also crucial, as factors such as fairness on the part of supervisors, transparent communication, and managerial support attract new employees and reduce the risk of staff turnover in hotels (Wisnom and Janes, 2023). Heimerl et al. (2020) emphasize the significant role that atmosphere and relationships play in the long-term attractiveness of a workplace; this is reflected in aspects such as teamwork, mutual respect, and the absence of unethical behavior. Research by Melián-González (2024) has demonstrated the importance of work scheduling for workplace attractiveness in the hospitality industry. Adherence to schedules and shift stability within a 24-hour operational system determine an employee's ability to maintain a work-life balance.

This study demonstrated that workplace selection factors among hotel employees were driven by both economic and social factors. However, only a small percentage of respondents indicated environmental considerations, such as personal ecological beliefs, as a significant factor. Slightly different patterns were noticed in articles by other authors. Research by Lin et al. (2022) showed that while personal environmental factors (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors) do not always influence workplace selection, air pollution can be a significant factor for potential employees. Using microdata from the Chinese census, the authors examined the causal impact of air pollution on workplace choice, finding that air pollution increased the likelihood of employees choosing workplaces closer to home. These findings suggest that environmental factors may influence workplace selection, particularly when linked to health outcomes. Employees thus tend to make choices aimed at avoiding environmental risks. Shen and Zhang (2022) also emphasized the importance of environmental conditions in workplace selection.

Symptomatically, our own research found that the least frequently indicated motive for the choice of workplace by surveyed hotel employees was environmental beliefs. Meanwhile, it is this sphere that has been subject to the strongest regulatory influence in recent years. The EU countries represented

by the authors of this article are causing the most discussion Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the council of June 18, 2020 on establishing a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 (Evangelinos et al., 2018). The object of the indicated legal act is to define the rules that make it possible to determine whether an economic activity qualifies as environmentally sustainable for the purpose of determining the extent to which an investment is beneficial or not to a specific natural area. When evaluating an economic activity in terms of its environmental benefits, both the environmental effects of the activity itself, as well as the impact of the products provided and services rendered by the activity, are taken into account. Regulation 2020/852 also identifies so-called *serious damage to environmental objectives*, the precise definition of which is entrusted to the European Commission through the given power to adopt delegated acts (European Commission delegated regulations). In the case of hotel establishments under delegated acts, it is indicated that an increase in the share of products in line with best market practices (such as eco-friendly stationery, natural mineral water, energy-efficient household appliances and white goods) certified in accordance with environmental standards should be pursued. The hotel operator (gestor) is committed to steadily increasing the share of certified products. The above discussion clearly indicates that environmental beliefs, which are not the most important motive for the choice of employment, are nevertheless important to those who employ them. This is primarily due to the ongoing legal changes aimed at increasing public awareness in the environmental sustainability of tourism activities.

The study observed correlations between workplace selection factors and socio-economic characteristics of hotel employees, such as gender, education level, and place of residence. Other researchers have also documented these correlations. Freedman and Kern (1997) found that salary and commute-related burdens (financial and time-related) were more critical for men than women in workplace selection. Evangelinos et al. (2018), reported that men more frequently cited salary and colleagues, while women emphasized professional development and work-life balance as workplace selection factors. Unlike this study, other research also found correlations between environmental factors such as workplace selection factors and socio-economic

characteristics. Shen and Zhang (2022) observed that individuals' preference for environmentally superior workplaces was correlated with gender, age, and education level. Their findings indicated that older and more educated individuals were more inclined to change workplaces for locations with better environmental conditions. Women were also more likely than men to make such changes. Lin et al. (2022) demonstrated that the impact of air pollution on choosing a workplace near home was more pronounced for women, older individuals, urban residents, and those employed in traditional industries.

The originality of this study lies in its focus and scope. The topic of workplace selection factors, particularly in the context of sustainable development, is rarely addressed in the literature. This is significant, as the study confirmed the critical role of professional development as a workplace selection factor. Previous research has scarcely examined the correlation between workplace selection factors and socio-economic status, nor has there been much focus on workplace selection factors among hotel employees. These contributions represent a valuable addition to academic knowledge. The primary limitations of this study include the sample size and the research methods employed. The limited and non-representative nature of the sample restricts the generalization of the findings to the broader population, confining them to the studied employees. Moreover, the diagnostic survey method relied on collecting respondents' opinions, which may not fully align with the actual factors for workplace selection. Too much emphasis was also placed on traditional factors influencing the choice of workplace. This study is cross-sectional and descriptive in nature. Therefore, only comments on relationships and differences can be made.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the study results allows the following answers to the research questions posed in the introduction:

1. The most important factors influencing workplace selection among the surveyed hotel employees were salary level, workplace atmosphere, and opportunities for professional development.
2. Workplace selection factors were not limited to economic considerations but also included social aspects. Environmental factors were cited very rarely.

3. Among the surveyed hotel employees, correlations were observed between workplace selection factors and socio-economic status elements such as gender, education level, and place of residence.

Identifying the key factors influencing the choice of workplace among the employees surveyed is also of significant practical importance. Identifying the main factors influencing workplace selection among potential employees also holds significant practical value. Within the framework of sustainable human resource management, organizations under study should aim to offer potential employees both economic and social benefits. The following should be considered key: salary level (wages, bonuses, etc.), workplace atmosphere, professional development opportunities and flexible employment conditions. This should be reflected in remuneration policies, incentive systems, and work organization. The environmental dimension, however, requires educational initiatives to increase awareness among employees and society at large. Raising awareness of the impact of air, water, and soil pollution on public health and individual behaviors is also crucial for optimally designing state environmental policies.

From a cognitive perspective, further research on workplace selection factors, including professional development prospects and environmental factors, should be pursued. The results of our own research and research conducted by other authors indicate that environmental motives should include those that are significant for the health and quality of life of employees, e.g. the level of air pollution. These studies should be conducted on representative populations and among various social groups. Additionally, survey methods should be supplemented with observational and experimental approaches to deepen the understanding of workplace selection factors. In the context of the hotel industry, a comparative analysis of workplace selection factors would be particularly interesting, focusing on hotel characteristics such as the degree of integration, standard, and the predominant type of hotel guest.

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