

Bibliometric Analysis of Postgraduate Theses on the Relationship Between Communication and Tourism

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ABSTRACT

In this research, it is aimed to reveal the current situation and trends in the related subject by examining the master's and doctoral theses prepared in Turkey in the relationship between communication and tourism with the bibliometric analysis method. In this context, 34 postgraduate thesis studies, which are related to the subject and which were shared and accessed by the Higher Education Institution database between 1990-2022, were included in the research. The data obtained from the research were analyzed with the help of SPSS statistical analysis package program, and frequency and percentage analyzes of the data were made. In the light of research findings; It has been determined that the most postgraduate theses among universities were prepared within the body of 'Selçuk University'. In addition to this, it has been concluded that 'quantitative research' methods are mostly used as a method in the researches. It is understood that the terms 'Tourism', 'Communication' and 'Public Relations' come to the fore in the keywords used in graduate theses. With this research, by drawing attention to the concepts of tourism and communication within the framework of postgraduate research, suggestions are made to researchers and stakeholders to examine them in different dimensions.

Keywords: Communication, Tourism, Bibliometrics, Postgraduate Thesis

İletişim ve Turizm İlişkisinde Yapılan Lisansüstü Tezlerin Bibliyometrik Analizi

ÖZ

Bu araştırmada, iletişim ve turizm ilişkisinde Türkiye'de hazırlanmış yüksek lisans ve doktora tezlerinin bibliyometrik analiz yöntemiyle incelenerek, ilgili konudaki mevcut durumun ve eğilimlerin ortaya çıkarılması hedeflenmektedir. Bu kapsamda, konuyla ilgili olan ve 1990-2022 yılları arasında Yükseköğretim Kurumu veri tabanı tarafından paylaşılarak erişim izni verilmiş olan 34 lisansüstü tez çalışması, araştırmaya dâhil edilmiştir. Araştırmadan elde veriler, SPSS istatistikî analiz paket programı yardımıyla incelenmiş olup, verilerin sıklık ve yüzde analizleri yapılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları ışığında; üniversiteler arasında en fazla lisansüstü tezin 'Selçuk Üniversitesi' bünyesinde hazırlandığı tespit edilmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra yapılan araştırmalarda yöntem olarak en çok 'nicel araştırma' yöntemlerinin kullanıldığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Lisansüstü tezlerde kullanılan anahtar kelimelerde ise 'Turizm', 'İletişim' ve 'Halkla İlişkiler' terimlerinin ön plana çıktığı anlaşılmaktadır. Yapılan bu araştırma ile turizm ve iletişim kavramlarına lisansüstü araştırmalar çerçevesinden dikkat çekilerek farklı boyutlarda incelenmesi için araştırmacılara ve paydaşlara önerilerde bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İletişim, Turizm, Bibliyometrik, Lisansüstü Tez

1. Introduction

Communication is one of the basic tools that sectors such as service producing tourism need most. It is of great importance in terms of both the healthy functioning of the internal organization and customer relations. In particular, effective communication techniques are required to encourage motivations such as satisfaction and repeat purchase. Thanks to the increasing technological developments since the beginning of the 20th century, changes have also occurred in the communication tools used in the tourism sector. Communication tools, which started via telephone and fax, are gaining a wide dimension with digital media and wireless communication resources. As a matter of fact, it is seen that every tourism organization that adopts a sustainable tourism principle shows an intense tendency towards these communication tools, which are the needs of the age.

Tourism and communication sectors also have an intense market share independently of each other. Within the scope of the 2020 market data of the information and communication technologies sector, it is estimated that this sector has grown by 22 percent compared to the previous year and will approach the level of 5 trillion dollars with an annual growth of 5.3 percent in 2025 (TÜBİSAD, 2021). Again in the

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same year of the tourism sector, despite the coronavirus, which is a global epidemic, it reached an annual level of 533 billion dollars (UNWTO, 2021). In line with these figures, it is understood that both sectors have great economic effects. In addition, people who need to be a tourist for rest, entertainment and awareness are constantly in contact with communication due to the need to express themselves and be understood. The value it reveals for human life in both disciplines is similar to each other. As a matter of fact, Ritz Carlton, Four Seasons and Marriot groups, which are the leading organizations of the tourism sector, use many communication tools, especially social media (Çiftçi & Küçükaltan, 2012, p.9). Moreover, travel organizations such as Turkish Airlines and Pegasus Airlines prefer different communication sources in terms of advertising and promotion (Işilar, 2021, p.58). In the field of entertainment and recreation, which is one of the main branches of the tourism sector, digital sharing-based communication tools are used (Wood et al., 2013). Promotion and marketing objectives, which are one of the most important issues that Turkey deals with within the scope of 2023 tourism strategy, are planned with appropriate communication tools (Murat, 2009, p.171). It is necessary to use the most effective types of communication in order to brand the relevant touristic destination and make it more attractive. This situation shows the importance of communication for the tourism sector, as well as supporting economic development as a complementary factor.

It has been tried to be explained by associating with many disciplines, especially tourism, management and marketing. However, the need for communication tools in order to better position its existing presence and gain competitive advantage is not fully revealed. In this context, it is thought that the scope of postgraduate studies that have been previously discussed in the relationship between tourism and communication should be discussed and their current status should be examined by bibliometric analysis method. Because these studies at the highest level of higher education offer detailed ideas on the subject. It contributes to bibliometric studies in tourism and its sub-branches by providing a comprehensive perspective on related fields (Temizkan et al., 2015, p.395). In this context, it is estimated that a broad perspective on the subject will be revealed with this bibliometric research to be carried out in the relationship between tourism and communication.

Bibliometric analyzes started to come to the fore with the consideration of numerical data related to scientific researches in the relationship between tourism and communication (Şahin & Acun, 2015). In particular, it can provide information that sheds light on the field, thanks to its ability to explain different dimensions such as subject distribution, difference in education level and functioning. Statistical descriptive information revealed by bibliometric analyzes can give an idea about the subject of research. In this direction, tourism and communication related graduate theses, which are complementary to each other, are examined by bibliometric analysis method and it is planned to eliminate the deficiency in the relevant field. Since there is no previous study on the subject, makes this research important.

2. Literature Review

Bibliometrics, which presents the content and objectives of studies in a scientific field in a wide perspective, offers numerical analyzes and descriptive statistical information on the subject. Bibliometrics also reveals ideas about the elements of the studies (scope, level, year, keyword, methodology, etc.) by applying mathematical and statistical methods (Polat et al., 2013, p. 275). In the most general approach, bibliometrics is expressed as a research area where mathematical and statistical methods that define analysis methods can be applied (Pritchard, 1969). Although it was seen that bibliometric studies were frequently performed in fields such as natural sciences and health sciences at first, it has been observed that its use in the field of social sciences has increased recently (Duran & Çelikkaya, 2019, p. 154).

The first study with the bibliometric analysis method was put forward by Cole and Eales in 1917. In this study; Analyzes dealing with the statistical information of studies published in the field of comparative anatomy between the years 1550-1860 were made. In 1923, E.Wyndham Hulme conducted a study in the field of history through bibliometric analysis. Similar to the bibliometric studies conducted around the world, the first study conducted in Turkey was the article titled 'Growth in Turkish Positive Basic Sciences' published by Özinönü in 1970. In this research, it is aimed to reveal the scientific efficiency in the fields of astronomy, biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics and earth sciences with the bibliometric

analysis method (Hotamışlı & Erem, 2014, p. 3). In the literature, bibliometric methods are shaped according to the research organization in a particular field and deal with reference sources with accurate model. In order to evaluate the researches in the relevant fields in accordance with the research purpose, it is possible to apply bibliometric measurements with great care (Hammarfelt, 2012, p.13). In addition, bibliometrics is one of the most basic methodological methods used to process large volumes of scientific data. The term "bibliometric analysis" is expressed as a statistical evaluation of published journal articles, books or graduate theses. It is widely preferred in many fields to follow the main themes by determining the subject headings, numerical data and relational distribution of the research area. Through this analysis, maps can be generated based on a normalized term co-occurrence matrix and a similarity measure that calculates the association strength between terms. By structuring the related terms into clusters, differences and similarities can be detected (Shi, et al., 2021, p.3). With bibliometric analysis, the subject groups of research articles, the scope of journals and the areas of interest of graduate theses can be analyzed statistically and scientifically (Lin, 2012, p.8). In this context, various information can be obtained about the researched area. Bibliometric analyzes are also frequently used in the field of tourism and communication, which have very important values in terms of national economies within the services sector (Çiçek & Kozak, 2012; Ulu & Akdağ, 2015). However, there is no bibliometric study that deals with both disciplines relationally. Some examples of postgraduate studies in the field of tourism and communication are as follows;

In his research, Ünal (2008) analyzed databases between 2000-2007 the distribution of electronic journal databases in the field of information communication and the distribution to journals by examining over 30 million full-text articles downloaded by consortium member university libraries from ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Wiley InterScience and EBSCOHost. Karabulut (2010), in his research on communication sciences, aimed to determine the professional-scientific communication patterns of the list members by examining KUTUP-L. In this context, 19,827 messages sent to the list between 1994-2008 were analyzed using the bibliometric analysis method. In addition to postgraduate theses based on communication and using bibliometric analysis method, there are also scientific article studies. Şen (2020) also handled the articles on Word Of Mouth (WOM) in Web of Science (WoS), one of the largest web-based databases, scanning the most prestigious journals in the field of academia, with the bibliometric method. Tosyalı (2021), on the other hand, similarly examined the articles on the COVID-19 epidemic in the field of media and communication, where communication is most frequently used, with the bibliometric analysis method. In his research conducted in 2017, Çıkrık focused on the bibliometric analysis of graduate theses, which deal with the perspective of local people on the effects of tourism, according to various parameters. In the same year, Altürk (2018), Scencedirect, SAGE, Taylor & Francis, Emerald and Wiley databases analyzed full-text articles in English on Turkish tourism with various bibliometric parameters. In his research, Çoşkun (2020) examined the books, articles and papers published between 2010 and 2018 related to tourism and Islamophobia with the bibliometric method within the framework of various parameters. Again, Demir analyzed the scientific studies on gastronomy with bibliometric method, using the statistical information of the articles published on the field of gastronomy between 2013-2019 in his study in 2020.

People, whose leisure time has increased and whose income has increased economically, have recently started to show more inclination towards activities where they can realize themselves, such as tourism. However, individuals who have started to use many mass media resources, especially digital communication tools, which is one of the most important advantages brought by technology, combine tourism and communication during their travels. This situation reveals that both fields have an intense relationship in a natural flow. However, the absence of a study related to tourism and communication in postgraduate bibliometric studies shows the lack of this relationship in the literature. In this respect, with this study, the framework of the studies put forward in the relationship between tourism and communication, which will not be considered independently from each other, is revealed with the bibliometric analysis method. On the other hand, it is aimed to analyze the similar and different aspects of both science fields in depth and to support them with statistical data.

3. Methodology

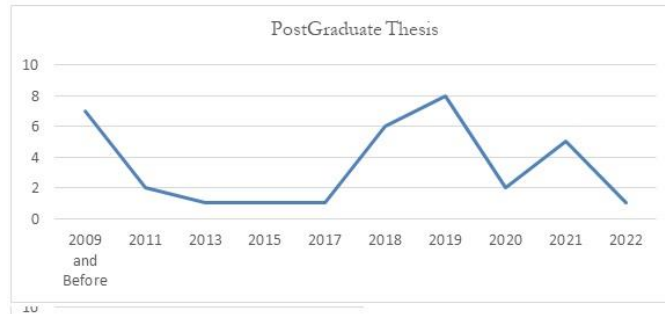
In this study, in which postgraduate studies on the relationship between communication and tourism are examined by bibliometric analysis method, it is aimed to reveal descriptive statistical data on the subject. In this context, bibliometric analysis method was preferred. Bibliometrics is expressed as the application of mathematical and statistical techniques to scientific studies such as articles, journals and thesis (Pritchard, 1969). In addition to science, bibliometrics has recently been used frequently in social sciences. It aims to explain the bibliographic features, information structure and development of the related literature with a quantitative analysis (Jing et al., 2015; Altınpulluk, 2018).

In this research, the National Thesis Center Database of the Council of Higher Education was used as a data collection tool. Theses covering common terms related to 'tourism' and 'communication' in the database were evaluated. As of February 1, 2022, a total of 34 master's and doctoral theses were reached in the search. The data obtained are analyzed with the SPSS statistical analysis program and shown in the findings section in the form of tables.

The aim of this research is to examine tourism and communication related master's and doctoral theses prepared in Turkey by bibliometric analysis method. In this context, answers to the following questions are sought;

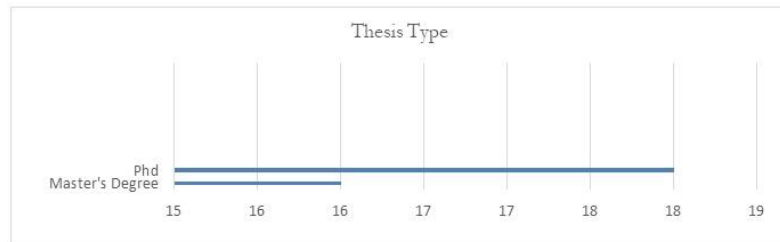
- How are the changes in the number of theses by years?
- What is the distribution of theses according to their types?
- Which are the departments in which theses are prepared?
- Which are the universities where theses are prepared?
- What are the application types used in theses?
- What are the data collection tools used in theses?
- What is the analysis of the keywords used in the theses?

4. Findings



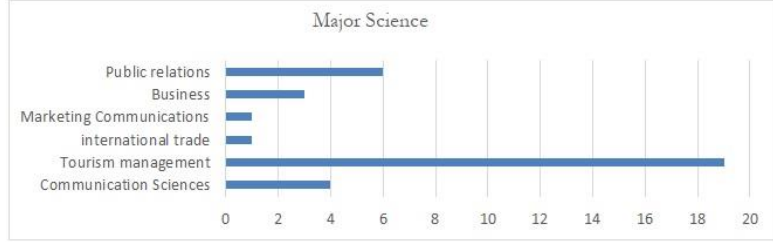
Graphic 1. Distribution of Graduate Theses by Years

Looking at the distribution of postgraduate theses on the relationship between communication and tourism by years (Graph 1), it is seen that the highest number of studies took place in 2019. On the one hand, it has seen that while there were 7 theses in 2009 and before, 23 postgraduate theses were prepared in the last 5 years. this situation has revealed recently with tourism and communications getting more clarification on the subject.



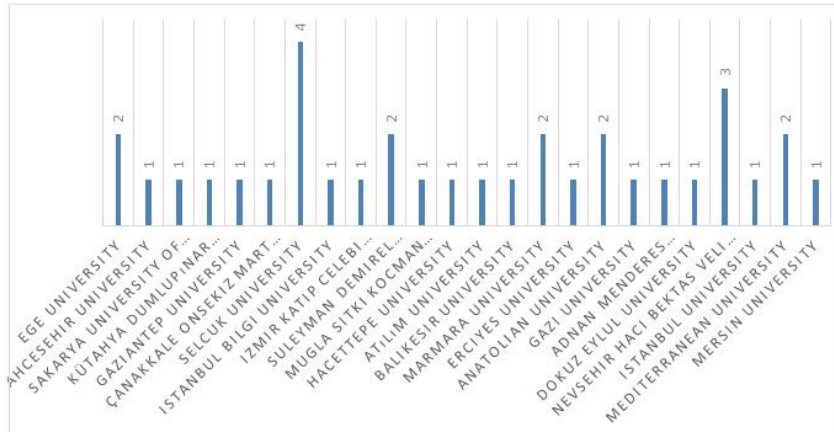
Graphic 2. Thesis Type

When the types of postgraduate theses made on the relationship between communication and tourism (Graph 2) are examined, it is understood that 16 of the theses related to the subject are master's and 18 are doctoral theses. The fact that the number of doctoral theses is higher than the number of master's degrees shows that the specialization perspective given to the relationship between tourism and communication has gained importance.



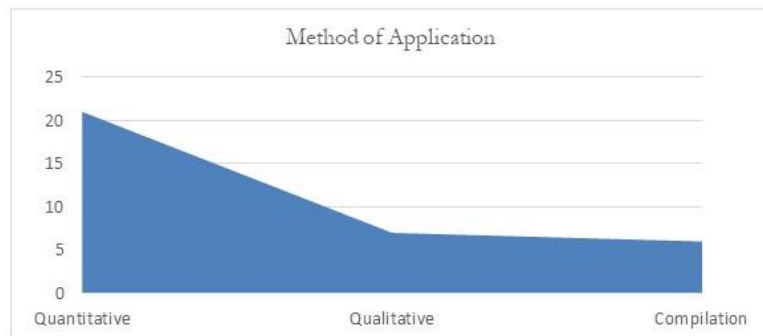
Graphic 3. Major Science

It is seen that the theses (Graph 3) on the relationship between communication and tourism are mostly made in the major science of 'Tourism Management', 'Public Relations' and 'Communication'. In addition to this, it is understood that there are postgraduate theses in other branches of science, which often deal with the relationship between communication and tourism and prepared for them.



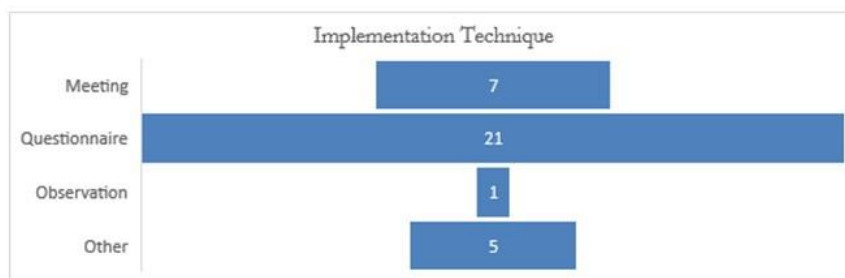
Graphic 4. Prepared by Universities

When the universities (Graph 4) where postgraduate theses on the relationship between communication and tourism are prepared are examined, it is seen that universities such as 'Selçuk University' and 'Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University' come to the fore. However, it is understood that graduate thesis studies are carried out in almost many universities related to the subject.



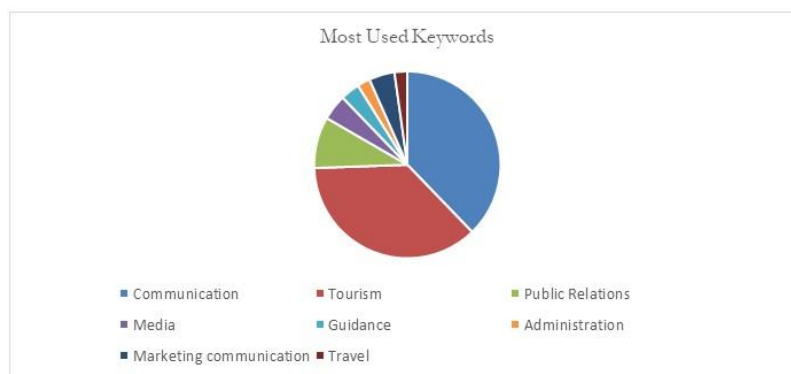
Graphic 5. Method of Application

When the application methods (Graphic 5) of the postgraduate theses made on the relationship between communication and tourism are examined, it has been determined that the most frequently used method to achieve the research purpose is the quantitative research method. This method is followed by qualitative research method and compilation studies. However, in recent years, in many studies, especially postgraduate theses on the relationship between communication and tourism, it is seen that qualitative research tendencies have an increasing tendency, as in this research. As a matter of fact, in the findings obtained in this research, it is seen that postgraduate thesis studies using qualitative research methods have been carried out in the last 5 years.



Graphic 6. Implementation Technique

When the data collection tools (Graph 6) of the postgraduate theses made on the relationship between communication and tourism are examined, it is seen that the most frequently used method is in the form of a questionnaire. Questionnaire data collection technique, which is of great importance in terms of collecting statistical information especially for studies that have to use quantitative data method, stands out within the scope of this research. Again, the interview technique for qualitative research methods is frequently used. These techniques are followed by Observation and other techniques.



Graphic 7. Most Used Keywords

One of the most important subjects used when obtaining information from studies conducted in bibliometric research is the keywords in the research. Keywords provide an idea about the research with prominent concepts about the general structure of the subject. This situation allows very valuable information to be obtained in bibliometric research.

When the keywords (Graph 7) used in the postgraduate theses on the relationship between communication and tourism are examined, 'Communication' comes first with 37.8% and 'Tourism' comes second with 36.7%. These are followed by 'Public Relations' 8.9%, 'Media' 4.4%, 'Guidance' 3.3%, 'Administration' 2.2% and 'Marketing Communication' 4.4%. 'Travel' is used as the keyword used at the lowest level with 2.2%.

5. Result, Discussion and Suggestions

This research was carried out in order to understand the current situation of the postgraduate theses prepared in the relationship between communication and tourism and to determine the level of the approaches. In order to reach this information, the database of the Higher Education Institution was used and the bibliometric analysis method was used to finalize the research purpose. Communication has always been at the center of human life and has been one of the most basic tools used to maintain its current existence. Communication has reached a different dimension with the concept of economic welfare and leisure time that emerged in human life after the industrial revolution. Especially thanks to technological developments, it touches every point by increasing its communication resources, especially digital, mobile and wireless devices (Guarda et al., 2021, p.6). There are similar situations in the concept of tourism, which is human-oriented and has a management process. Because communication is needed in every field of tourism in order to understand, explain and agree. Again, with the rapid increase in the number of people participating in tourism in the last century, the tourism sector is one of the areas that the communication sciences industry is interested in (Niu et al., 2016). In this context, it is wondered to what extent the relationship between the two scientific approaches, which are of critical importance to each other, is reflected in the postgraduate theses, which are defined as one of the most valuable works of those who want to specialize. Since there is no study in the related literature on postgraduate studies in the relationship between communication and tourism, this research is original and offers new information to the field.

Communication can be done with many mass communication tools under the leadership of internet-based digital media (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014, p.703). Organizations that offer purchasing in mobile services and social media applications are shown as examples of the development of communication (Kaplan, 2012; Taleb et al., 2015). Every sector that wants to benefit from communication opportunities, especially tourism, shows tendencies in this direction and they want to gain a competitive advantage. With the increase in the tendency of people with a certain leisure time and income to travel more and more, tourism activities are increasing (Stephens et al., 1985, p.150). Destinations that want to attract tourists aim to be a point of attraction by accelerating their communication and promotion efforts (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2007, p.16). The communicative processes of accommodation, food and beverage, transportation and recreation areas in the tourism sector are the subject of research (Huff et al., 2003; Arsal et al., 2010; Tseng et al., 2020). Considering the connections between 4.0 and tourism, the weight of the last 5 years of postgraduate research in the research results (Graph 1) is supported. In addition, the fact that studies on the relationship between communication and tourism are included in doctoral theses more than master's level proves the degree of importance at the point reached. On the other hand, it has revealed in the research findings that there is an interest in the subject in the fields of business and marketing as well as the departments of communication and tourism. This situation shows the weight given to the economic aspects of communication marketing and tourism activities. It has been determined in this research that the relationship between communication and tourism is generally tried to be revealed by quantitative research methods. In this respect, it is understood that the interaction can be clearly demonstrated with numerical data. Indeed, Sánchez et al. (2017), their research also supports the research findings by expressing the importance of quantitative research in determining the relationship. Again, in the postgraduate studies, drawing attention to the public relations aspects as well as the concepts of tourism and communication reveals its social effects and outputs (Evren & Kozak, 2014; Ruhanen et al., 2015; Mihalic et al., 2021). In addition to being an effective communication process instrument, public relations is one of the most valuable elements of customer satisfaction and healthy communication in tourism (Lu et al., 2015, p.171). With the social media channels used in communication recently, digital media communication has reached the highest level in tourism as in every sector (Manap et al., 2013; Gülbahar & Yıldırım, 2015; Alghizzawi et al., 2018; Pop et al., 2021). Social media, digital marketing and online sales channels in the field of tourism also support this situation (Kiráľová & Pavlíčka, 2015).

In the light of the research findings, although it is seen that the relationship between communication and tourism has been increasing in recent years, it is thought that they are the subject of limited studies. Especially considering the process management and connection dynamics that support each other, the

relationship between communication and tourism should be investigated in depth and should be subject to more studies. Because it is foreseen that any sector that does not have communication qualifications, especially tourism, cannot maintain its current situation and cannot be sustainable.

This research is limited to postgraduate theses prepared in Turkey. The subject can be deepened by researching postgraduate theses made at international level. In addition, different results can be obtained by searching scientific articles in the WEB of Science, the SCOPUS and ULAKBIM databases.

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Yazarların çalışmadaki katkı oranları %50/%50 şeklindedir.

The authors' contribution rates in the study are %50/%50 form.

Çıkar Çatışması Beyanı / Conflict of Interest

Çalışmada herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

There is no conflict of interest with any institution or person in the study.

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In this study, the rules specified within the scope of the Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive were followed.