

## Impact of Demographic Variables on Job Stress Factors: A Study on Turkish Employees

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### Abstract

Pursuant to research regarding hotel management and tourism, several stress factors have been determined to affect both employees and managers. However, relevant literature does not adequately explore the effect of demographic variables on the stress factors. Moreover, no measurement has been identified to test job stress factors for Turkish hotel employees. Accordingly, this study, particularly aimed (a) to develop a scaling method for examining job stress factors for hotel employees in Turkey, and (b) to examine the differences between demographic characteristics and job stress factors obtained from the scaling endeavor. A convenience sampling method was used to determine the participants in the study. Then, face-to-face questionnaires were administered to employees at four- and five-star hotels in Istanbul. In total, 500 questionnaires were delivered to the employees, and 379 questionnaire forms were considered valid. At the end of the study, scaling was obtained that includes 33 items falling under six job stress factors, the factors of job stress and factor items were ranked and then, the differences between the demographic variables and job stress factors were presented.

**Keywords:** job stress factors, demographic factors, hotel employee.

### Introduction

Job stress is a problem in the hospitality industry, just as it is in other businesses. Much of the relevant research (Ashton, 2017; Chan & Dongyu, 2011; Lambert, Minor, Wells, & Hogan, 2016; Hwang, Hyun, & Park, 2013; Mansour & Mohanna, 2017; Sunny’Hu & Cheng, 2010; Tsaur & Tang, 2012) indicates that the vast majority of employees experiences high levels of stress in their workplace, which can generate negative impacts on both the employee and the organization. Therefore, it is important to identify and understand the stressors experienced by employees in order to develop appropriate management methods (Law, Pearce, & Woods, 1995). By examining

relevant research on this issue that refers, generally, to the determinants of job-related stress, the kinds of stress can be linked to being mostly related to performance, turnover intention, or burnout, rather than relating it to demographic factors. However, certain constrained empirical studies examined the differences between demographic variables and job stress factors, especially for Turkish hotel employees. The significance of this study is two-fold. First, as there are not enough studies in Turkish literature regarding the job stress of hotel employees, there is no scaling to uncover their job stress factors. Second, hospitality literature tends to emphasize the relations between variables such as job or role stress, burnout, locus of control and job performance or attitudes (Murray-Gibbons & Gibbons, 2007), but the degree of employee stress based on demographic characteristics remains poorly understood (Chuang & Lei, 2011). Therefore, this study aims to determine job stress factors for Turkish hotel employees, and to investigate the differences between the demographic variables and job stress factors.

### **Literature Review**

Job stress is widespread within the hospitality industry (Kim, Shin, & Umbreit, 2007; Papadopoulou-Bayliss, Ineson, & Wilkie, 2001; Wildes, 2007), as it is labour-intensive and involves frequent rotations, work overload, anti-social working hours, intensive contacts with customers, and highly emotional labour characteristics (Chiang, Birtch, & Kwan, 2010; Hayes & Weathington, 2007; Wong & Huang, 2014). Therefore, even if the presence of stress at work is almost inevitable in all the organizations, to manage it in a right way is so important for all hotels like the other business areas. To control stress, the organizations usually begin by understanding job stress as a concept with its reasons and results.

Job stress can be defined as a psychological and physical strain that appears when a mismatch occurs between work demands and resources (Lazarus, 1993). In an organizational context, the term job stress is used interchangeably with work stress and occupational stress (AbuAlRub, 2004; Ismail, Mohamed, Sulaiman, Ismail, Z., & Mahmood, 2010; Larson, 2004). It is a generic term that has been explained as a temporary adaptation process causing psychological strain; it is generally caused by an imbalance between work demands and one's capability to respond to the job, a combination that can eventually lead to job burnout (Rothmann, Jackson, & Kruger, 2003). According to Chuang and Lei (2011) as one of the prevailing issues for today's workforce is job stress and it derives from people's reactions to the work environment and situations that appear threatening to them. Jamal and Baba (2000) study defined job stress as a poor fit between the individual abilities and the work environment in which either excessive demands are made on the individual or the individual is not fully equipped to handle a particular situation.

High levels of occupational stress have a negative impact on performance (AbuAlRub, 2004; Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992). Stress at work can affect an organization with employee absenteeism, intention to leave, interpersonal difficulties, and poor performance (Ashton, 2017). Stress in the workplace, a common cause of job dissatisfaction (Golbasi, Kelleci, & Dogan, 2008), positively correlates with employee burnout and voluntary turnover intention and negatively correlates with employee performance, productivity, and absenteeism (Chiang & Liu, 2017; Jamal, 1990; Robbins, 2003). The study by McFillen, Riegel and Enz (1986) examined the reasons for restaurant managers' turnover. They indicated the issues of pay; treatment by

supervisors; work hours; and job pressure as reasons for turnover and the study emphasized that these people who leave their job were experiencing stress of various forms. Research conducted in Tourism Training Australia by Marwick in 1991 outlined the reasons why employees left the tourism industry. This research identified three reasons and one of them was stress, the others were lack of understanding of industry work conditions and being too young to cope (especially in front-line positions). Woodruff (1993), found that the high levels of stress linked to serious negative outcomes such as social and family problems and decreased job performance. It also causes high rates of work absenteeism and burnout (Koç & Bozkurt, 2017; Westman & Etzion, 2001). High levels of job stress have been shown to be associated with a variety of negative consequences for employees in both the workplace and in their private lives, including physical illness and even mental disorders in extreme cases (Brewer & McMahan-Landers, 2003; Ismail, Yao, & Yunus, 2009). The researchers noted that job stress is negatively correlated to employees' task performance and organizational performance (Kaya, 2013). Overall, many studies (Abramis, 1994; AbuAlRub, 2004; Cleveland, O'Neill, Himelright, Harrison, Crouter, & Drago, 2007; Jamal & Baba, 2000; Leung, Chan, & Dongyu, 2011; Savery & Luks, 2001) have indicated the relationship between performance and job stress. They have especially uncovered that stress has been linked with the following three outcomes: reduced job satisfaction, lower organizational commitment, and increased turnover. Stress at work is a well-known factor for low motivation and morale, decrease in performance, high turnover and sick-leave, accidents, low job satisfaction, low quality products and services, poor internal communication and conflicts (Murphy, 1995; Schabracq & Cooper, 2000). Moreover, Chusmir and Franks (1988), said that all the problems in a business are related to stress and it has an effect on overall organizational efficiency and effectiveness. Research has shown a negative correlation between job stress and quality customer service delivery, that is, less stressed employees provide better customer service than more stressed ones (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Varca, 1999). In general, work-related stress has been shown to result in declines in the quality of employee job performance (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008), increases in exhaustion, decreases in employee ability to learn (Lepine, Podsakoff, & Lepine, 2005), more depressive symptoms, hostility (Motowidlo, Packard, & Manning, 1986), and withdrawal (Gupta & Beeher, 1979). As a summary, within the hospitality industry like the other ones, work stress has been regarded as one of the most important issues facing managers and it affects the performance of all levels of employees, including both managers and employees (Ross, 1995).

As job stress is viewed as one of the most significant challenges facing organizations, many studies have tried to identify job stress factors. Cooper and Marshall (1976) classified stress into five categories: intrinsic to the job, resulting from one's role in the organization, career development, relationships with others, and organizational structure and climate. Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) suggested four main items that are namely: physical environment, individual level (role and career development variables), group level (relationship-based), and organizational level (organizational climate, structure, job design, and task characteristics). Schuler (1982) proposed seven categories of work stressors: job quality, relationships, organizational structure, physical quality, career development, change and role in the organization. Quick and Quick (1984) identified four factors as occupational stresses: task demands, role demands, physical demands, and interpersonal demands. Ross (1993) found that the

major hospitality industry stressors were co-workers, pressure, working conditions and staff-guest interactions. Zohar (1994) stated four categories of occupational stress: conflict, role ambiguity, decision latitude and workload. In another study by Law et al. (1995), four particular job characteristics were identified, but not empirically confirmed, as contributing to stress: anti-social work hours; insufficient pay; poor management; requirement to deal with the public on a continuous day-to-day basis. Then, in their study, according to results, respondents felt that being very busy (20%) and arrogant people (34%) were important stressors in their job, but just over 65% of all respondents indicated that management was the chief source of stress in their work. Of the 61 respondents who mentioned management as a stressor, 28% gave lack of communication as an element of stress. Lack of recognition (17%) and lack of interest (7%) were other factors contributing to stress at work. Ramirez, Graham, Richards, Cull and Gregory (1996) said that the most significant sources of stress were work overload, feeling badly managed and resourced, managerial responsibilities and dealing with customers. Faulkner and Patiar (1997) determined six categories: factors intrinsic to the job, the management role, relationship with other people, career and achievement, organization structure and climate and home and work interface. Robbins (2003) suggested a model of stress that consists of three potential stressors, including environmental, organizational, and individual factors that cause a high level of job stress. Vakola and Nikolaou (2005) mentioned the following factors as occupational stress indicators: work relationships, work-life balance, overload, job security, control, resources and communication, pay and benefits, aspects of the job. Furthermore, Gibson, Ivancevich, Donnelly, and Konopaske (2006) suggested a model of organizational stress, comprising four levels: individual, group, organizational, and non-work-related stress. A high level of job stress can occur at any of these levels. Mathur, Vigg, Sandhar, and Holani (2007) said that a number of job conditions frequently put employees under pressure and lead to stress. They outlined the following stress factors: Work overload, time deadlines, supervision, poor quality of supervision, role conflict and ambiguity, differences between company values and employee values, job itself, such as rotating shift work, machine-paced tasks, routine and repetitive work, long work hours, lack of perceived control, resource shortages, the demand for a large volume of error-free work, financial well-being and frustration about reaching the desired goal of employee. Kim, Lee, Y. H., and Lee, J. W. (2008) mentioned organizational job stress factors. They explained job stress items under 7 factors, including organizational factors, supervisors, compensation, colleagues/family, promotion/opportunities, job characteristics and organizational culture. Okutan and Tengilimoğlu (2002) and Baytar (2010) proposed similar factors to define the main items that cause job stress: the factors related with job, organizational role, career development, relationships with others, organization structure and climate, physical environment and environmental factors. In the study of Essawy (2016), job stressors are explained as role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload and interpersonal conflict. Overall, several studies have tried to explain forces at work that can contribute to the feeling of stress on employees. This study aims to determine job stress factors for investigating the differences between the demographic variables and these factors for Turkish employees. Thus, 6 hypotheses are proposed as follows:

**H<sub>1</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to gender.

**H<sub>2</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to marital status.

- H<sub>3</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to age.  
**H<sub>4</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to tenure.  
**H<sub>5</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to the department.  
**H<sub>6</sub>** The job stress factors differ due to education level.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The descriptive research method is pretty much as its name indicates, describe the situations or phenomenon being studied, that is, it does not make accurate predictions, and do not determine cause and effect (Jackson, 2009). There are three main kinds of descriptive research methods: observational methods, case-study methods and survey methods. In this study, the survey method was preferred. Data were analysed based on the research objectives using various statistical analyses, including: (a) Cronbach's alpha was computed to measure the reliability of job stress scale, (b) factor analysis was conducted to examine the factor structures of the job-stress scale, and (c) descriptive statistics, including mean ranking comparison, was performed to examine items and factors on the job-stress scale that concerned hotel employees in Istanbul, (d) the data is not normally distributed according to Kolmogorov Smirnov test, instead of *t*-test and ANOVA, the non-parametric alternatives, Kruskal Wallis and Mann Withney U were conducted to determine the difference between the demographic profiles of employees and job-stress factors. Statistical significance was determined at  $p < .05$  in analyses.

### **Sampling**

Convenience sampling method was used to determine the participants in the study. It is a less rigorous technique, involving the selection of the most accessible subjects. Also, this method is the least costly to the researcher, in terms of time, effort and money. In this study, participants were selected from employees at four- and five-star hotels as they have more institutional structure. The questionnaire was sent to the 172 hotels human resources departments to ask permission to conduct a survey, 52 of them answered. 11 of these gave an appointment for conducting our study's survey. For obtaining data, the support of general manager of each hotel was established first. After permission was provided by the general manager, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire distributed by the human resource director. A cover letter included the instruction to explain the purpose of this research; after completion of the survey, employees gave their questionnaire to the human resource department. A total of 500 questionnaires was delivered to the employees at four- and five-star hotels; 379 of the questionnaires were collected and used in this research.

### **Measurement**

The questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. When designing the survey questions, closed-ended ones were favored. To prepare them, the relevant literature had to be reviewed first. The initial survey was prepared based on the review of the existing literature—especially the studies of Okutan and Tengilimoğlu (2002), Baytar (2010) and Zohar (1994), wherein 46 items were identified. Second, three academics and five hotel managers with knowledge about job stress issues of hotels were consulted. After a discussion with these academics and managers, a question form was devised based on their opinions. The survey was later amended according to consequent concerns, additional contributions, and 40 items that were determined to

influence the job stress of hotel employees. Then, the survey was distributed to 30 employees before the actual study commenced. The employees were asked to identify any problems that they may have had with it. Finally, the questionnaire of the study consisted of 40 close-ended questions and 6 demographic variable questions, this means that it is comprised of two parts. The first part consisted of six demographic variables questioning employee gender, marital status, age (5 options), tenure (4 options), department (11 options), and education level (5 options). The second part of the questionnaire contained 40 questions based on the existing literature and expert views. These determinants were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale, with responses ranging from 1 (more stressful) to 5 (less stressful). Factor analysis was then performed to the second part of the questionnaire including 40 items by using the Principal Component and Varimax Rotation techniques. A total of 7 items were excluded because they did not contribute to a simple factor structure and failed to meet a minimum criterion of having a primary factor loading of .3 (Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and, Büyüköztürk, 2014; Loewen and Gonulal, 2015; Uslu, 2016). Thus, the second part of the questionnaire had 33 questions reflecting the most important items on hotel employee job stress. At the end of the factor analysis, the scale had 6-factorial structure with 33 items, and explains 57.4% of variance for job stress. Reliability analyses were conducted to ensure the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient was  $\alpha = .90$  for the whole scale, and  $\alpha = .66 - .87$  for its dimensions, confirming that inter-correlations among the test subscales are high. Item-total correlations for each item in Factor 1 are  $r = .53 - .65$ ; in Factor 2 are  $r = .52 - .77$ ; in Factor 3 are  $r = .46 - .52$ , in Factor 4 are  $r = .53 - .68$ ; in Factor 5 are  $r = .51 - .62$  and in Factor 6 are  $r = .45 - .49$ . Item-total correlations ( $r \geq .30$ ) are evidence for the validity of items in the scale (Çokluk et al. 2014; Hof, 2012). In this regard, all items in the scale can measure in the same construct. As a result, this survey is a valid and reliable data collection instrument to measure job stress of hotel Turkish employees.

## Results

### Distribution of the Demographic Variables

According to the descriptive statistics, 129 of the respondents were female (34%) and 250 were male (66%); 145 were married (38.3%) and 234 were single (61.7%). Nearly half of the respondents were aged between 26 and 35; the percentage of employees over 56 years of age was smaller than the others. The majority of the employees had worked in the tourism industry for between 1 and 10 years (315 employees, 83.2%). The largest percentage of respondents worked in the front office, and front-office employees accounted for nearly half of the respondents (179 employees, 47.2%). The percentages of other groups are shown in Table 1. A few of the respondents had master's degrees (9 employees, 2.4%). Table 1 presents the results of the demographic analysis.

**Table 1** Description of the respondents (n=379)

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	250	66
Female	129	34
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	145	38.3
Single	234	61.7
<b>Age</b>		
16-25	99	26.1
26-35	191	50.4
36-45	73	19.3
46-55	13	3.4
>56	3	0.8
<b>Tenure</b>		
0-5	112	29.6
6-10	203	53.6
11-15	48	12.7
>16	16	4.3
<b>Department</b>		
Restaurant	64	16.9
Spa	2	0.5
Human resource	8	2.1
Front-office	179	47.2
Kitchen	21	5.5
Accounting	14	3.7
House-keeping	27	7.1
Sales-Marketing	11	2.9
Security	22	5.8
Bar	16	4.2
Others	15	4
<b>Education</b>		
Primary School	43	11.30
High School	116	30.60
Vocational	88	23.20
Bachelor's degree	123	32.50
Master's degree	9	2.40

### Findings of Factor and Descriptive Analysis

Before testing the factor structure of the scale, the sufficiency of respondent numbers for factor analysis was checked, and 379 respondents within the data set of pilot questionnaire were found enough for proceeding to explanatory factor analysis according to the general rule “there should be at least 5 subjects per variable and a total of no fewer than 100 subjects” (Bryman and Cramer, 1990, as cited in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007, p. 563). As the first step of EFA, the adequacy of sampling and suitability of the data set in all groups for EFA was assessed by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

(KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS). For this scale, KMO value was .922 and BTS ( $\chi^2=5813.07$ ,  $p=.00$ ) showed a significant result. The researcher, based on the findings of KMO and BTS, decided that data set of the survey is suitable to perform explanatory factor analysis. Explanatory factor analysis was then performed by using Principal Component and Varimax Rotation techniques. As a result of this analysis, factor loadings and common factor variances for each item were found, as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2** Factor Analyses for Stress Items

No	Constructs and items	M	S.D.	Factor loadings	Eigen value	Cronbach's alpha	Explain Variance (%)
	<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>3.09</b>	<b>.74</b>		<b>11.237</b>	<b>.874</b>	<b>34.05</b>
I23	Employees are not appreciated by a superior	2.95	1.28	.675			
I21	The work I do is ignored by others	2.84	1.30	.654			
I24	Employees fail to receive personal support from colleagues	3.32	1.19	.642			
I22	There are disputes and problems arising in relationships with superiors	2.84	1.35	.638			
I19	Failure to provide the professional aspects of self-development opportunities	2.91	1.19	.608			
I26	Ambition is rising among employees and related issues are also increasing as a result of competition	2.78	1.31	.550			
I20	Unfair and unbalanced promotion opportunities are seen	2.75	1.31	.549			
I25	Gossip in workplace	2.33	1.32	.499			
	<b>Factor 2</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>.90</b>		<b>1.99</b>	<b>.846</b>	<b>6.031</b>
I33	Excessive discipline and pressure	3.11	1.27	.773			
I34	Having to give vital decisions	3.35	1.15	.740			
I32	Strict control and supervision are felt	3.08	1.27	.732			
I35	A feeling of being restrained while working	3.17	1.30	.640			
I37	Political pressure	3.61	1.28	.524			
	<b>Factor 3</b>	<b>2.84</b>	<b>1.02</b>		<b>1.722</b>	<b>.771</b>	<b>5.219</b>
I5	The workplace is crowded and noisy	3.31	1.26	.671			
I6	Poor temperature and lighting characterize the work environment	3.52	1.28	.667			
I4	Work is monotonous	3.21	1.22	.648			
I3	Long working hours	3.07	1.23	.563			
I9	Having to finish work at a certain time is forced	3.23	1.26	.522			
I12	The lack of space to relax in the working environment	3.16	1.39	.511			
I7	Frequent shift changes	2.94	1.40	.486			
	<b>Factor 4</b>	<b>2.96</b>	<b>.91</b>		<b>1.573</b>	<b>.823</b>	<b>4.765</b>
I29	To have different views from management	3.20	1.30	.720			
I30	Unable to get support from executives during decision processes	2.99	1.31	.705			
I31	Inability to join the decision-making process	3.07	1.19	.673			
I28	I work in an unreliable environment	3.21	1.38	.477			
I36	I am unable to criticize managerial practices	3.17	1.23	.419			



	<b>Factor 5</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>.90</b>		<b>1.259</b>	<b>.802</b>	<b>3.814</b>
I16	The inability to work in one's desired field	3.53	1.26	.733			
I17	I feel that organizational objectives and policies are not well performed.	3.48	1.29	.643			
I18	I feel uninformed except for my own duties because otherwise, I am excluded.	3.36	1.33	.560			
I15	The possibility of making mistakes at work	3.19	1.18	.551			
I14	Imbalance in the duties and authorities	2.70	1.32	.420			
	<b>Factor 6</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>.89</b>		<b>1.162</b>	<b>.66</b>	<b>3.521</b>
I40	The inability to spend enough time with family and friends	2.51	1.30	.699			
I39	The economic and political conditions of the country	2.89	1.29	.641			
I38	The negative effect of family affairs on work life weighs on me.	3.20	1.40	.633			

As shown in Table 2, the first factor is composed of 8 items with .499-.675 factor loadings and can explain 34.05% of the variance (11.237 Eigen Value). The second factor had 5 items which had .524-.773 factor loadings can explain 6.031% of the variance (1.99 Eigen Value). The third factor consisted of 7 items with .486-.671 factor loadings which can explain 5.219% (1.722 Eigen Value). The fourth factor consisted of 5 items with .419-.72 factor loadings which can explain 4.765% (1.573 Eigen Value). The fifth factor consisted of 5 items with .42-.733 factor loadings which can explain 3.814% (1.259 Eigen Value). The sixth factor consisted of 3 items with .633-.699 factor loadings which can explain 3.521% (1.162 Eigen Value). In conclusion, the scale had a 6-factorial structure within 33 items and can explain 57.401% of the variance for effective job stress factors on a hotel employee. Table 2 also includes descriptive statistics. A five-point Likert scale (1=more stressful to 5=less stressful) was used to interpret responses. According to the perception of respondents, Factor 3 was the most important, with a score of 2.84; Factor 2 was the least important, with a score of 3.18. In addition, the hotel employees ranked "gossip in the workplace" and "the inability to spend enough time with family and friends" as the most stressful items; dealing with "political pressure issues" and "the inability to work in one's desired field" were the least stressful items.

### Testing Hypothesis

Before applying the analysis, tests for normality were performed. Based on the basic assumption of parametric analysis of variance, the data should be normally distributed. According to the normality test results, the probabilities are greater than 0.05, so we accept that these data are not different from normal. As the data are not normally distributed according to Kolmogorov Smirnov Test (p-value of all 6 factors are less than 0.05), instead of t-test and ANOVA, the non-parametric alternatives, Kruskal Wallis and Mann Withney U were used testing hypotheses.

### Effects of Gender

To state the difference between *gender* and *the employees' stress*, Mann-Whitney U test was performed. According to the related statistics that are shown in Table 3, Factor 3 differed by gender. In addition, the results of the mean rank in Table 3 refer

that female hotel employee placed more emphasis on these four stress factors (Factor 1, 2, 3 and 4) than male hotel employee. The male hotel employee placed more emphasis on Factor 5 and 6.

**Table 3** Gender (Mann-Whitney U)

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Z</i>
Factor 1	Male	250	196,50	-1,608
	Female	129	177,41	
Factor 2	Male	250	197,84	-1,943
	Female	129	174,81	
Factor 3	Male	250	198,64	-2,144 <sup>a</sup>
	Female	129	173,26	
Factor 4	Male	250	192,04	-,507
	Female	129	186,04	
Factor 5	Male	250	189,23	-,192
	Female	129	191,50	
Factor 6	Male	250	188,36	-,407
	Female	129	193,17	

<sup>a</sup> Group means are significantly different in 95% level ( $p < 0.05$ )

### Effects of Marital Status

To state the difference between *marital status* and *the employees' stress*, Mann-Whitney U test was performed. The related statistics are shown in Table 4. This test showed that 2 out of 6 factors showed the difference. Employees differed by marital status in their evaluation of Factor 1 and Factor 3. Moreover, the results in Table 4 refer that the single hotel employee placed more emphasis on these six stress factors than the married hotel employee.

**Table 4** Marital Status (Mann-Whitney U)

		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Z</i>
Factor 1	Married	145	204,19	-2,052 <sup>a</sup>
	Single	234	180,46	
Factor 2	Married	145	203,40	-1,944
	Single	234	180,94	
Factor 3	Married	145	211,77	-3,118 <sup>a</sup>
	Single	234	175,79	
Factor 4	Married	145	202,02	-1,751
	Single	234	181,80	
Factor 5	Married	145	198,12	-1,204
	Single	234	184,20	
Factor 6	Married	145	198,76	-1,297
	Single	234	183,80	

<sup>a</sup> Group means are significantly different in 95% level ( $p < 0.05$ )

### Effects of Age

To determine the difference between *age* and *the employees' stress*, Kruskal-Wallis test was performed in Table 5. As seen in Table 5, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test showed Factor 2 out of 6 factors had mean scores differing statistically between (at least two) different age groups. In addition, that the following results in

Table 5 refer that hotel employee who is between 46-55 years old, place more emphasis on these six stress factors than others, with the exception of Factor 2 and Factor 5. A hotel employee who is between 26-35 years old, place more emphasis on these two stress factors. The results show that the effects of stress factors were seen least in the age groups are greater than 56 in all six factors.

**Table 5** Age (Kruskal–Wallis Test)

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square
Factor 1	16-25	99	207,72	4,92
	26-35	191	181,97	
	36-45	73	185,97	
	46-55	13	180,46	
	>56	3	256,33	
Factor 2	16-25	99	213,35	16,529 <sup>a</sup>
	26-35	191	171,91	
	36-45	73	201,05	
	46-55	13	180,42	
	>56	3	343,83	
Factor 3	16-25	99	192,37	8,087
	26-35	191	183,23	
	36-45	73	199,19	
	46-55	13	182,04	
	>56	3	353,5	
Factor 4	16-25	99	194,78	7,607
	26-35	191	181,83	
	36-45	73	202,16	
	46-55	13	172,38	
	>56	3	332,67	
Factor 5	16-25	99	201,96	7,729
	26-35	191	177,46	
	36-45	73	199,88	
	46-55	13	201,19	
	>56	3	305	
Factor 6	16-25	99	192,2	2,029
	26-35	191	188,27	
	36-45	73	189,5	
	46-55	13	181,62	
	>56	3	276	

<sup>a</sup> Significant in 95% level ( $df = 4, p < 0.05$ )

### Effects of Tenure

To determine the difference between *tenure* and the *employees' stress*, Kruskal–Wallis test was performed. As seen in Table 6, the results of the Kruskal–Wallis test showed Factor 1 out of 6 factors had mean scores differing statistically between (at least two) different tenure groups. As seen in Table 6, the hotel employees who work on its job more than 16 years placed more emphasis on Factor 4, 5 and 6 than others, they placed less emphasis on Factor 3. Factor 1 and 2 create job stress, especially for employees who work on its job more 11-15 years. Factor 3 creates job stress especially for employees who work on its job more 6-10 years.

**Table 6** Tenure (Kruskal–Wallis Test)

	<i>Tenure</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
Factor 1	1-5	112	196,05	8,982 <sup>a</sup>
	6-10	203	196,1	
	11-15	48	145,41	
	>16	16	192,37	
Factor 2	1-5	112	198,1	1,752
	6-10	203	189,09	
	11-15	48	174,54	
	>16	16	178,63	
Factor 3	1-5	112	196,32	1,866
	6-10	203	182,53	
	11-15	48	198,57	
	>16	16	203,9	
Factor 4	1-5	112	182,77	1,005
	6-10	203	191,89	
	11-15	48	198,53	
	>16	16	178,57	
Factor 5	1-5	112	192,17	1,522
	6-10	203	190,28	
	11-15	48	190,54	
	>16	16	155,67	
Factor 6	1-5	112	193,45	2,646
	6-10	203	190,63	
	11-15	48	189,34	
	>16	16	145,27	

### Effects of Department

To determine the difference between a *department* and the *employees' stress*, Kruskal–Wallis test was performed. According to the results of the Kruskal–Wallis test statistics in Table 7, 2 of the 6 factors had score means that differed statistically between (at least two) different departments: Factor 1 and Factor 3. The mean rank results in Table 7 showed that Factor 1 and 3 had an important impact on kitchen employee, they had the least impact on human resources department. Factor 2 had an important impact on accounting department, it had the least impact on SPA department. Factor 4 had an important impact on sales marketing department, it has the least impact on SPA department. Factor 5 and 6 have an important impact on sales marketing department, they had the least impact on human resources department.

**Table 7** Department (Kruskal–Wallis Test)

	<i>Department</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Rank</i>	<i>Chi-Square</i>
Factor 1	Restaurant	64	185,84	25,253 <sup>a</sup>
	Spa	2	227,75	
	Human resource	8	273,06	
	Front-office	179	180,03	
	Kitchen	21	150,74	
	Accounting	14	198,64	
	House-keeping	27	164,81	
	Sales-Marketing	11	166,64	
	Security	22	256,77	
	Bar	16	240,75	
	Others	15	234,67	
Factor 2	Restaurant	64	194,15	11,250
	Spa	2	347,75	
	Human resource	8	241,81	
	Front-office	179	179,36	
	Kitchen	21	194,29	
	Accounting	14	159,25	
	House-keeping	27	193,41	
	Sales-Marketing	11	190,41	
	Security	22	220,07	
	Bar	16	208,94	
	Others	15	202,53	
Factor 3	Restaurant	64	181,56	21,604 <sup>a</sup>
	Spa	2	285	
	Human resource	8	305,19	
	Front-office	179	179,52	
	Kitchen	21	156,93	
	Accounting	14	181,57	
	House-keeping	27	204,74	
	Sales-Marketing	11	176,95	
	Security	22	242,48	
	Bar	16	207,47	
	Others	15	218,53	
Factor 4	Restaurant	64	170,28	14,635
	Spa	2	278,25	
	Human resource	8	272,94	
	Front-office	179	185,47	
	Kitchen	21	180,02	
	Accounting	14	205,54	
	House-keeping	27	192,37	
	Sales-Marketing	11	147,55	
	Security	22	219,98	
	Bar	16	218,91	
	Others	15	223,77	
Factor 5	Restaurant	64	187,48	14,940
	Spa	2	230	
	Human resource	8	269,69	
	Front-office	179	180,34	

	Kitchen	21	209,71	
	Accounting	14	211,32	
	House-keeping	27	194,28	
	Sales-Marketing	11	116,55	
	Security	22	226,16	
	Bar	16	206,09	
	Others	15	196,63	
	Restaurant	64	188,95	
	Spa	2	229,75	
	Human resource	8	271,44	
	Front-office	179	178,54	
Factor 6	Kitchen	21	214,52	10,685
	Accounting	14	193,54	
	House-keeping	27	195,8	
	Sales-Marketing	11	156,55	
	Security	22	214,3	
	Bar	16	202,41	
	Others	15	210,03	

<sup>a</sup> Significant in 95% level ( $df = 10, p < 0.05$ )

### Effects of Education Level

To determine the difference between a *department* and the *employees' stress*, Kruskal–Wallis test was performed. As seen in Table 8, the results of the Kruskal–Wallis test showed that 2 out of 6 factors had score means that differed statistically between (at least two) different educational levels. Factor 2 and Factor 4 differed significantly by educational level. The mean rank results in Table 8 show that while the Factor 1, 2 and 3 had an important impact on master's degree, they have the least impact on primary school leavers. Factor 4 has an important impact on the vocational degree, it had the least impact on primary school leavers. Factor 5 and 6 an important impact on high school degree, they have the least impact on primary school leavers.

**Table 8** Education Level (Kruskal–Wallis Test)

	Education level	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square
Factor 1	Primary	13	201.38	2,601
	High school	116	178.85	
	Vocational	88	183.90	
	Bachelor's degree	123	199.13	
	Master degree	9	177.20	
Factor 2	Primary	13	246.69	10,324 <sup>a</sup>
	High school	116	187.43	
	Vocational	88	191.51	
	Bachelor's degree	123	196.94	
	Master degree	9	164.71	
Factor 3	Primary	13	241.96	8,555
	High school	116	188.13	
	Vocational	88	182.96	
	Bachelor's degree	123	201.89	
	Master degree	9	169.56	

Factor 4	Primary	13	242.58	10,886 <sup>a</sup>
	High school	116	176.13	
	Vocational	88	172.26	
	Bachelor's degree	123	209.36	
	Master degree	9	177.17	
Factor 5	Primary	13	246.73	7,588
	High school	116	165.67	
	Vocational	88	178.99	
	Bachelor's degree	123	199.57	
	Master degree	9	179.94	
Factor 6	Primary	13	232.15	6,41
	High school	116	160.88	
	Vocational	88	183.31	
	Bachelor's degree	123	200.20	
	Master degree	9	178.12	

<sup>a</sup> Significant in 95% level ( $df = 4, p < 0.05$ )

### Conclusion

Two goals were established in this study: (1) to develop a scale related to the job stress of hotel employees and (2) to investigate the differences between “gender, marital status, age, tenure, department, education level” and “job stress factors.” The first goal required that data be collected from 30 hotel employees in Istanbul by using the pilot version of the scale. According to exploratory factor analysis, the scale has a 6-factorial structure and explains 57.4 % of the variance for job stress factors for hotel employees. The reliability coefficient was  $\alpha = .92$  for the whole scale and  $\alpha = .42-.77$  for its 33 items. The structural model of the scale was also tested by a confirmatory factor analysis with the secondary data set that was collected from other 379 employees, and the 6-factorial structure was confirmed. As a result, this scale was accepted as a valid and reliable data collection instrument that adequately measures job stress among hotel employees.

A descriptive analysis of stress factors was performed next. The results showed that Factor 3 was the most important, while Factor 2 was least important according to respondents. Workplace gossip and the inability to spend enough time with family and friends were the most important stressors per the perception of respondents. Political pressure and the inability to work in one's desired field were the least important stress factors. Parallel to our study, many studies have shown that gossip decreases productivity, erodes morale, damages feelings, harms reputations, and increases stress (Danziger, 1988; Michelson & Mouly, 2000). Gossip could also indicate low trust, burnout, hostile relationships, and infrequent contact with managers (Ellwardt, Labianca, & Wittek, 2012). Georganta, Panagopoulou, & Montgomery (2014) stated that gossip is positively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization such as job stress. Traditionally, gossip has been viewed negatively and needs to be minimized in the context of the organization, if not eliminated completely. One of the most observable negative effects of gossip is the damage it causes to relationships and to the reputations of those affected and their stature in the workplace (Kurland & Pelled, 2000). Employees considered the inability to spend enough time with family and friends an important factor contributing to job stress, which suggests the need for work-life balance. Many studies have supported the importance of work-life balance for employees (Chiang, Birtch, & Kwan, 2010; Wong & Ko, 2009). Consistent with our

research, Sutton and Rafaeli (1987) noted that when employees focus on their work, they are bothered less by interferences from the physical environment. Particularly when the employees are busy, they are less likely to notice their working environment, and thus less likely to have time to notice noise, heat, and poor lighting. Therefore, such stressors are less likely to influence them. As a summary, nowadays, maintaining a work–life balance is an important issue among employees. Hotel management needs to develop more appropriate policies and schemes to handle their “internal customers,” as the quality of service for hotel guests depends on them. Hotel managers should not forget that their employees are a crucial component of a hotel’s competitive edge (Wong and Huang, 2014).

This study also sheds light on the differences between demographic factors and job stress factors. In some previous studies (Chang and Kim, 2014; Hwang, Lee, Park, Chang, and Kim, 2014; Sunny’Hu and Cheng, 2010; Torkelson, Muhonen, and Peiró, 2007), the differences between demographic factors (gender, age, department, marital status, education level, and length of employment) and job stress factors were examined. Wilnefield and Anstey (1991) said that up to one-third of the respondents reported significant levels of job stress, which vary by age and gender as well as by attitudes toward general practices. The results of our analyses showed that Factor 3 varied by gender. Law et al. (1995) indicated that a difference between males and females is present in the type of stress experienced. Male respondents indicated more stress related to organizational processes such as performance, committing mistakes, and job security, while females recorded higher frequencies for stress relating to role characteristics such as conflicting duties, lack of assistance, and confusion with the service. Baytar (2010) found no statistical gender differences in stress factors. A study by Agyemang and Arkorful (2013) also emphasized that in terms of gender, males and females did not differ with respect to job stress.

Furthermore, the results of our study show that female hotel employees placed more emphasis on some of the aforementioned stress factors more than males. Parallel to our study, Cozens (1998) and Wilnefield and Anstey (1991) demonstrated that the outcomes of job stress have a higher impact on females than on males. De Smet et al. (2005) claimed that job stress prevalence was significantly higher in women. Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that female teachers experienced greater stress (from both workload and student behaviors during class) in classroom management. Similarly, De Smet et al. (2005) stated that job strain is slightly higher among women. However, Cooper, Rout, and Faragher (1989) found that males in general have higher rates of job stress. However, O’Neill and Davis (2011) said that there are no significant differences by gender.

Our analysis indicated that employees differed by marital status in their evaluation of Factor 1 and Factor 3. Although some prior research suggests that married employees tend to experience different types and levels of stress than unmarried employees (Kessler, 1979; Thoits, 1987), our mean ranks show that all factors caused more stress for single employees. Consistent with the results of our study’s mean ranks, Krone, Tabacchi and Faber (1988) found that single women suffered the most, while married respondents suffered the least. The study of Elkahlout and Algaed (2003) outlined that there is no difference based on marital status with regard to the answers given to job stress questions. Similar to their study, O’Neill and Davis (2011) said that no significant differences were discovered between married and unmarried employees based on work



stressors. Hwang, Hyun and Park (2013) indicated that single employees were stressed more by conflicts with job responsibility than married employees; married employees suffered more from companies' work and pay practices than single employees. However, some studies (Preston, 1995; Vanagas, Bihari-Axelsson, and Vanagiene, 2004) found that married women were more vulnerable to stress. Agyemang and Arkorful (2013) also approved this view and they concluded that married women reported higher levels of stress than single women.

Our findings revealed that Factor 2 (out of six factors) had score means statistically different between (at least two) different age groups. These findings paralleled those of Baytar (2010). Her study posited a relationship between age and stress factors related to organizational structure and management, such as responsibilities with roles and their density, imbalance between responsibility and authority, and a feeling that organizational objectives and policies are not well performed. Pocnet, Antonietti, Massoudi, Györkös, Becker, de Bruin, and Rossier (2015), in their study of migrant employees, discussed the relationship between different age groups and job stress. They said that, like our study, the 18 to 29 age group, in particular, showed a higher level of job stress than the one for older employees. Matt and Dean (1993), however, found that the effect of distress was twice as great in a sample of older persons than a sample of younger persons. According to Law et al. (1995), there was no significant difference between the source of stress and the age of respondents. Hunnur and Bagali (2014) also found that stress dimensions did not differ significantly by age. According to test statistics, Factor 1 differed statistically between (at least two) different tenure groups. Ross (1997) said that work stress has the potential to affect the performance of all levels of staff, ranging from senior management to the young and newly employed. Elkahlout and Algaed (2003) indicated that years of experience had no effect on job stress levels. Klassen and Chiu (2010) emphasized the relationship between years of experience and job stress. Consistent with our findings, Hunnur and Bagali (2014) proposed that stress dimensions do not differ by job tenure. However, Baytar's study (2010) argued that all the stress factors differ by different levels of tenure. Respondents of the study working in different departments evaluated factors 1 and 3 differently. Elkahlout and Algaed (2003) said that there is no significant difference between departments regarding answers to job stress questions. Hwang et al. (2013) mentioned "department" as an effective demographic variable on defining job stress. They said that respondents who worked in the departments of "food and beverage" and "housekeeping" carried more stress from problems related to home life. The results of the study pertaining to the differences between educational level and stress factors were revealed in factors 2 and 4, which had mean scores that differed statistically between (at least two) educational levels. Elkahlout and Algaed (2003) proposed that there is a significant difference between educational level and job stress level.

However, Baytar (2010) found no statistical difference between stress factors and different education levels. In parallel with him, Hunnur and Bagali (2014) revealed that stress-causing dimensions did not differ drastically between graduates and undergraduates. While they did not address stress factors, De Smet et al. (2005) found a lower prevalence of strain in more educated employees of both genders.

Hotel jobs are demanding and there are many sources of job stress. Hotel management cannot ignore this issue, and although encouraging employees to develop self-mechanisms to handle stress is important, hotels must also consider different ways to assist employees with stress management (Wong and Huang, 2014). In hotel management, identifying and managing the factors of employee comfort and satisfaction are important, in order to increase their performance and manage them effectively. As this study investigated the differences between stress factors affecting hotel employees and demographic variables, the results can be used to better understand job stress of employees in the tourism industry, especially for the Turkish hotel industry. Moreover, these findings will be useful for hotel managers as they plan and develop their strategies for stress management. Hotels should organize stress-management training programs to enable employees to cope with occupational stress. By understanding the stress factors and their relationship with demographic factors, hotel managers can eliminate (or at least alleviate) stress in the work environment. These strategies will improve employee performance; better employee performance will benefit their organizations. It should not be forgotten that a happy team can be remarkably profitable for an hotel. Some potential limitations of this study should be noted. This is because the data were collected from convenient samples of employees at four- and five-star hotels in Istanbul, the limited sample framework and size might be seen as a drawback. Thus, further studies should be carried out using larger samples from more hotels and from more geographically diverse parts of Turkey. The study also placed a limited focus on the differences between demographic variables and stress factors. Accordingly, future studies should further investigate the impacts of stress factors or, perhaps, the relations between stress, performance, and turnover intention.

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