

Workation Phenomenon and Hotel Selection for Hotel Room Design Considerations

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How to cite: Fitriani, A. D. & Maharani, Y. (2024). Workation Phenomenon and Hotel Selection for Hotel Room Design Consideration. *Gorga : Jurnal Seni Rupa*, 13(2), 712-720.

<https://dx.doi.org/10.24114/gr.v13i2.62393>

Article History : Received: August 6, 2024. Revised: August 16, 2024. Accepted: December 11, 2024

ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors influencing hotel selection for workation. The term workation, derived from the combination of the words "work" and "vacation," refers to the trend of working while on vacation, which has emerged as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The workation trend is believed to enhance mental well-being and work productivity by balancing work life with everyday life. Workationers, with their unique characteristics, have preferences for how they conduct their workation. This study aims to analyze theories and literature regarding these preferences. The method used is a qualitative approach through a literature review based on reputable national and international scientific articles related to the topic. Based on findings from the literature review on workation work preferences and hotel selection, two intersecting factors were identified: room quality and room type. These two factors can serve as considerations for hotel management and interior designers in creating or developing hotel room designs. This study is expected to provide recommendations for designers and policymakers in addressing the needs of workation participants in the future.

KEYWORDS

Workation
Hotel
Room Design
Space Quality
Design
Recommendations

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INTRODUCTION

In today's modern world, workers are increasingly flexible in their work locations due to advances in technology, information, and communication. They enjoy flexibility in work location because they are allowed to work from home or other places instead of going to the office. (Ondia et al., 2018). However, the recent global phenomenon of the Covid-19 pandemic has made people follow government policies to stay at home. People are forced to carry out their activities from home for a long period of time for mutual safety. This new habit does not rule out the possibility of having an impact on the mental state of the community. Prolonged work from home activities can lead to boredom and boredom (Šmite et al., 2023). Lack of social interaction, communication, and brainstorming with coworkers will result in feelings of isolation and lack of motivation, affecting one's productivity ability (Gunasekara et al., 2023). (Gunasekara et al., 2022; Šmite et al., 2023). This is a negative impact of work from home that poses a challenge to manage time, where some people also have difficulty dealing with unclear boundaries between work and personal life that can lead to burnout (Gunasekara et al., 2022; Šmite et al., 2023). (Gunasekara et al., 2022; Pecsek, 2018; Šmite et al., 2023).

However, over time when entering 2021, the government's policy for the community became broader and looser with a record of implementing good health protocols. With this policy, people are

able to do activities in public places again. This refers to the trend of workation, which is a combined term of work and vacation which means working while on vacation. This term was first used in the West to refer to workers who have a flexible work system and are relatively free when taking free time or vacation. (Yoshida, 2021). By doing workation, workers can feel a new atmosphere and experience outside their home space so that they can overcome the boredom and boredom experienced when working from home. This is interesting to note because the workation trend is considered to improve workers' mental well-being and productivity. (Pecsek, 2018). However, the workation phenomenon is also not free from problems, namely its ambivalence towards its impact on workers. Although workation has a positive impact on mental health because it provides greater flexibility that can increase productivity and innovation, workation also poses other challenges. (Kurniasari et al., 2022). These challenges involve the potential negative impact on productivity from unfavorable environmental conditions at the workstation. Some of these include internet connection, availability of office equipment, good workspace, ergonomic considerations, privacy, noise, and lighting can affect the ability of workationers to focus. (Matsushita, 2021; Yoshida, 2021).

These various environmental conditions will then be identified by this research through the process of finding environmental factors that influence work preference during workation. This is driven by the lack of studies that discuss these factors, especially in Indonesia, even though it has many potentials, especially for the development of hospitality industry design. The hospitality industry or business can respond to this workation phenomenon through the design of hotel rooms that refer to the preferences of workation actors. By paying attention to guests' work preferences during workation that are influenced by environmental factors, policy makers can facilitate guests with the right room space. Workers have motivations and preferences in conducting workation activities to meet the needs of vacation pleasure and work productivity. One form of motivation behind workers to carry out workation is to get out of daily routines, especially pandemic-related restrictions, to seek entertainment to relieve stress but still want to achieve a balance of work activities with leisure. (Bassyiouny & Wilkesmann, 2023).

The workation trend is welcomed by workers who are motivated to do it, this is shown in one study which found that these workers make preparations and have their own preferences for certain hotel accommodations to do workation. (Nugraha & Nuryanti, 2022).. It can be said that these workers have an itinerary to do workation at the destination location. The choice of accommodation at the destination location to stay can have a big influence on the smooth running of the desired workation activities, so the readiness or availability of the preference aspects sought by workers is very important to consider when making workation plans. These preferences reflect the desire for a conducive work environment and the opportunity to enjoy recreational activities while at work. (Kurniasari et al., 2022).

Research on workation is still predominantly sourced from outside Indonesia because the term first emerged in Western countries before entering Asia, with Japan being a country that has extensively discussed this new work style. Workation research in Indonesia is still very limited, even though the term is somewhat familiar to the working population. Two studies on workation that serve as primary references for this research are Nugraha & Nuryanti's 2022 study in the context of Bandung and Kurniasari's 2022 study primarily focused on Bali. These studies mainly focus on the characteristics of workation participants in Indonesia, while this research emphasizes design considerations based on the workation phenomenon as a new work style.

Until now, it is not certain what environmental factors have an influence on the formation of work preferences during workation, so the main focus of this research is to dig deeper into these factors based on a review of literature on related topics. This research is expected to contribute to the development of recommendations for designers that address the needs of workation actors as a new tourism phenomenon that has developed along with the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHOD

The method used in this research is a qualitative approach through a literature review. This method is utilized by researchers to find scientific articles that can serve as references or foundational considerations for new research (Perry & Hammond, 2002). The literature review

involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing previous research so that the results can provide an understanding of knowledge development, stimulate policymakers, spark the creation of new ideas, and serve as a guide for other research (Snyder, 2019). Therefore, this study will analyze literature on the topics of workation and hotel selection to identify the factors that could influence the design considerations of hotel rooms for workation purposes

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Work from home (WFH) activities have actually been around since before the Covid-19 pandemic, but the pandemic played a role as a catalyst for the use of the term work style. It was then adapted by many companies and workplaces to be applied to their employees. Then over time, government policies for the community became more relaxed with a note of implementing good health protocols. With this policy, people were able to do activities in public places again. This makes workers whose offices still apply the WFH system want to try working outside their living space because they feel bored and bored. (Gunasekara et al., 2022). Therefore, there is another work style after WFH, namely work from anywhere (WFA). WFA emerged from the development of remote work where workers have the flexibility to choose a workplace that allows workers not to be in the same geographical location as their office (Choudhury et al., 2022).

The shift from WFH to WFA is a significant revolution in working practices. Initially, the concept of WFH was focused on employees working from their homes (Šmite et al., 2023). However, the shift to WFA has expanded this concept to make employees working from any location they choose possible and not limited to their homes. This transition has been driven by employees' experiences and preferences during the pandemic, as well as the recognition of the importance of flexibility and work-life balance. (Ateeq, 2022). For example, companies such as InterSoft have implemented WFA policies that make employees can choose how often they want to be in the office or at home, and even allow them to move to the country of their choice. (Šmite et al., 2023).

This transition is supported by employees' positive experiences during the enforced WFH period, with many expressing a desire to continue working remotely even after the pandemic. (Ateeq, 2022). It can be concluded that the revolution of WFH and WFA has had a positive impact on workers as it is driven by the desire for greater flexibility in achieving work-life balance. This then refers to the phenomenon of workation as one form of WFA trends that occur in society.

According to Amano (2018) in Yoshida (2021) workation is a neologism of work and vacation words. Workation is a type of tourism where tourists travel for the double purpose of work and recreation, and with the role of modern technology, they can carry out their activities away from home or their usual workplace. (Nawijn & Damen, 2014; Pecsek, 2018).

Previous research suggests that workation can have a positive impact on mental health and well-being, as it gives individuals the opportunity to engage in recreational activities and enjoy a change of environment, which can reduce stress and improve overall mental well-being. (Yoshida, 2021). In addition, workation has the potential to increase productivity by providing a change of scenery and reducing the monotony of the work environment, which can increase motivation (Pecsek, 2018). (Pecsek, 2018).

1. Workation Preference Factors

There are several factors that are considered to influence the ability to work during a workation. These factors contribute an crucial role in ensuring that workation can be enjoyable and productive for workers (Kurniasari et al., 2022). The following is a table of factors that affect the ability to work during workation from previous studies.

Table 1. Table of Workation Preference Factors

Research Title	Author	Factor
Work During Vacation: Not So Bad After All	Nawijn, J. & Damen, Y. 2014. <i>Tourism Analysis</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A quiet workspace free from distracting sounds - Wifi - Ergonomic workspace

Digital Nomads' Interest and Satisfaction In Doing Workcations in Hotels at Greater Bandung Region: The AIDA+S Model Application	Nugraha, A. & Nuryanti, N. 2022. Journal of Tourism Sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wifi - Room size - Comfortable workspace - Quite atmosphere
Working on Holiday; The Theory and Practice of Workation	Pecsek, B. 2018. Balkans Journal of Emerging Trends in Social Sciences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality and speed of technology facilities
Workations and Their Impact on the Local Area in Japan.	Matsushita, K. 2021. Dalam The Flexible Workplace: Coworking and Other Modern Workplace Transformations. Springer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coworking space - Internet access
Workations and the Doubling of Time and Place.	Matsushita, K. 2021. Dalam Advances in Information and Communication Research. Springer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internet quality - Workspace comfort - Natural environment
Going on workation – Is tourism research ready to take off? Exploring an emerging phenomenon of hybrid tourism	Bassyiouny, M. & Wilkesmann, M. 2023. Tourism Management Perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weather - Facilities and services provided by the accommodation
The Emerging Workcation Trend in Indonesia: A Preliminary Study on the Demographic Profiles, Motivations, and Experiences of Workcationers.	Kurniasari, M. I., Isbah, M. F., & Azca, M. N. 2022. Jurnal Ilmu Sosial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High speed wifi - Digital facilities - Conducive workspace
A Study on Factors Affecting Workation Participation Intention through Airbnb under COVID-19	Kim, M & Chung, N. 2022. Journal of Tourism and Leisure Research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleanliness of accommodation - Health protocol - Comfortable workdesk - Internet speed
Work from anywhere: traditional workation, coworkation and workation retreats: a conceptual review	Voll, K., Gauger, F., & Pfnür, A. 2022. World Leisure Journal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ergonomic and conducive workspace - Internet connectivity - Service facilities

Based on the table above, it can be understood that the dominant factors are the quality of the working space as well as the availability and quality of technology. Wi-Fi facilities in hotel rooms can enhance travelers' ability to work briefly during their vacation through their smartphones or tablets (Nawijn & Damen, 2014). The role of smartphones and other technological devices such as tablets and laptops are indispensable for work activities during workations. This group of tech-savvy workationers is highly sensitive to the quality and speed of technological infrastructure available at their vacation destinations, which can influence their stress levels (Pecsek, 2018).

The dependence on the quality of the workspace also plays an important role in work activities during workations, where the expected workspace should provide comfort (Nugraha & Nuryanti, 2022). This includes several qualities such as a quiet atmosphere, ergonomic furniture, good lighting,

and others. The availability of a conducive workplace for working, video conferencing, and phone calls can affect the quality of work during workations (Kurniasari et al., 2022). Therefore, workationers have preferences when seeking accommodations at their workation destinations. This can underpin their decisions in choosing certain options that can meet their needs while working on vacation. Hotels are the most frequently chosen accommodation option for tourists who want to work while vacationing (Bassiyouny & Wilkesmann, 2023; Kurniasari et al., 2022). This then leads to the next discussion on hotel selection preferences for guests who want to stay.

2. Hotel Selection Preference Factors

The factors influencing people's preferences in hotel selection have many dimensions. Research has shown that guests look for specific features that align with their tastes and preferences, often relying on online reviews to understand public opinion about a hotel (Chen et al., 2021). By identifying online reviews, guests can categorize the key factors and hotel criteria they are seeking. Factors such as price, amenities, service quality, and geographic location contribute to the overall hotel criteria that influence the choice of accommodation according to their needs. Previous studies have also discussed the classification of guest groups with their own characteristics, which influence their psychological behavior. It is important to consider guests' psychological behavior in the hotel evaluation process, as they may compare hotels and be more sensitive to choosing the most advantageous option (Wang et al., 2020).

In addition to the aforementioned factors, there are other elements that can influence guests' preferences in choosing a hotel. For instance, physical elements such as architecture, room design, and aesthetics play a significant role in attracting attention. These physical elements are considered capable of creating the overall atmosphere and ambiance of a hotel. The availability of amenities such as swimming pools, fitness centers, spas, and on-site dining options also play an important role in shaping preferences (Kim & Kim, 2022). Below is a table outlining the factors that influence people's preferences in choosing a hotel for their stay, based on previous research studies.

Table 2. Table of Hotel Selection Factors

Research Title	Author	Factor
The Differences in Hotel Selection Among Various Types of Travellers: A Comparative Analysis with a Useful Bounded Rationality Behavioural Decision Support Model	Wang, L. et al. 2020. Tourism Management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room type - Traveler type - Hotel rating - Availability of certain facilities
An Empirical Study of How Both Environmental Awareness and Interest in Artwork Can Be Incorporated into the Interior Design of Urban Hotels	Kim, J. & Kang, E. 2022. Sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room design - Room type - Physical environment - Appearance and design of hotel lobby - Public space
Customer preference identification from hotel online reviews: A neural network based fine-grained sentiment analysis	Bian, Y. et al. 2022. Computers & Industrial Engineering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service quality - Neighborhood - Room type - Facilities - Sanitation
Hotel attributes and overall customer satisfaction: What did COVID-19 change?	Srivastava, A. & Kumar, V. 2021. Tourism Management Perspective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hygiene - Noise - Room type - Convenience of location
Study on hotel selection method based on integrating online ratings and reviews from multi-websites	Zhao, M., Li, L., & Xu, Z. 2021. Information Sciences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traveler type - Price - Internet

		- Room type
		- Sleep quality
Saving the hotel industry: Strategic response to the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel selection analysis, and customer retention	Kim, J. J. & Han, H. 2022. <i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i> .	- Service quality - Room furniture - Room type - Technology facilities
Using a heuristic approach to design personalized urban tourism itineraries with hotel selection	Zheng, W. et al. 2020. <i>Tourism Management</i> .	- Location - Reputation - Room type
Analyzing the impact of COVID-19 vaccination requirements on travelers' selection of hotels using a fuzzy multi-criteria decision-making approach	Wang, Y. & Chen, T. 2022. <i>Healthcare Analytics</i> .	- Room type - Price - Reputation - Hygiene - Services

Based on the table above, the studies explored guest preference factors for hotel selection, and the dominant factors that emerged were service quality, surrounding environment, and room type.

Service quality encompasses various aspects of the guest experience, including interactions with hotel staff, responsiveness to guest needs, efficiency in service delivery, and overall customer service standards. High service quality is associated with positive guest perceptions, increased customer loyalty, and an improved hotel reputation (Bian et al., 2022). Additionally, service quality is closely linked to value expectations. When hotels consistently provide high-quality services that meet or exceed guest expectations, it can result in favorable recommendations and online reviews that attract new customers and retain existing ones.

The surrounding environment of the hotel includes factors such as location, nearby attractions, accessibility, and the overall ambiance, all of which can influence guest experience and satisfaction. Research shows that the surrounding environment plays a crucial role in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty to a hotel (Tran et al., 2019). Guests often consider the proximity of the hotel to attractions, transportation hubs, and natural settings when choosing accommodations. Hotels located near natural environments offer access to good air quality and a sense of connection with nature. These factors contribute to a relaxing and comfortable stay for guests, making the hotel experience more enjoyable. In cases where the hotel is not situated in a natural setting, hotel managers and designers can incorporate natural elements into the hotel design to create a biophilic environment (Khozaei et al., 2022). This can include adding indoor plants, landscaped gardens, and water features to fulfill guests' needs for a connection with nature. A pleasant and comfortable surrounding environment can enhance the overall guest experience, leading to positive reviews and recommendations.

Room type is a crucial aspect that significantly influences preferences in hotel selection (Radojevic et al., 2018). Different types of guests have varying preferences when choosing the desired room type during their stay. Room types such as standard rooms, suites, or themed rooms offer various qualities of space, including size, layout, functionality, and aesthetics, which influence guest preferences (Ozkan & Yildirim, 2017). Various types of guests, such as families, friends, and business travelers, will have different preferences regarding room type (Wang et al., 2020). Family guests, compared to solo or couple guests, will prioritize rooms that can comfortably accommodate all family members. If there are children, they will also look for facilities suitable for the children (Li, 2021). Meanwhile, business guests will focus on functional rooms equipped with amenities such as work desks and good internet access (Bian et al., 2022). In contrast, leisure guests tend to focus more on finding rooms that offer specific atmospheres or views that can enhance their stay experience (Radojevic et al., 2018).

3. Recommendations for Designers

Design is a process that involves planning or ideation that is not only put on paper but also

incorporates multidisciplinary values from fields such as economics, social sciences, technology, and culture (Adiluhung, 2021). To keep evolving with market growth and demand, designers continually expand their knowledge by studying phenomena that are currently developing in society. This is because designers can be a profession that addresses people's needs in their activities according to their desires and preferences. When designing spaces, designers will highly consider the needs of the users of the space to ensure the space is purpose-built (Yusuff et al., 2024). This also applies in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has had a serious effect on Indonesia's economy, including in trade, investment, and tourism sectors (Sanjaya & Citra, 2022). Designers are required to adapt to the needs of society during and after the pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic is seen as a catalyst that has led to phenomena or trends that people are interested in, one of which is the workation phenomenon.

In the case of the workation phenomenon, the type of guests aims to work while on vacation, thus combining characteristics of both business and leisure guests. This indicates that workationers are oriented towards rooms with good workspace quality and those offering a pleasing atmosphere or view to satisfy their experience. Additionally, it is important to consider who the workation is being done with, whether alone, with friends, or with family, as this becomes another factor in determining preferences for hotel selection based on their needs.

Based on the findings from the literature study on workation preferences and hotel selection, two intersecting factors were identified: the quality of the room and the type of room. These factors can be used as considerations for hotel management and interior designers in creating or developing hotel room designs. Understanding the diverse preferences of workationers with various characteristics is essential to tailor the room quality to meet each guest's needs.

Designers can play a role in understanding the needs of workationers, which can then be translated into the design model of hotel room types. Rooms favored by workationers often have high-quality work desks due to their tendency to work within the room. This creates a connection between the quality of the work desk, ventilation openings, and room size, which can be integrated to create a well-designed and comfortable workspace. Guests will have their own preferences regarding the quality of the space that makes them comfortable, such as air quality, temperature comfort, lighting, and sound or noise levels. All these factors can be considered by designers to create a comfortable and conducive workspace for workationers, tailored to their specific characteristics. Hotel management also plays a role in adjusting offerings and services to meet guest expectations and improve overall customer satisfaction.

The following is an example of a schematic layout for the placement of a work desk in relation to ventilation openings. This scheme can be a consideration for designers and provide hotel management with an idea of how desk placement can be a criterion for categorizing room types. A desk facing an opening will receive better lighting, natural ventilation, and views of nature, enhancing the guest experience and providing a sense of relaxation (Khozaei et al., 2022). However, it also has drawbacks, such as glare and eye strain. Research by Jamrozik et al. (2019) shows that workers with large window areas reported experiencing more eye strain compared to those with smaller windows.



Figure 1. Layout scheme for workdesk facing windows

A work desk positioned beside an opening has the advantage of reducing glare, which in turn lessens eye strain (Jamrozik et al., 2019). However, placing the desk beside a ventilation opening can

potentially lower mood and productivity levels, resulting in reduced work satisfaction due to the lack of direct access to the opening (Day et al., 2019).



Figure 2. Layout scheme for workdesk beside windows

The consideration of placing a desk facing or beside a ventilation opening may vary depending on individual preferences and hotel environment conditions. If glare and eye strain are primary concerns, positioning the desk beside the ventilation opening could be a better choice. However, if the benefits of natural light and views are prioritized, facing the desk towards the opening might be more advantageous, provided that measures to reduce glare, such as using window coverings, are taken (Abd-Alhamid et al., 2023; Jamrozik et al., 2019).

CONCLUSIONS

Workation as a work style phenomenon catalyzed by the COVID-19 pandemic, has the potential to become a sustainable trend due to its positive impacts on individuals, the economy, and tourism. Workation offers a new perspective on the emergence of flexible workplaces and has implications for creating tourist destinations that meet market needs.

By taking into account the preferences of various characteristics of workationers, interior designers can evaluate space quality needs so that together with hotel management, they can create various hotel room type offerings that suit the needs of workationers. Understanding the needs of guests is important for policy makers in the tourism sector to formulate strategies to meet evolving market demands.

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