

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEISURE AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG WORKING WOMEN: A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF WEB OF SCIENCE LITERATURE 2020–2024

*A RELAÇÃO ENTRE LAZER E QUALIDADE DE VIDA ENTRE
MULHERES TRABALHADORAS: UMA ANÁLISE
SISTEMÁTICA DA LITERATURA DA WEB OF SCIENCE
2020–2024*

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Abstract

Today, women play active roles in professional and social life, contributing significantly to the development of societies. However, working women must cope with various factors such as heavy workloads, household and family responsibilities, social life, and health issues. In this process, participation in leisure activities adds meaning and balance to their lives and plays an important role in improving their quality of life. In this study, 61 articles published between 2020 and 2024 in the Web of Science (WOS) database that included the concepts of working women, leisure or quality of life were examined through the document analysis method. Accordingly, the aim of the research is to review studies published in the WOS database in the last five years within the context of working women, leisure and

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quality of life. The findings indicate an increase in publications on this topic in recent years; most studies were conducted in India and within the field of Public Health, and the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health was identified as the journal with the highest number of publications. Most of the studies were indexed in SCIE journals and published in journals with a moderate impact factor. The majority of the studies were quantitative in nature and mainly used questionnaires as data collection tools. As a result, it was determined that

working women have difficulties in planning their leisure due to job and household responsibilities, which negatively affects their quality of life, whereas participation in leisure activities has positive effects on health, stress management, and overall life quality. In this regard, it is recommended to strengthen spousal support and develop positive employer policies to enhance leisure participation and improve the quality of life among working women.

Keywords: Working Women. Leisure. Quality of Life.

Resumo

Hoje, as mulheres desempenham papéis ativos na vida profissional e social, contribuindo significativamente para o desenvolvimento das sociedades. No entanto, as mulheres trabalhadoras precisam lidar com diversos fatores, como cargas de trabalho intensas, responsabilidades domésticas e familiares, vida social e questões de saúde. Nesse processo, a participação em atividades de lazer acrescenta significado e equilíbrio às suas vidas, desempenhando um papel importante na melhoria de sua qualidade de vida. Neste estudo, 61 artigos publicados entre 2020 e 2024 na base de dados WOS, que incluíam os conceitos de mulheres trabalhadoras, lazer ou qualidade de vida, foram analisados por meio da técnica de análise documental. Assim, o objetivo da pesquisa é revisar os estudos publicados na base de dados WOS nos últimos cinco anos, no contexto de mulheres trabalhadoras, lazer e qualidade de vida. Os resultados indicam um aumento nas publicações sobre esse tema nos últimos anos; a maioria dos estudos foi realizada na Índia e na área de Saúde Pública, e o *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* foi identificado como o periódico com o maior número de publicações. A maior parte dos estudos estava indexada em periódicos SCIE e publicada em revistas com fator de impacto moderado. A maioria das pesquisas era de abordagem quantitativa e utilizava principalmente questionários como instrumentos de coleta de dados. Como resultado, constatou-se que as mulheres trabalhadoras têm dificuldades em planejar seu tempo de lazer devido às responsabilidades profissionais e domésticas, o que afeta negativamente sua qualidade de vida, enquanto a participação em atividades de lazer apresenta efeitos positivos sobre a saúde, o gerenciamento do estresse e a qualidade de vida geral. Nesse sentido, recomenda-se fortalecer o apoio do cônjuge e desenvolver políticas positivas por parte dos empregadores para ampliar a participação no lazer e melhorar a qualidade de vida das mulheres trabalhadoras.

Palavras-chave: Mulheres Trabalhadoras. Lazer. Qualidade de Vida.

1. Introduction

Since the industrial revolution of the 1800s, the reduction of human labor in production has led to significant changes in the concept of time. As working hours decreased, participation in leisure activities outside of work began to increase (Sop, 2014). Leisure, which exists outside the sphere of work, can be conceptualized as a domain in which individuals can make free choices—an area that provides opportunities for self-renewal, self-development, and the enhancement of quality of life and can therefore be regarded as “valuable time” (Kılıç, 2020). Another definition describes leisure as a period in which individuals escape the stress of occupational life and the monotony of daily routines, gain new knowledge and skills, and find motivation-enhancing experiences (Gürbüz, Kara & Sarol, 2017). Individuals who participate in leisure activities develop social relationships, experience positive emotions, acquire additional skills and knowledge, and consequently improve their quality of life (Brajsa-Zganec et al., 2011).

The World Health Organization defines quality of life as an individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of their culture and value systems. This perception is related to one’s goals, expectations, standards, and concerns and is influenced by physical and psychological health, personal beliefs, and social and environmental relationships (Misluk & Rush, 2022; Koçak & Gürbüz, 2024). In modern society, the pursuit of personal development, self-realization, and a healthy, low-stress, and fulfilling life is directly associated with quality of life. Thus, quality of life and leisure emerge as closely linked concepts (Tak & Park, 2022; Mallillin, 2022). Working women, the focus of this study, often have more limited time compared to non-working women and bear greater household and occupational responsibilities. This situation may directly affect their social lives, hobbies, and participation in leisure activities (Karaca, Atasever & Kara, 2025).

Research on leisure use provides valuable insights into how working women spend their leisure. It has been emphasized that leisure use among working women is shaped by individual needs and social connections. Moreover, studies have shown that leisure improves not only physical health but also psychological well-being (Stebbins, 2015). Participation in group-based leisure activities helps enhance social skills and strengthen group roles (Eskiler et al., 2019). Leisure also creates a meaningful and permanent sense of belonging for individuals with strong social ties (Ayyıldız Durhan & Karabulut, 2025). For working women, leisure activities offer opportunities for physical health, mental well-being, social development, and improved quality of life. Participation in leisure generates both individual-level and

societal-level outcomes. Studies conducted in Türkiye emphasize that women's participation in leisure activities is strongly influenced by their efforts to balance work and family life (Abay et al., 2021).

In this regard, understanding how working women use their leisure and how these activities affect their quality of life is essential for developing policies aimed at enhancing individual well-being and designing strategies to balance work and family life. Although recent studies provide valuable insights into working women's leisure preferences and the relationship between these preferences and quality of life, there is a need to synthesize these research findings systematically and evaluate them in light of the recent literature. A systematic examination will allow for a clearer understanding of how women's leisure experiences contribute to their physical and mental health, as well as their social development. Therefore, the aim of this research is to identify the factors affecting working women's participation in leisure activities and their quality of life, and to examine the relationship between leisure and quality of life through a literature review of studies published in the WOS database over the last five years.

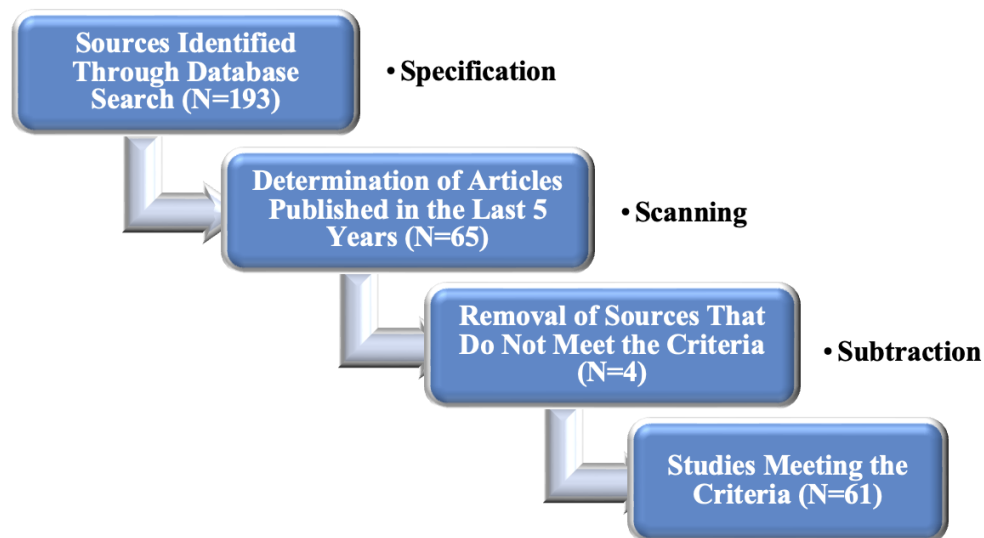
2. Methodology

Research Design

This study was conducted within the framework of a descriptive qualitative research model using a systematic literature review and document analysis approach. The aim was to systematically collect, classify, and analyze the existing literature on working women's leisure use and quality of life. The research has both descriptive and integrative characteristics; it not only compiles data but also reveals thematic patterns, common findings, and research gaps in the literature through thematic analysis (Webster & Watson, 2002). This approach enables both theoretical and practical contributions. The literature review was carried out through a systematic process that included the identification of studies, data extraction, and evaluation through content and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Data Source and Selection Criteria

In this systematic literature review, only the WOS database was used, which includes SCIE, SSCI, and AHCI indices. The review was limited to studies published between 2020 and 2024. Articles were identified using the search formula: ("working women") AND ("leisure" OR "quality of life"). This formula was designed to comprehensively capture studies related to working women, leisure participation, and quality of life. "Working women" directly defines the target population, while "leisure" and "quality of life" represent the key concepts of interest. Thus, both topic-specific and conceptually relevant studies were included. WOS database search yielded 193 studies available since 1986. After applying the five-year time limitation and the specified inclusion criteria, 61 studies were included in the final analysis.



flow 1: Literature Review Flowchart

Data Analysis

The collected data were evaluated using content analysis and thematic analysis methods. Content analysis enabled the organization of the data under specific themes and facilitated the identification of relationships among these themes (Krippendorff, 2018). Thematic analysis allowed for the identification of common themes within the data and the in-depth examination of these themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The coding process was carried out independently by two researchers, and

discrepancies were resolved through discussion. The findings were grouped under the themes of “working women,” “leisure,” and “quality of life.” By synthesizing similarities and differences across the studies, the trends in working women’s leisure use and the factors affecting their quality of life were revealed in detail. However, the study has several limitations. Only the WOS database was used; therefore, studies published in other databases or local journals were excluded. Additionally, the review included only publications from the last five years, which restricts the evaluation of long-term trends. Finally, the analysis was limited to English-language publications, meaning that some national or local-language research could not be included. Table 1 presents the categories and subcategories used to assess the studies in detail.

Table 1: Research Evaluation Criteria

Categories	Subcategories
Research Characteristics	Publication Year
	Country of Publication
	Author’s Department / Discipline
	Journal Name
	Journal Index
	Journal Impact Factor
	Citation Count of the Publication
Methodological Information of the Study	Publication Type
	Research Type
	Research Topic
	Sample Age Range
	Sample Size
	Data Collection Instruments
Research Findings	Findings

Research Ethics

This study was conducted in accordance with the “Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive.” Ethical approval was obtained from the Kırıkkale University Social and Humanities Research Ethics Committee on 17.05.2025, meeting number 05.

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3. Findings

Figure 1. Annual Development Process of the Research

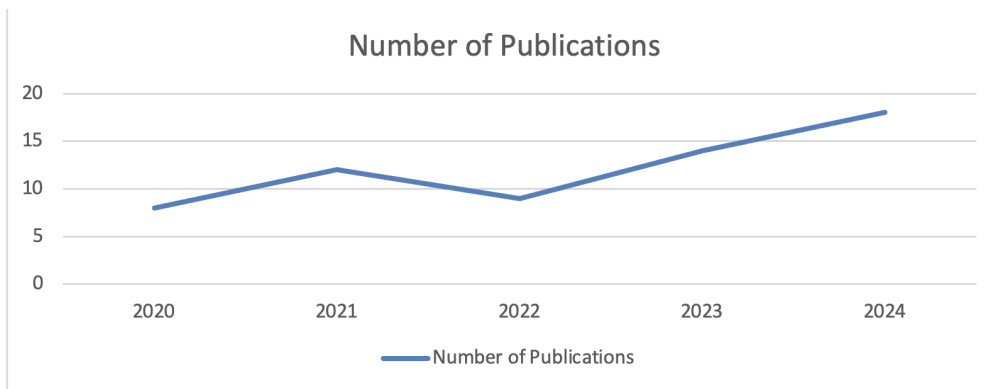


Figure 1: Annual Development Process of the Research

Figure 1 shows the number of publications with the determined keywords found in WOS during the process from 2020 to 2024. The number of publications, which was 8 in 2020, increased to 12 in 2021, but experienced a brief decline to 9 in 2022. The number of publications rose to 14 in 2023 and showed an increase, reaching 18 in 2024.

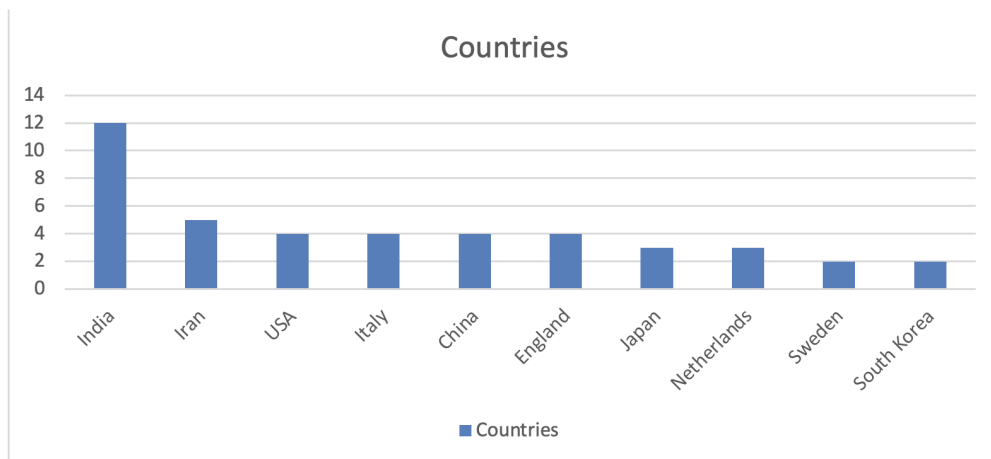


Figure 2: Countries Where the Research was Published (Top 10)

Figure 2 shows the countries where the research was published and the num-

ber of publications. According to the figure, India significantly stands out from other countries with 12 publications. Iran follows India with 5 publications, while the USA, Italy, China, and the UK are at similar levels with 4 publications. Japan and the Netherlands appear with approximately 3 publications, and Sweden and South Korea with approximately 2 publications. This distribution indicates clear differences between countries in terms of the articles examined.

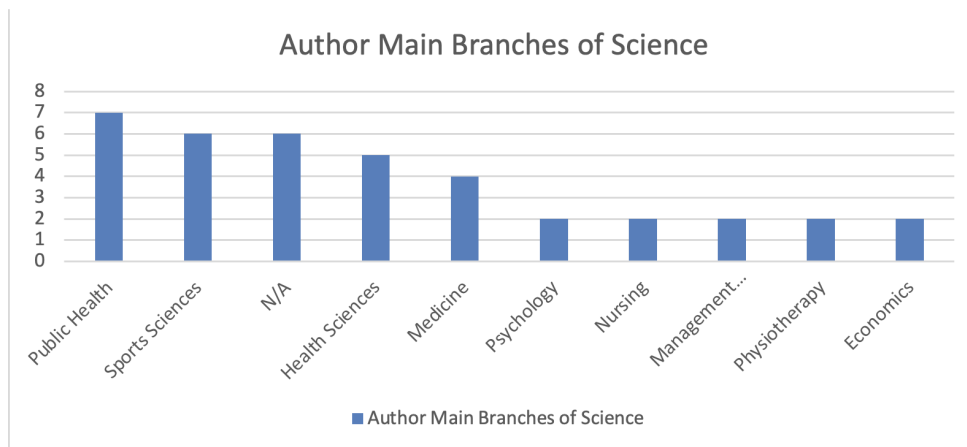


Figure 3: Major Disciplines of the Authors (Top 10)

Figure 3 presents the distribution of the examined authors by major disciplines. According to the figure, the "Public Health" discipline appears with 7 authors, "Sports Sciences" and "N/A" (not specified/invalid) categories with 6, "Health Sciences" with 5, "Medicine" with 4, and "Psychology," "Nursing," "Management Sciences," "Physiotherapy," and "Economics" disciplines with 2 authors. This distribution indicates that the examined authors are concentrated predominantly in fields such as health and sports sciences, but there are also participations from various other disciplines.



Figure 4: Journals Where the Research was Published (Top 10)

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the journals where the research was published. According to the figure, the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health stands out as the journal with the most publications, with 3 articles. Journal of Education and Health Promotion and BMC Women's Health follow it with two publications each. Women's Health, International Journal of Women's Health, Women's Studies International Forum, Leisure Studies, Leisure Sciences, Managing Sport and Leisure, and Journal of Sports Science and Medicine each have one publication. This distribution indicates that the examined research is concentrated in certain journals, but is also published in a wide variety of journals.

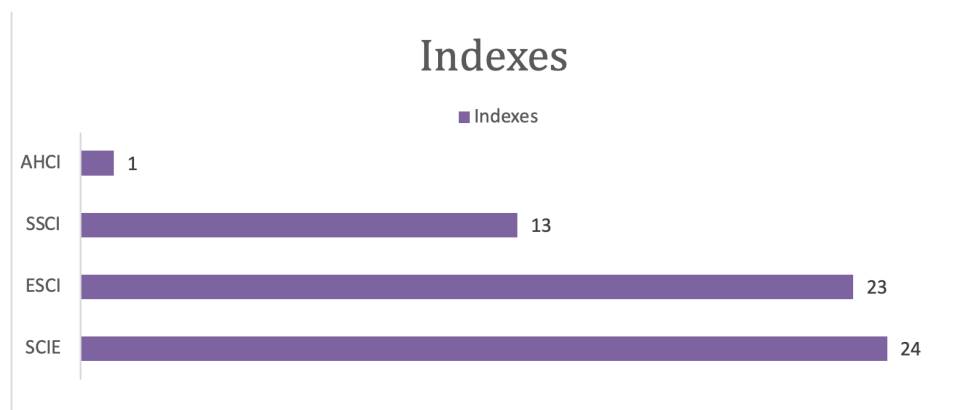


Figure 5: Indices of the Journals Where the Research was Published

Figure 5 shows the indices of the journals where the research was published, and according to the figure, the "SCIE (Science Citation Index)" index has the highest representation with 24 units, followed by the "ESCI (Emerging Sources Citation Index)" index with 23 units. There are 13 units in the "SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index)" index, while the "AHCI" index shows the lowest representation with 1 unit. This distribution reveals that the examined content is predominantly featured in science-focused indices (SCIE and ESCI), a significant portion is also found in the social sciences (SSCI) domain, but representation in the arts and humanities (AHCI) is quite limited.

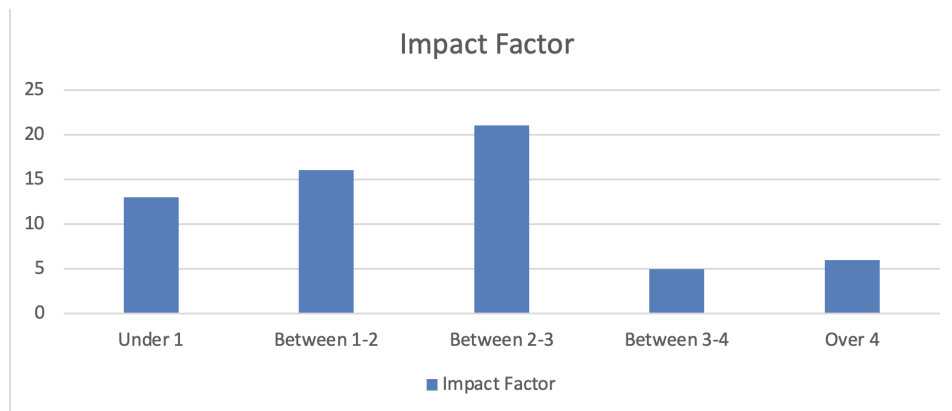


Figure 6: Impact Factor of the Journals Where the Research was Published

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the impact factor of the journals where the research was published. According to the figure, there are 21 articles with an impact factor of "Between 2-3," 16 articles with an impact factor of "Between 1-2," while there are 13 articles with an impact factor of "Under 1," 5 articles with an impact factor of "Between 3-4," and 6 articles with an impact factor of "Over 4". This distribution reveals that the examined content is moderately concentrated in terms of impact factor, but there is also a distribution in both low and high impact factor areas.

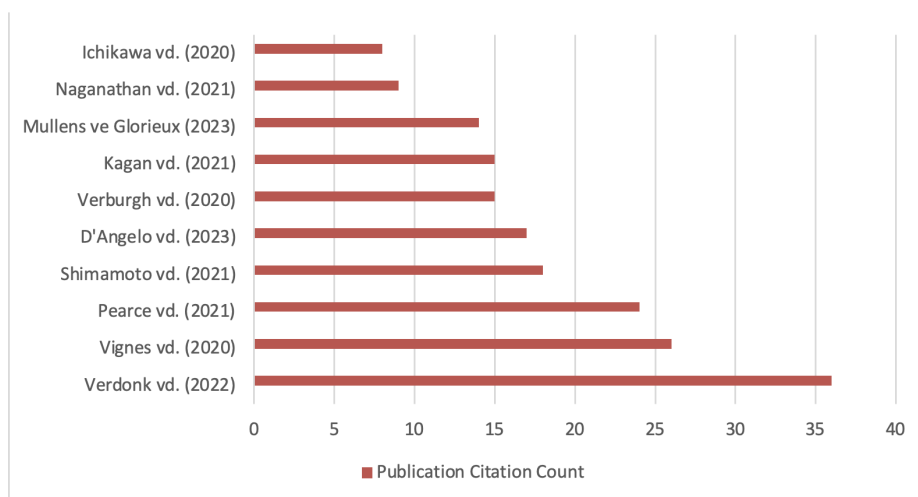


Figure 7: Citation Counts of the Publications (Top 10)

Figure 7 details the publication numbers of various researchers from 2020 to 2024. According to the figure, the study by "Verdonk et al. (2022)" has the highest citation count with approximately 36 citations, followed by "Vignes et al. (2020)" with approximately 26 citations and "Pearce et al. (2021)" with approximately 24 citations. "Shimamoto et al. (2021)" and "D'Angelo et al. (2023)" are in the mid-

dle ranks with approximately 18 and 16 citations, while "Verburgh et al. (2020)," "Kagan et al. (2021)," and "Mullens and Glorieux (2023)" have similar citation counts. The studies with the lowest citation counts are "Ichikawa et al. (2020)" and "Naganathan et al. (2021)" with approximately 8 citations each. This distribution reveals significant differences in citation counts among the examined studies, and that some studies have created much more impact than others.

Table 2: Methodological Information and Results of the Research

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
Viotti et al. (2020)	Research Article	Mixed	Organizational and individual factors affecting workability in menopausal women	38-66	1069	Scale	It was observed that the work ability of women during menopause is negatively associated with family-work conflict and positively associated with a health-oriented organizational climate, job autonomy, and skill utilization.
Vignes et al. (2020)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the occupational effects of upper extremity lymphedema developing after breast cancer treatment on working women	48-57	134	Survey	Upper extremity lymphedema negatively affects the work life of working women. Providing workplace accommodations during the return-to-work process and integrating cancer rehabilitation into the treatment process play an important role in improving quality of life.
Waller et al. (2020)	Research Article	Quantitative	Occupational mobility status of African American women working in public park and recreation agencies and the perception of demographic variables and race and gender as potential barriers affecting this mobility	40-49	123	Survey	Reveals that the opportunities and systemic barriers affecting the occupational mobility of African American women in the public park and recreation sector are critical for developing strategies to support their career development.
Xiao et al. (2020)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the effects of age, occupational stress, and burnout on the quality of life among working women	18-60	375	Scale	States that young working women experience higher occupational stress and burnout but have a lower quality of life compared to middle-aged women, and coping strategies should be adopted to improve this situation.
Ichikawa et al. (2020)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of how fertilityD' treatment affects the quality of life and careers of working women	28-55	835	Scale	Fertility treatment creates obstacles in the careers of working women and leads to a low quality of life.

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
Mullens and Glorieux (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of various dimensions of time and the effects of leisure on individuals' lives, especially in terms of time poverty.	18-76	1877	Survey	Reveals that different time dimensions, such as the continuity, fragmentation, and weekend distribution of leisure, significantly shape the leisure activities and quality of life of working women, but these dimensions create different effects between women and men.
Verburgh et al. (2020)	Research Article	Mixed	Examination of the effects of the Work-Life Program (WLP) intervention on the health and work functionality of female workers in low-wage jobs	45-60	56	Survey and Semi-Structured Interview	The Work-Life Program (WLP) significantly improved menopausal symptoms and provided mental empowerment by increasing the health and workplace well-being of female workers.
Rahat et al. (2020)	Research Article	Mixed	Examination of the effect of breastfeeding cessation on health-related quality of life and the reasons for cessation in working women with multiple children	20-40	200	Scale and Survey	Shows that early cessation of breastfeeding has a negative effect on health-related quality of life, causes low milk production, and that working life leads to this situation.
Jha and Singh (2020)	Research Article	Quantitative	Comparison of working and non-working women in terms of recognition and quality of life.	N/A	160	Scale	It was observed that working women have higher marital satisfaction, better relationships, and a higher quality of life compared to non-working women.
Melnyk et al. (2021)	Integrative Review	Qualitative	Examination of the work-related psychosocial vulnerabilities of women after breast cancer diagnosis	N/A	N/A	Screening	Emphasizes the importance of supporting the psychosocial health of women in their work life and post-cancer recovery processes.
Abadian et al. (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of the challenges related to sexual health experienced by working women and the role of work in these challenges	15-45	32	Semi-Structured Interview	Shows that sexual problems due to work and workplace harassment lead to sexual health challenges for working women.

Research	Publication Type	Research Type	Research Topic	Age Range	Participant Count	Data Collection Tools	Results
Valenciano et al. (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of the contributions of women working in the fruit and vegetable processing sector to local development and evaluation of the sustainability of the improvement in quality of life with the flexibility women provide in balancing work and family life	N/A	300	Survey	Shows that the empowerment and quality of life of women working in the fruit and vegetable processing sector have increased, and ensuring job security and the involvement of more female managers in the sector will contribute to the sustainability of these positive effects.
Wang et al. (2021)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the effects of physical activity and counseling interventions on work stress, burnout, and quality of life of working women in Shanghai	25-60	121	Survey	Group-based intervention was more effective than individual intervention, and both interventions reduced stress and burnout, increasing quality of life.
Nath and Dwivedi (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Work-life balance experiences of tribal women and the examination of these experiences with an identity-based approach	29-54	18	Semi-Structured Interview	Women have formed a unique identity by utilizing matrilineal identity and community values while establishing work-life balance, overcoming traditional gender norms.
Küçükaya and Süt (2021)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the relationship between stress and quality of life among women working on the washing belt of a magnesite mine and homemakers	24-58	288	Scale	Working women in the magnesite mine have higher stress levels and lower quality of life; increased depression, anxiety, and stress are associated with decreased quality of life.
Naganathan et al. (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of how working middle-class women define their leisure and how these leisure activities establish a balance between work and personal life	27-48	28	Semi-Structured Interview	Revealed that urban middle-class working women see leisure as a means of individual satisfaction and stress reduction, and are trying to establish a new “work-leisure balance” between their work and personal lives.
Pearce et al. (2021)	Research Article	N/A	Examination of the relationship between occupational physical activity and mortality rates in UK Biobank participants in England	27-48	460,901	Survey, National Death Registries	It was observed that non-occupational physical activity (e.g., leisure activities) reduces the risk of mortality in both women and men.

Research	Publication Type	Research Type	Research Topic	Age Range	Participant Count	Data Collection Tools	Results
Shimamoto et al. (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of the relationship between menstrual symptoms and health-related quality of life in working women	N/A	6048	Scale	It was observed that menstrual symptoms in working women significantly negatively affect health-related quality of life.
Kagan et al. (2021)	Research Article	Quantitative	The impact of sleep disorders on employment and work productivity in middle-aged women	42–52	2489	Survey	States that new-onset sleep problems in middle-aged working women increase the risk of unemployment and cause an annual productivity loss of \$2 billion nationwide.
Allio (2021)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of the impact of the establishment of the Turin City Library on the community's reading habits and the development of library services	N/A	N/A	N/A	Shows that working women are disadvantaged in accessing public spaces and cultural resources compared to men because they cannot find leisure due to domestic responsibilities and, therefore, cannot benefit from library services as much as men.
Portella et al. (2021)	Research Article	Quantitative	The effect of meditation on insomnia and other menopausal symptoms in working women during the menopausal transition	40–55	47	Scale	Showed that Raja Yoga meditation could be an effective non-pharmacological alternative in reducing insomnia and menopausal symptoms in women during the menopausal transition.
Verdonk et al. (2022)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of the effects of menopause on women's work life and health	N/A	N/A	Literature Review	It has been revealed that menopause is still seen as a taboo in workplaces and this situation can negatively affect women's workforce capacity.
Belekhova and Ivanoskaya (2022)	Research Article	Qualitative	Examination of working women's satisfaction with work-life balance and evaluation of differences between women with and without children	16–46	535	Semi-Structured Interview, Survey	While the satisfaction of working women with work-life balance is similar between those with and without children, childless women do more extra work and have difficulty organizing their leisure.
Jain and Sundarajan (2022)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the effects of a Tai Chi exercise program on sleep quality, quality of life, and physical performance in postmenopausal working women	46–50	76	Scale	Showed that an 8-week Tai Chi exercise program provided significant improvements in sleep quality, quality of life, and physical performance in postmenopausal working women.

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
Mubeen and Ahsan (2022)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the prevalence and associated factors of restless legs syndrome during pregnancy in Pakistani women	18–45	478	Scale	Showed that pregnant women experience significant symptoms of restless legs syndrome, which may affect quality of life and sleep.
Garnica-Monroy and Hernández-Reyes (2022)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of the relationship between commuting distance and domestic care work in working women	N/A	22,408	Survey	Shows that as working women's domestic care work increases, they cannot travel as far as those with less domestic care work, due to gendered expectations of care work, resulting in spatial discrimination.
Cruz (2022)	Clinical	Quantitative	Comparison of days off work after treatment and breast reduction surgery in women with symptomatic macromastia	21–65	123	Prospective Cohort	Breast reduction surgery significantly reduces the number of days off work compared to conservative treatment in women with symptomatic macromastia.
Geurts (2022)	Letter to the Editor	Qualitative	Examination of working women's spatial pleasures, especially the practice of flânerie, within feminist and class-sensitive analyses	N/A	N/A	N/A	Flânerie is an experience that everyone can occasionally access, but individuals and groups face different structural restrictions in accessing it.
Sasaki et al. (2022)	Systematic Review	Qualitative	Workplace psychosocial factors' impact on menstrual irregularities and fertility of female employees	N/A	N/A	Literature Review	N/A
Yun et al. (2022)	Research Article	Quantitative	Investigation of the effects of work-family interference (WIF) on depressive symptoms among married working women	N/A	1504	Survey	Women with WIF are 1.58 times more likely to experience depressive symptoms; irregular work hours and having two or more children further increase risk.
Hu (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of how household structure affects gender differences in travel time and time spent at destinations among full-time employees	N/A	49,386	Survey	Household structure significantly affects women's travel and time use patterns, especially mothers in dual-adult or single-parent households.
Aqab et al. (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Effects of physical activity on health-related quality of life in working mothers	18–55	120	Survey	Adherence to physical activity positively affects the quality of life of working mothers.

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
David and Tiwari (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Comparison of work stress and pregnancy-related stress between paid working women and homemakers during pregnancy	18–40	426	Scale	Paid working pregnant women have higher pregnancy-related stress and workplace stress compared to homemakers.
Nayar and Kapur (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Comparison of psychological factors between working and non-working women	25–45	600	Scale	Working women scored higher in social and environmental quality of life and in environmental mastery, positive relations, and self-acceptance.
Augustina et al. (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of pelvic floor dysfunction and its impact on quality of life among female health workers	25–50	161	Survey	Pelvic floor dysfunction has a direct effect on quality of life and increases with age.
D'Angelo et al. (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Impact of menopausal symptoms on work	50–64	409	Survey	About one-third of working women face work difficulties due to menopausal symptoms.
Theis et al. (2023)	Systematic Review	Qualitative	Examination of the quality of life of menopausal women in the workplace	N/A	N/A	Literature Review	Factors include age, income, symptoms, environmental and mental factors, working conditions, and schedules.
Yuan and Cao (2023)	Focus Study	Quantitative	Examination of women's sports and leisure behaviors using data mining based on the FCM algorithm	N/A	N/A	Data Mining	Participation is influenced by work system, education, income, culture; targeted interventions recommended.
Magnavita et al. (2023)	Research Article	Mixed	Barriers and facilitating factors in return-to-work after breast cancer treatment	41–59	160	Semi-Structured Interview, Survey	Personal, institutional, and societal factors shape return-to-work; psychological problems are frequent.
Anastasopoulos et al. (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Mediating role of work-life balance on quality of life of female employees	18–65	654	Survey	Work-life balance and post-work coping positively influence quality of life.
Rai et al. (2023)	Research Article	Mixed	Utilization of postnatal services by working women	18–33	154	Semi-Structured Interview, Survey	Higher education, cesarean births, and extended families increase postnatal service use; multifaceted support needed.
Amiresmaili et al. (2023)	Systematic Review	Quantitative	Care burden of informal caregivers in Iran	N/A	N/A	Literature Review	Caregivers experience a high burden; identifying at-risk groups is essential for support systems.
Giusti et al. (2023)	Research Article	Quantitative	Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's mental health, quality of life, and care burden	18–82	211	Scale	Pandemic worsened women's mental health; caregivers and non-working women most affected.

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
Ramyashree et al. (2024)	Case Report	Quantitative	Severity of menopausal symptoms and their impact on the quality of life in working women	N/A	93	Survey	Menopausal symptoms correlate with lower quality of life; workplace stress worsens outcomes.
Asiamah et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Effects of physical activity on menopausal symptoms, psychosomatic factors, and well-being in working women	42–56	324	Survey	Physical activity reduces menopausal symptoms and improves well-being.
Danielsson et al. (2024)	Research Article	Mixed	Effects of work-related stress on work ability and general health	18–64	232	Scale	Imbalance between work and leisure reduces work ability.
Mat Pozian et al. (2024)	Research Article	Mixed	Impact of family-friendly working conditions on well-being of Malaysian women	15–64	190	Survey	Paid maternity leave lowers anxiety, though physical health and depression effects were minimal.
Hosseini et al. (2024)	Research Article	Qualitative	Work-life conflict in working women	25–45	19	Semi-Structured Interview	Conflict arises from individual, institutional, and cultural factors; reduces quality of life.
Loukzadeh et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Effect of premenstrual disorders on work disruptions in working women	27–42	358	Survey	Premenstrual disorders impair work performance, daily activities, and capacity; teachers especially affected.
Park et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Relationship between spouses' contribution to housework and couple-bonding activities	N/A	5758	Survey	Positive association between partners' housework contribution and participation in activities together.
Aziz et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Psychological well-being, family social capital, self-esteem, and meaningfulness in working women	N/A	315	Scale	Family social capital increases well-being via self-esteem; meaningfulness moderates this effect.
Yadav et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Prevalence and factors associated with non-specific neck pain in working women	25–53	196	Survey	Neck pain associated with marital status, working hours, technology use, sleep disorders, and psychological factors.
Zhang et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Impact of maternity leave stigma on fertility intentions in China	22–40	976	Scale	Maternity leave stigma reduces fertility intentions, more strongly among women.
Maqsood et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Emotional health, positive life orientation, and work-life balance in professional married women	24–34	300	Scale	Emotional health and positive life orientation improve work-life balance.

Research	Publication	Research	Research Topic	Age	Participant	Data Col-	Results
	Type	Type		Range	Count	lection	
						Tools	
Rakhshani et al. (2024)	Research Article	Mixed	Relationship between mental health and quality of life, stress, anxiety, and depression in women working in health centers	25–45	500	Scale	Mental health improves quality of life and reduces stress, anxiety, and depression.
Moulin et al. (2024)	Research Article	Randomized	Efficacy of solvent-free flower pollen extracts on urinary incontinence in women	40–75	114	Survey	“RCT FemUI” extract reduces severity and leakage; “PollenBerry” helps stress-related incontinence.
Abdullah et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Prevalence of unmet needs faced by working mothers due to their children’s epilepsy and associated factors	18–60	204	Survey	Shows that the highest proportion of unmet needs faced by working mothers due to their children’s epilepsy are in the areas of community services (81.6%) and information (71.9%).
Riaz (2024)	Research Article	Qualitative	Aims to analyze the visual language of female identities and ideological representations using a social creativity approach, in relation to the depiction of women and ideological representations in contemporary Chinese and Pakistani paintings	N/A	N/A	Content Analysis	Chinese women are represented in constructive gender roles such as working women, ballerinas, athletes, and hardworking farmers, while Pakistani women are portrayed around themes of resistance, oppression, victimhood, religious beliefs, and protection.
Ramadan et al. (2024)	Research Article	Mixed	Prevalence of health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) among working women and barriers preventing these activities	N/A	760	Scale	A quarter of the participating women engage in HEPA; 44.9% are at a minimal activity level, and 30.1% are inactive. The most frequently reported barriers include lack of energy (80.4%), lack of resources, willpower, and lack of time (74.04%, 69.6%, 69.4% respectively).
Machado et al. (2024)	Research Article	Quantitative	Examination of workplace and social support, treatment satisfaction, and their impact on the quality of life of working women with MS	20–50	2967	Survey	Low MS severity and fatigue, high cognitive processing speed, living in a city, and high education level increase the quality of life, while workplace and social support also have a significant impact.

4. Discussion

This research, by examining 61 articles published between 2020 and 2024, reveals in detail the relationship between working women's leisure use and their quality of life, within the scope of the methodology and findings of the studies. From a methodological perspective, quantitative research constitutes the majority of the analyzed studies, indicating that the topic is mostly addressed within the framework of descriptive and relational models. However, the inclusion of qualitative and mixed-method studies in the literature is considered important for gaining an in-depth understanding of working women's leisure experiences. The use of semi-structured interviews and focus group studies, in particular, has contributed to understanding leisure not only in terms of frequency or content of participation but also in terms of its semantic content and emotional effects. This situation supports the potential of thematic analyses to offer a deeper view into individuals' life worlds, as emphasized by Braun and Clarke (2006).

When the age ranges of the female participants in the examined studies are reviewed, it is seen that the majority of the studies focused on working women between the ages of 25–45. This age period generally represents the phase where work life, family responsibilities, and personal expectations intersect most intensely (Festini et al., 2019). Therefore, leisure stands out not only as a period of leisure but as a critical element in maintaining life balance (Veal, 2020).

It is observed that the samples in the research mostly consist of urban women with middle-income levels. There may be two main reasons for this situation. First, the researchers may have consciously chosen this group; because urban and middle-income women present a more diversified and accessible profile in terms of work life, family responsibilities, and leisure use (Naganathan et al., 2021). The second and more likely reason is the preference for easily accessible samples; women working in university environments, city centers, or certain sectors are participants who can be reached more quickly and practically for research (Stratton, 2021). This situation explains the socioeconomic homogeneity observed in the literature and indicates that the findings obtained are particularly valid for women in the urban and middle-income group. However, when making a generalization about leisure and quality of life for working women, the leisure experiences and quality of life of women living in rural areas, having different income levels, or living in different socio-cultural conditions may differ from the findings of the current studies. Therefore, since the current literature is largely limited to accessibility-based samples, the generalizability of the findings is limited and must be interpreted carefully for women in different

socio-cultural or geographical contexts.

Within the scope of the information obtained from the findings of the studies included in the research, it is shown that leisure is a determining factor that directly affects women's physical, mental, and social well-being. Active participation in leisure activities, in particular, has been shown to benefit women not only in terms of work-related. Within the scope of the obtained findings, the effect of health, psychological well-being, social support, workplace conditions, and periodic variables such as menopause on quality of life has been frequently emphasized. The positive effects of physical activity-based leisure activities on quality of life stand out as a common finding in many studies (Asiamah et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021). These findings demonstrate the importance of shaping health policies and workplace regulations to enable women to use their leisure more effectively.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review has brought together studies examining the multidimensional effects of working women's leisure use on their quality of life. It was observed that the female participants in the examined research were predominantly in the 25–45 age range; the fact that this age group is in the most intense period of life in terms of both work life and family responsibilities increases the importance of leisure management. During this period, women use leisure activities as a means of both establishing social connections and psychological relief. The limited number of studies covering older age groups indicates a gap regarding the meaning and use of leisure in later stages of the life cycle.

From the perspective of data collection methods, survey-based measurement tools were preferred in most studies. While these tools make it possible to quantitatively evaluate the relationship between leisure and quality of life, they may remain limited in explaining women's leisure experiences in cultural and social contexts.

Future studies should increase sample diversity to examine the relationship between leisure and quality of life more comprehensively; they should cover women living in different cultural contexts, income levels, and rural areas. Furthermore, tracking the experiences of women in different ages and life stages over time will contribute to understanding the differences in leisure use. In-depth analysis of qualitative data and examination of the effects of employer practices, working hours, and government support will help reveal the social and institutional factors that shape women's leisure use. This approach will allow for a more holistic and cultural understanding of the multidimensional effects of women's leisure practices on their

quality of life.

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