



EXAMINATION OF GRADUATE THESIS IN TERMS OF CONTENT AND STRUCTURE IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT BETWEEN 2010-2018

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to identify the current situation, to draw attention to mistakes made, and to raise awareness for students who want to write a thesis in this area in the future by examining the aims, abstracts, methods, results and bibliographies of postgraduate theses in the field of Health Management between 2010-2018.

Methods: In this study, the department of Health Management has been scanned in the thesis database of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) in Turkey. As a result of the examination, 463 theses were reached and 409 theses, which were open to access, have been subjected to content analysis by using Microsoft excel program.

Findings: As a result of the study, 70% of the theses in the field of Health Management consist of quantitative researches. 23% of the scales used in quantitative studies were adapted from foreign scales.

There were various problems in writing of the abstract section of the theses. In addition, while the aims and results were compatible in 48.65% of the theses, 51.35% of them had some inconsistencies.

Conclusion: When the bibliographies of the theses were examined, it was determined that while 20% or less of the sources used in 219 theses included foreign sources, there were also theses that did not use any foreign resources.

Keywords: Health Management, Thesis Writing, Graduate Theses

Introduction

Management has become a concept that is given importance by organizations because of the changes in today's healthcare world, globalization, developing technology and changes in the business world. However, success in making decisions that can use human resources, raw materials, materials, equipment, fixtures and time in harmony, efficiently and effectively in order to achieve the goals determined by the management, and the success in the processes of implementing these decisions have started to become a priority for organizations (Yeşilaydın et al., 2018:1529).

A series of managerial activities that are public oriented and require inter-sectoral cooperation in the management of preventive health services and primary health care services are necessary. However, the necessity of a wide range of managerial activities such as polyclinic, laboratory, x-ray, operating room services in addition to hotel services in hospitals where secondary and tertiary health services are provided complicates Health Management (Çimen, 2010: 136). Increased complexity in these organizations, increased willingness to pay for services, many of which are based on new and emerging technologies, and subsequent increase in health expenditures bring together the concepts of qualified managers and health. This situation increases the interest in Health Management and Health Management education (Thomasson, 2002: 235). While the rapid change in the healthcare industry in the world and in Turkey has led to the renewal of curriculum and accreditation standards in the field of health management, it is expected that both undergraduate education and postgraduate research subjects has a tendency towards this direction (Taylor et al., 2007: 60).

Health Management is also called as health administration. While it is defined as the management or supervision of health systems, public health systems and hospitals, it includes tasks such as the smooth running of individual departments, the recruitment of qualified employees, efficient coordination of information throughout the organization, and more efficient use of resources (www.healthcare-administration-degree.net, 10.05.2020).

It has been understood that it is not sufficient to use only health or only management science approaches in managing the health sector by the necessary experts. Thereupon, Health Management started to take place in national and international university education as a separate discipline (Yenimahalleli Yaşar et al., 2008: 158). The history of Health Management education is quite short. The first master's program in business administration was established at the University of Pennsylvania in 1881, and the first public health school was established at Johns Hopkins University in 1916. The Rockefeller Foundation was the first institution to sponsor Health Management education studies in 1922. The same study was also very effective in establishing the first undergraduate program at Marquette University in Milwaukee in 1926 (Hilsenrath, 2012: 1).

The first postgraduate Health Management program began in 1934 at the University of Chicago under the name of Health Administration and Policy. The Health Management education in Turkey started in 1963 with the establishment of the School of Health Administration affiliated to the Ministry of Health. Afterwards, the School of Hospital Administration was established in 1970 within the body of Hacettepe University and provided postgraduate education until 1975 (Yeşilaydın et al., 2015: 1731). With the Health Management training programs, a human resource that is committed to the fundamental principles and values of the sector, has a grasp of its processes, is knowledgeable about managerial practices, is trained in patient / customer relations and effective communication is provided in line with the needs of the health sector. Therefore, areas such as management theories, communication, organizational behaviour, health law, cost accounting, human resources management, health economics, quantitative techniques are included in the Health Management curriculum (www.anadolu.edu.tr, 10.05.2020).

The lack of standards in institutions providing education in this field and in the content of a given training in this area has led to an increase in Health Management departments in universities in Turkey. The health management department has increased its number day by day by taking part in different faculties or schools as in different names (Gül et al., 2016: 243). But, in

most countries, the development of individuals who have received Health Management education has been negatively affected by the competition of Business Administration and Medicine, and it has been observed that there are some deficiencies in the training of qualified manpower (Aaronson et al., 2010: 323). However, as of 2020, 108 Health Management departments (82 states, 26 foundations) registered in the information system of higher education are operating in universities (<https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr/>, 2020).

In line with this information, with the increasing interest in Health Management day by day, the number of theses in the field of master's and doctorate has increased and the quality problem in theses has started to emerge. Theses made are the most important outputs of postgraduate education. Therefore, their general characteristics are very important in revealing the development tendency of that discipline (Sahin and Ocak, 2019: 547). With this study, it is aimed to determine the current situation, to draw attention to the mistakes made, to raise awareness for students who want to write thesis in the field of Health Management by ranking the theses written between 2010-2018 according to the years, universities, undergraduate status of the student and examining the aims, abstracts, methods, results and bibliographies of theses in detail.

1. Research Methodology

The departments of "Health Institutions Management" and "Health Management" between 2010-2018 were scanned in the database of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE). 463 theses were reached as a result of the scanning. 54 theses that are closed to access were excluded from the scope of the research. A total of 409 theses were examined within the scope of the research.

While examining the theses, firstly, the information about the year, the university, the city where the university is located, the faculty / institute it is affiliated with, and the graduate-undergraduate departments of the author have been examined. Then, the aims and method; whether the validity and reliability analysis was performed, the result, abstract and bibliography of the study were examined in detail according to the relevant thesis writing guidelines and the consistency relationship between them were examined. Excel content analysis was used in data analysis.

2. Analysis

The characteristics of the theses within the scope of the research, including the type, language, author's license status, access status, and universities where they were written are given in Table 1.

Looking at Table 1, it is determined that 89.24% of the theses are master's theses, 99.02% of them are written in Turkish, 25.82% of the authors are Health Management graduates, 88.52% of them are open to access. According to the university where the theses were written, respectively in state universities; Süleyman Demirel University (9.29%), Hacettepe University (7.09%) and Gazi University (6.60%) were higher; in foundation universities; Okan University (7.57%), Atılım University (7.33%) and Beykent University (6.60%) were found to be the top 3 universities in which the most theses were submitted. In this period, it was determined that with the opening of new universities and the beginning of Health Management graduate and doctorate education to existing universities, theses (25.18%) started to be written in universities other than those listed.

Table 1: The Characteristics of the Theses within the Scope of the Research

Category		Number	%
Type of Theses	Master Thesis	365	89,24
	Doctoral Thesis	44	10,75
Language of Thesis	Turkish	405	99,02
	English	4	0,97
License Status of the Author	Indicated license status	306	74,81
	Health Management	79	25.82
	Nursing Department	61	19.93
	Business Administration	45	14.70
	Other	121	39.54
Access status	Open to Access	409	88,52
	Closed to Access	54	11,47
Universities where the Theses are Written	Süleyman Demirel University	38	9.29
	Okan University	31	7.57
	Atılım University	30	7.33
	Hacettepe University	29	7.09
	Beykent University	27	6.60

(Table 1 cont.)

Gazi University	27	6.60
Başkent University	20	4.88
İstanbul University	20	4.88
Dokuz Eylül University	16	3.91
Selçuk University	15	3.66
İstanbul Medipol University	13	3.17
Cumhuriyet University	12	2.93
Sakarya University	11	2.98
Ankara University	10	2.44
Namık Kemal University	7	1.71
Other	103	25.18

Table 2 shows the distribution of these according to the data collection tool. As can be seen in the table, the most used data collection tool is the quantitative research method (70%). While qualitative research methods are used in 12% of theses, it was determined that theses are carried out using 11% compilation, 3% cost analysis, 2% data envelopment analysis method and 1% other (secondary data, time series, swot, etc.) data collection methods.

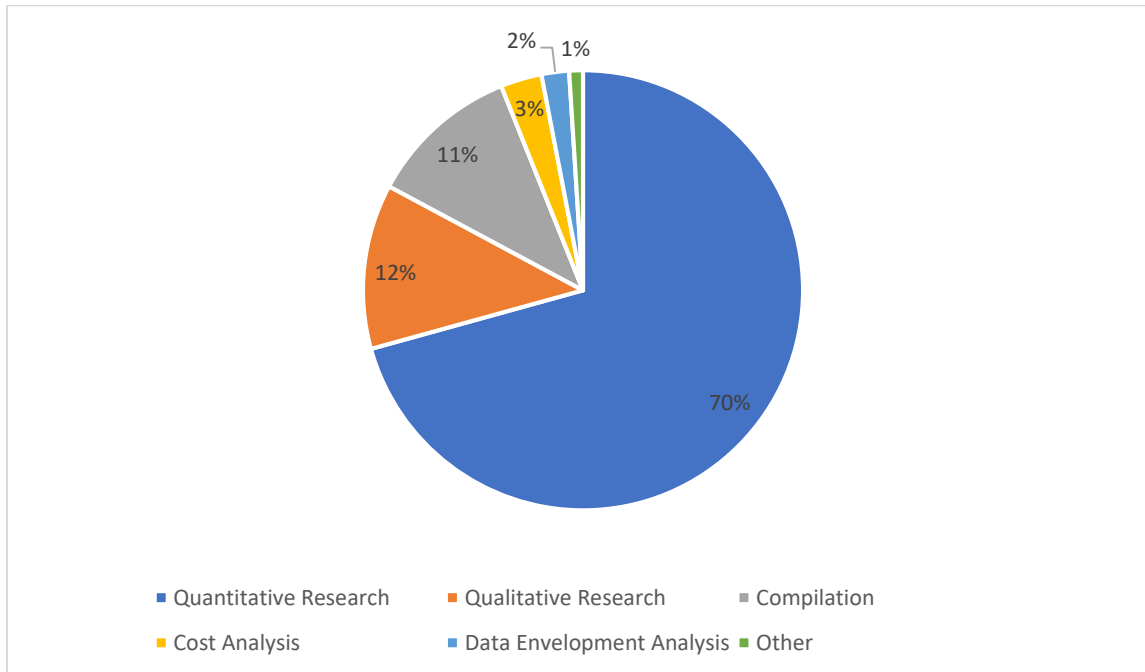


Figure 1: Distribution of Theses Within the Scope of the Research According to Data Collection Method

In the research, it was also examined whether the written theses had validity and reliability analysis or not. Validity is the degree to which a measuring tool can accurately measure the property it aims to measure without confusing any other feature. A reliable measurement tool is that it gives approximately the same numerical result in consecutive measurements for the same feature. Therefore, it is very important to have validity and reliability analyses of the scale to be used in studies in terms of generalizability of the results. (Taşkoparan, 2011).

Figure 2 shows the distribution of scales used in quantitative studies. 23% of the scales consist of scales obtained from international literature and translated into Turkish; 18% of them were analysed for validity and reliability. As the questions of 17% of the scales were prepared by the author; In 16% of these theses, the validity and reliability analysis was made by the author. 4% of the scales were taken from another thesis about the subject. As a result of the examinations, it was determined that 19% of the thesis authors did not share any information about the questionnaire form they used.

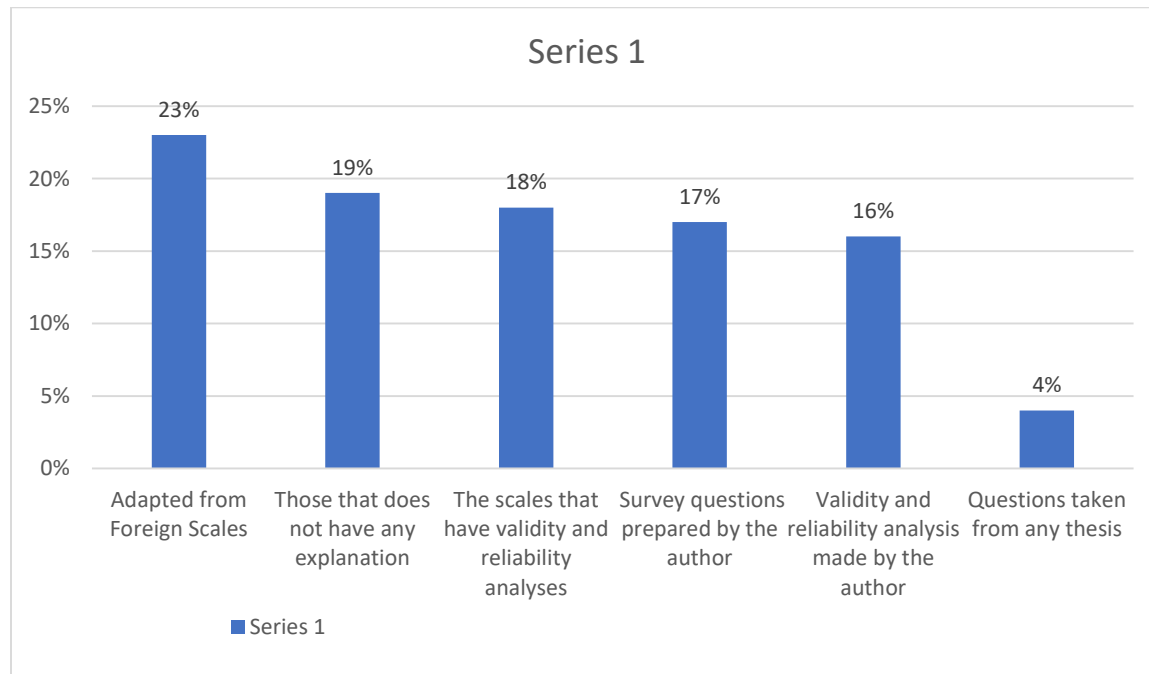


Figure 2: Distribution of Scales Used in Quantitative Studies

The abstracts of the theses were examined in the study; In this context, it was examined whether the researcher wrote the abstract in a way to cover the aims, method, findings and results of his study. As seen in Figure 3, 63% (260) of the examined 409 theses were appropriate in this regard,

18.82% (77) did not have at most one of the aims, methods and results, 7.57% (31) did not have more than one and 4.40% (18) did not have any of them but instead information about the literature was given. Another important issue regarding the abstracts is that keywords should be chosen from the words that best reflect the content of the thesis (Sakarya, 2017: 25). It was determined that 69% (285) of the theses examined were suitable for this definition, 3% (14) did not include any keywords and 26% (110) used words that were not suitable for the content.

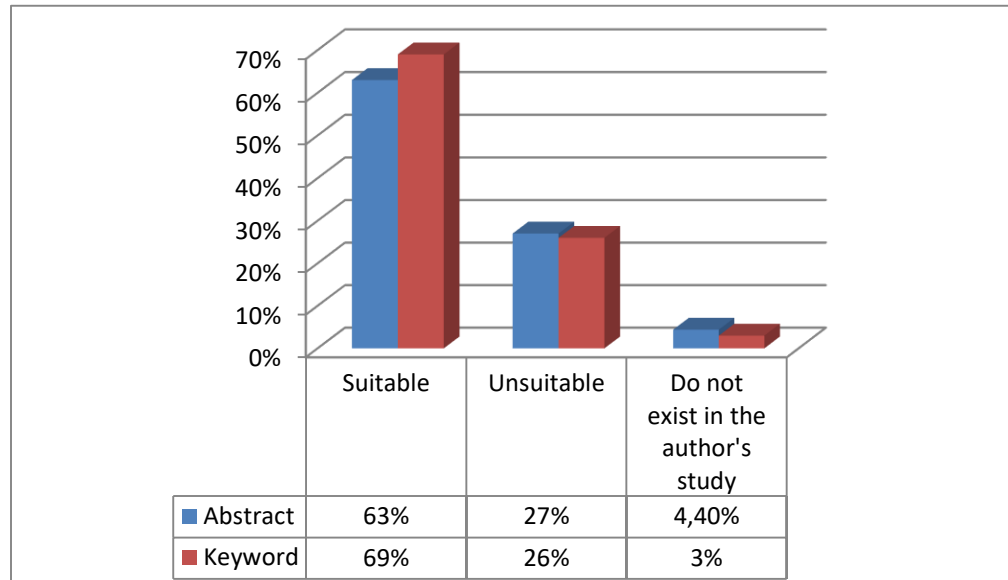


Figure 3: Theses According to the Relevance of Abstract and Keywords

The author is expected to present the results by interpreting the findings obtained from the research in line with the purpose stated in the thesis. This issue is not just a repetition of the findings; It should be in the form of expressing the research results and the contribution of the findings (theoretical, methodological, application) (Sakarya, 2017: 35). The theses have been evaluated in this context; As seen in Figure 4, it was determined that the aims and results of 48.65% (199) of the examined 409 theses were consistent with each other, and 51.35% (210) of the remaining thesis were inconsistent.

Among the reasons for the aim-result inconsistency, the difference in the aims and results of the thesis (32.77%) and the results not being based on the findings, having more than one aim or method-aim inconsistency (19.07%) take an important place.

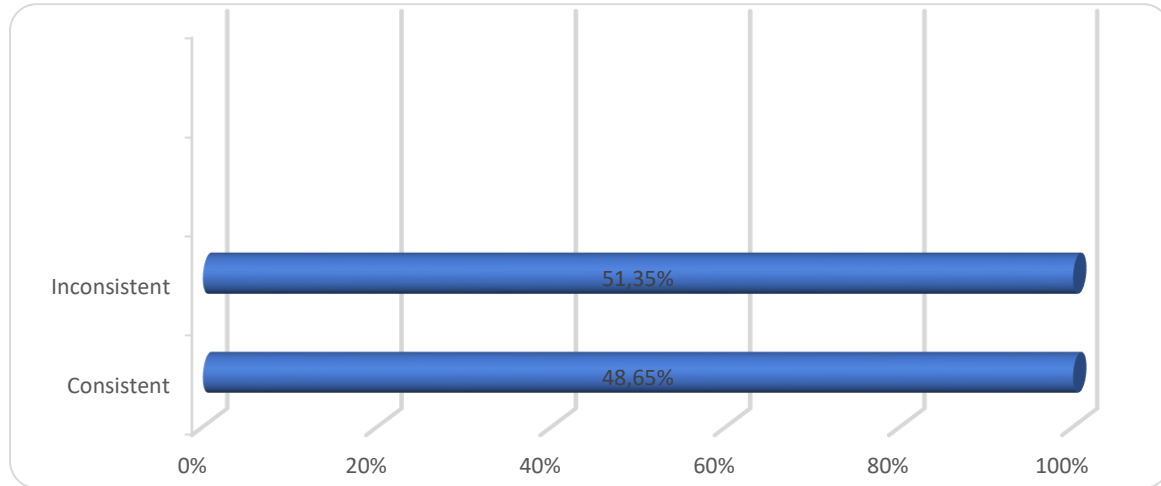


Figure 4: Evaluation of Theses

In the theses examined, the type and amount of bibliography has also been examined, and the results are presented in Table 2 and Figure 5. Accordingly, while an average of 111 sources were used in the theses, an average of 33 foreign sources were used from the sources used. Besides, the thesis that uses the most resources is the doctoral thesis with 364 sources. In addition, the thesis using the most foreign sources is another doctoral thesis with 283 sources. Among the theses examined, there are theses that have no bibliography and the number of theses without foreign sources is quite high.

Table 2: Evaluation of the Bibliographies of Theses

	Maximum	Minimum	Average
Total Resource	364	0	111
Foreign Recourse	283	0	33

Table 5 proportionally shows how many of the sources used in the theses are foreign sources. Accordingly, the use of foreign resources varying between 0% and 20% was determined in 219 of the theses. In addition, while there was a foreign resource use between 21% and 40% in 105 of the theses, it was determined that foreign resource use varied between 41% and 60% in 42 of them. In 21 of the 409 theses examined, it was determined that 80% or more, in other words quite a high rate of foreign resources was used.

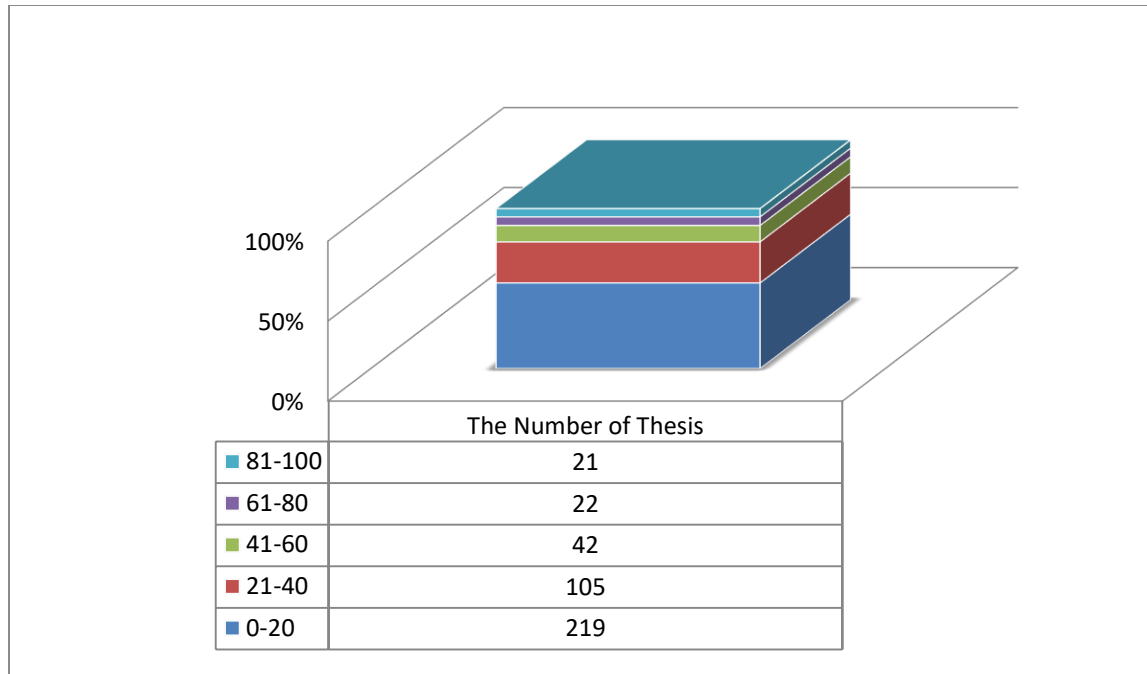


Figure 5: The Evaluation of Bibliographies of Theses

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

When examining the distribution of graduate thesis in health management field in Turkey by years, it is seen that the first thesis was made in 1978 and approximately two-thirds of thesis were written in the last 5 years. Considering the distribution of postgraduate thesis studies on Health Management written in other world countries ,especially in America and Canada, by years from the Proquest database, it was determined that the thesis studies started in 1950 and approximately 90% of them were written in 2000 and after (Yeşilaydın et al., 2015: 1739).When looking at the increasing number of graduate programs opened in the field of Health Management in Turkey and in the world in the last 10 years, it can be said that it is directly proportional to the increase in the number of theses.

Looking at the results of the study, it was determined that 86.24% of the theses written in the field of Health Management between 2010 and 2018 were master's theses, 99.02% were written in Turkish, and 25.82% of the authors were graduates of Health Management. Considering the universities where the theses were written; It was determined that the universities with the highest number of thesis publishing were Süleyman Demirel University in state universities and Okan University among private universities. Beykent University, on the other hand, has more than

200 theses in a year and since most of the theses were written within the department of Business Administration, only some of them were examined within the scope of the research. With the increasing number of theses, most of the studies have started to turn into studies that do not contribute to the method, field, and application (Tutar, 2018: 33). For this reason, writing the theses by taking into consideration the thesis writing guides and their content being compatible with each other are very important. As a result of the examinations, only 63% of the abstract part were written in accordance with the thesis writing guidelines, and 31% of the keywords did not reflect the content. When the bibliographies of the theses were examined, it was determined that only 21 of them had substantially foreign literature research and reference to foreign sources. It is very important for the Health Management department, which is in the competition of Business Administration and Medicine, to train well-equipped students in order to beat this competition. According to the results of the study, it was determined that the thesis quality decreased with the increase of theses; In this area, it is recommended to develop spelling guides in terms of both content and form. In order to increase the quality of theses, it is important to give lectures and seminars that can raise awareness of students regarding thesis writing during the course of graduate education, and to have a second faculty member to control the process of the thesis writing in addition to the thesis supervisor.

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