



**TRENDS OF POSTGRADUATE THESES ABOUT CHANGE IN THE FIELD OF  
EDUCATION: A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS**

***Eğitim Alanında Değişim İle İlgili Yapılan Lisansüstü Eğitim Tezlerinin Eğilimleri: Betimsel  
Bir Analiz***

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**ABSTRACT**

Aim of this study is to examine thesis on change in education. Qualitative research was preferred. Findings of the research; 66 theses on change were made between 2005 and 2021. Of the 66 theses, 56 are master's theses and 10 are doctoral dissertations. Of the 66 theses, 23 were carried out at the institute of educational sciences, 39 at the institute of social sciences, 1 at the institute of science and 1 at the graduate education institute. Quantitative method was adopted in 55 of 66 theses, qualitative method in 7 and mixed method in 4 of them. Simple random sampling method was used in 23 of 66 theses, convenient sampling in 6, cluster sampling in 3, stratified sampling in 5, disproportionate sampling in 1, maximum variation in 1, and purposive sampling in 1 of theses. Scale was used in 54 of the 66 theses, semi-structured interview form in 9, questionnaire in 4 and observation in 1 of the theses. Change management in 11, change process in 15, organizational change in 7, resistance to change in 19, readiness for change in 12, change leadership in 2, organizational change cynicism in 2, perception of change in 1 of the theses were discussed.

**ÖZ**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, eğitim alanında değişime ilişkin lisansüstü eğitim tezlerini incelemektir. Araştırmada nitel yöntem tercih edilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları; değişimle ilgili 66 tez 2005 ile 2021 yılları arasında yapılmıştır. 66 tezdten 56'sı yüksek lisans tezi ve 10'u doktora tezidir. 66 tezin 23'ü eğitim bilimleri enstitüsünde 39'u sosyal bilimler enstitüsünde, 1'i fen bilimleri enstitüsünde ve 1' i de lisansüstü eğitim enstitüsünde yürütülmüştür. 66 tezin 55' inde nicel yöntem, 7' sinde nitel yöntem ve 4'ünde karma yöntem benimsenmiştir. 66 tezdten 23'ünde basit seçkisiz örnekleme, 6'sında uygun örnekleme, 3'ünde küme örnekleme, 5'inde tabakalı örnekleme, 1'inde oransız eleman örnekleme, 1'inde maksimum çeşitlilik ve 1'inde ise amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. 66 tezdten 54'ünde ölçek, 9'unda yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu, 4'ünde anket ve 1' inde gözlem kullanılmıştır. 66 tezdten 11'inde değişim yönetimi, 15'inde değişim süreci, 7'sinde örgütsel değişim, 19'unda değişime direnç, 12'sinde değişime hazır olma, 2'sinde değişim liderliği, 2'sinde örgütsel değişim sinizmi ve 1'inde değişim algısı konusu ele alınmıştır.

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## **1.Introduction**

Today, there is a shrinking world where information and communication technologies are changing rapidly, facts and concepts are constantly being renewed. Changes in individuals and societies trigger change in organizations. Organizations are open systems and individuals in organizations are in constant communication with the environment. For this reason, change is one of the situations that requires individuals to be in harmony with the environment (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2013) and is indispensable and inevitable for both organizations and individuals (Buono & Kerber, 2010).

Change is a disturbing process because it requires abandoning habits by disrupting the existing structure and moving away from the known (Koçel, 2003). In order to reduce the fear or anxiety experienced by individuals against change, change must be explained correctly.

Change means moving from one state to another. Today, there is a rapid change in social, cultural, political, technological and many other areas, and organizations have to adapt themselves to change in order to survive in the face of this change (Güçlü & Şehitoğlu, 2006). Creating a structure suitable for new conditions is organizational change (Çolakoğlu, 2005). It is all kinds of changes that occur in various subsystems and elements of organizations in their relations between them (Tunçer, 2013). Therefore, it will be very difficult for organizations that are in constant interaction with the environment to survive without change.

One of the ways for organizations to survive is to be sensitive to the changes that occur in their environment. Of course, with change, some problems arise. Sabuncuoğlu and Tuz (1998) state that while change brings solutions to problems, it also causes new problems to emerge, and in these cases, resistance to change can be resisted. The acceptance or resistance of change in organizations depends on a number of variables such as the content, scope, timing of the changing situation, and risks for the future (İnandı, Tunç, & Gılıç, 2013).

Different definitions are used for organizational change; readiness for change, commitment to change, openness to change, acceptance of change, resistance to change, cynicism about organizational change. (Kin & Kareem, 2019). The structure of readiness for change emerged from the organizational literature that focused on efforts to prevent employee resistance to change. Holt, Armenakis, Harris and Feild (2015) defined readiness for change as a comprehensive attitude that reflects the extent to which an individual or a group is cognitively and affectively inclined to accept and adopt a specific plan to deliberately change the status quo, simultaneously affected by content, process and context. Resistance to change is expressed as employees do not believe in the necessity of change, think that change will bring harm to themselves and the organization, and have negative feelings about change (Piderit, 2000). Oreg (2006) discusses resistance to change in three dimensions: affective, cognitive and behavioral. In the affective dimension of resistance to change, employees' feelings about organizational change; In the behavioral dimension, the behaviors developed by the employees against change within the organization and the existing beliefs of the employees about change in the cognitive dimension are discussed. Resistance to change is an important factor to consider in any change process, because proper resistance management is key to the success or failure of change (Pardo del Val & Martinez Fuentes, 2003). Resistance to change can take two forms: open or covert resistance. Open resistance manifests itself in unconcealed actions and can be positive if managed correctly. Covert resistance includes behaviors that prevent change efforts (Caruth & Caruth, 2013).

In educational organizations, school leaders; seen as the architect and process manager of the change process. When the resistance situations encountered in the change process are managed correctly by the managers, as mentioned above, changes can be observed in the resistance situations. In this direction, we can talk about many methods and techniques in order to manage change and continue the process against possible resistance groups. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004), who state that managers can use some tactics to reduce the resistance to change, list these as increasing participation, strengthening communication, providing support, rewarding, planning and using force.

Although achieving change in education may seem technically easy at the planning stage, it is a very complex and difficult process since it is a social practice area. Apart from the demands and expectations of various segments of society and pressure groups from education, the school itself contains many variables that will directly affect the implementation of change. The resistance to change, the determination of short and long-term change goals and the difficulties of planning the social process that directly concerns a significant part of the society play a decisive role in the success of change studies in education (Fullan, 2007).

There are many researches on the examining of national/international scientific articles, books, papers or thesis. Since this research aims to examine thesis on change in Turkey, previous studies that analyzed master's and doctoral thesis are included. Accordingly, the current studies examining postgraduate thesis in Turkey can be summarized as follows:

Aydın & Uysal (2014) aims to determine the general trends by examining the doctoral dissertations made in the field of educational administration in Turkey in terms of research topic, research method and

recommendations. Content analysis method was used in the research. Doctoral theses are focused on 'educational policies', 'comparative educational management' and 'management philosophy', and mostly quantitative research methods are preferred. Most of the researches were conducted at Ankara University. Looking at the distribution of theses by years, it is seen that the most theses were produced in 2008. In the suggestions for researchers in the theses, the most common suggestions are 'Research on similar or alternative subjects' and 'Repeat the research with different sample groups'. Among the suggestions for practitioners in the theses, the most frequently repeated suggestions were 'In-service training practices' and 'Improvement of working conditions and personal rights, rewarding and motivation', respectively.

The study of Akyol, Yavuzkurt, Tanrısevdi & Gidiş (2021) was conducted on articles about organizational behavior published in the Journal of Educational Management in Theory and Practice (KUEY) in the field of Educational Administration between 2011 and 2017, and organizational behavior in the field of Educational Management registered in the National Thesis Center. In the study, 41 articles downloaded electronically from this journal were examined according to their years, subjects, models and data collection techniques. 459 postgraduate thesis; It has been examined according to its subjects, years, types, original language, university, permission status, data collection techniques, models and departments. When the downloaded postgraduate thesis were examined, it was determined that the thesis on organizational behavior in the field of educational administration were made in 3 departments and 6 branches of science in 45 universities. In total, 119 of 459 thesis were done in Social Sciences Institutes and 340 in Educational Sciences Institutes. In addition, it was determined that there were 377 master's thesis and 82 doctoral thesis. In this study, document review and content analysis techniques were used. As a result of the study, it was found that the subjects of organizational citizenship, organizational commitment and organizational culture were mostly researched in the KUEY journal. In addition, when the postgraduate thesis were examined, it was determined that the most studies were on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, burnout and motivation. As a result, it has been seen that organizational behavior topics are highly preferred topics in the field of educational administration, but there are concentrations on certain topics. In addition, it has been revealed that qualitative and mixed studies are less preferred than quantitative studies.

Kutanis, Özsoy, Karakiraz, Aras, Erol & Uslu (2015) examined postgraduate thesis in the field of organizational culture in terms of subject and method. For the purpose of the research, a total of 183 postgraduate thesis, including 146 master's thesis and 37 doctoral thesis, whose access was allowed by the author, were examined. As a result of the examination of thesis; It has been determined that issues such as typology development, scale development, dimension development, criticism of organizational culture studies are not included in almost any thesis, quantitative methods are used as a method, and qualitative and mixed methods are used in very few thesis. In thesis conducted using quantitative methods, it was determined that the scales used in the international arena were preferred and validity and reliability analyzes were neglected in some studies. The findings obtained in the light of the thesis examined reveal that the problems of the field continue to a large extent.

Yeşilaydın & Bayın (2015) aimed to examine the researches made in Turkey about organizational silence; to reveal the target groups in which the researches are conducted, to determine the contribution of the other concepts discussed together with the concept of organizational silence, and to be a guide in future studies. The studies were examined according to the determined criteria and 49 studies were selected. As results of the examination, it was found that approximately half of the studies (53%) were conducted in the last two years; 45% of them are master's thesis; 38% of them were made for education sector employees. 18% of the studies focused on organizational commitment and 18% focused on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational silence.

Sezgin & Sönmez (2018) aimed to examine the organizational culture and organizational climate. Content analysis method was used. Within the scope of the research, 354 studies were accessed. According to the research results; organizational culture and climate studies showed similar trends in terms of subjects, years, number of authors, types, sample, education level and methodology. Although they have different etymological, epistemological and methodological foundations according to the relevant literature, it was seen that these two research areas are studied with similar approaches.

Eser (2017) aimed to determine the success factors in change management and to put forward a change management model, based on the results of the researches carried out in the field of change management. For this purpose, the national thesis center database and the archives of ULAKBİM scientific journals were searched with the keywords "change" and "change management". A total of 31 articles and 41 theses were reached, and based on the results of 25 studies, the elements of success in change management were determined as communication, potential resisters, human resources, leadership, shared vision, encouragement, change

team, and change culture. In the change management implementation process, 4 basic steps have been reached: determining the current situation, determining the main lines of change, monitoring and fixing.

When the literature is examined, it has been seen that researches have been conducted on different subjects such as change management, organizational silence, organizational culture, organizational climate, educational administration and organizational behavior. No research has been found in the literature examining postgraduate thesis studies on change in the education. With this research, it is thought that it will contribute to the literature in terms of presenting the current status of the thesis on the subject of change, as well as presenting different perspectives to the field with further study suggestions. The aim of this study is to examine the postgraduate education thesis on change in the field of education. For this purpose, the following problems were created:

- What is the trend of theses on change according to years?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to types?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to institutes?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to research methods?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to research models?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to sampling methods?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to data collection tools?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to data analysis techniques?
- What is the trend of theses on change according to topics?

## **2.Method**

### **2.1. Research model**

In this study, which was carried out with the qualitative research method, the document analysis technique was used to reveal the tendencies of the postgraduate theses on change in the field of education in terms of various features. Document review is a set of systematic processes followed for the analysis of printed and electronic materials containing information about the case or cases aimed to be investigated (Bowen, 2009; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). Among the documents that can be examined are documents such as meeting minutes, notes, books and brochures, maps, newspaper articles, magazines, researches, scenarios, reports, archives (Patton, 2002; Tekin, 2017). Document review is carried out in five stages: (1) accessing the documents, (2) checking the originality, (3) understanding the documents, (4) analyzing the data, and (5) using the data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

### **2.2.Study Group**

The study group consists of 66 postgraduate education theses conducted between. The sample was not determined for the postgraduate theses to be included in the study, and it was aimed to reach the entire workable universe.

### **2.3. Data collection process**

The Council of Higher Education National Thesis Center was applied for inclusion of thesis in the research process. The terms "change, organizational change, resistance to change, readiness for change, change management" were used while collecting the data. Within the scope of the research, 68 master's and doctoral thesis were accessed and all of them were included in the research.

The criteria for inclusion of thesis in the study were determined as follows:

- The full texts of thesis are accessible in order to reach the necessary thematic and methodological information.
- To be thesis on change in the field of education.

### **2.4.Analysis of Data**

Descriptive analysis was used. In descriptive analysis, the collected data is explained and interpreted in a systematic and clear way within the framework of predetermined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The data of the study were collected through the 'thesis review form' created by the researcher. In the creation of the form, the forms used in similar studies in the literature were examined. Due to the inability to reach a form that is fully suitable for the purposes of the study, a form containing the following categories was created based on the thematic and methodological information that should be included in a thesis:

Year  
Type  
Institute

Method  
 Research model  
 Sampling method  
 Data collection tools  
 Data analysis techniques  
 Topic

Ensuring the validity and reliability is important in qualitative research. The findings defined in this context were examined by another researcher. The process of the research is given in detail (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016).

### 3. Findings

Findings were given and interpreted in order according to the problems created for the purpose of the research (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of thesis on change by years

Years	f
2005	2
2007	7
2008	2
2009	3
2010	3
2011	2
2012	3
2013	5
2014	1
2015	3
2016	5
2017	6
2018	9
2019	10
2020	4
2021	1

When Table 1 is examined; 66 theses on change were made between 2005 and 2021. The most theses were carried out in 2019 and the least in 2021. When Table 2 is examined; 56 are master's theses and 10 are doctoral dissertations.

Table 2. Distribution of thesis on change by type

Types	f
Master	56
PhD	10

When Table 3 is examined; Of the 66 theses on change, 23 were carried out at the institute of educational sciences, 39 at the institute of social sciences, 1 at the institute of science and 1 at the graduate education institute. While the most theses were conducted in the social sciences institute, the least thesis was conducted in the science and graduate education institute.

Table 3. Distribution of thesis on change by institutes

Institutes	f
Educational Sciences Institute	23
Social Sciences Institute	39
Science Institute	1
Postgraduate Education Institute	1

When Table 4 is examined; Quantitative method was adopted in 55 of 66 theses on change, qualitative method in 7 and mixed method in 4 of them. It has been observed that the quantitative method is preferred more than other methods.

**Table 4.** Distribution of thesis on change by method

<b>Method</b>	<b>f</b>
Quantitative	55
Qualitative	7
Mixed	4

When Table 5 is examined; Of the 66 theses on change, 49 were survey model, 6 case study design, 4 relational model, 2 semi-experimental design, 1 phenomenological design, 1 action research design and 1 document analysis preferred. It has been observed that the survey model is used more than other models and designs.

**Table 5.** Distribution of thesis on change by research models

<b>Research models / design</b>	<b>f</b>
Survey Model	49
Case Study Design	6
Relational Model	4
Quasi-Experimental Design	2
Phenomenological Design	1
Action Research Design	1
Document review	1

When Table 6 is examined; Simple random sampling method was used in 23 of 66 theses, convenient sampling in 6, cluster sampling in 3, stratified sampling in 5, disproportionate sampling in 1, maximum variation in 1, and purposive sampling in 1 of theses. The most commonly used sampling method is simple random sampling, while the least used methods are disproportionate element sampling, maximum diversity and purposive sampling.

**Table 6.** Distribution of thesis on change by sample methods

<b>Sample methods</b>	<b>f</b>
Random Sampling	23
Convenience Sampling	6
Cluster Sampling	3
Stratified Sampling	5
Disproportionate Element Sampling	1
Maximum Diversity Sampling	1
Purposeful Sampling	1

When Table 7 is examined; Scale was used in 54 of the 66 theses, semi-structured interview form in 9, questionnaire in 4 and observation in 1 of the theses. While the most used data collection tool is scale, the least used data collection tool is observation.

**Table 7.** Distribution of thesis on change by data collection tools

<b>Data collection tools</b>	<b>f</b>
Scale	54
Semi-Structured Interview Form	9
Questionnaire	4
Observation	1

When Table 8 is examined; Independent samples t-test in 40, one-way Anova in 42, Scheffe in 7, LSD in 7, Tukey HSD in 6, Dunnett C in 1, Tamhane's T2 in 2, Levene in 3, 7 Content analysis in 3, descriptive analysis in 3, Kruskal Wallis in 8, Mann Whitney U in 9, correlation analysis in 18, structural equation modeling in 3, regression analysis in 9, Kolmogorov Smirnov in 6, Descriptive statistics were used in 66, factor analysis in 33, and one-way Manova in 3 were used in the theses. The most used data analysis technique is descriptive statistics, and the least used is Dunnett C.

**Table 8.** Distribution of thesis on change by data analysis techniques

<b>Data analysis techniques</b>	<b>f</b>
Independent Sample T Test	40
One Way Anova	42
Scheffe	7
LSD	7
Tukey HSD	6
Dunnett C	1
Tamhane's T2	2
Levene	3
Content Analysis	7
Descriptive Analysis	3
Kruskal Wallis	8
Mann-Whitney U	9
Correlation Analysis	18
Structural Equation Modeling	3
Regression Analysis	9
Kolmogorov-Simirnov	6
Descriptive statistics	66
Factor Analysis	33
One Way Manova	3

When Table 9 is examined; Change management in 11 of the theses, change process in 15, organizational change in 7, resistance to change in 19, readiness for change in 12, change leadership in 2, organizational change cynicism in 2 and perception of change in 1 were discussed as topics. The most discussed topic is resistance to change, and the least discussed is the perception of change.

**Table 9.** Distribution of thesis on change by topics of theses

<b>Topics</b>	<b>f</b>
Change management	11
Change process	15
Organizational change	7
Resistance to change	19
Readiness for change	12
Change leadership	2
Organizational change cynicism	2
Perception of change	1

#### **4. Discussion**

In this study; 66 theses on change were made between 2005 and 2021. The most theses were carried out in 2019 and the least in 2021. Eser (2017) found studies in the field of change management started in 1996 and continued after 1999. The most important thing for organizations in the 21st century is the extraordinary increase in the speed of change. It is one of the issues that organizations struggle most with adapting their structures and processes to this rapid change they face (Yeşil, 2018). According to Ayyıldız (2021)'s research; the first theses on individual innovativeness in the field of education was conducted in 2011 and theses were conducted between 2011 and 2021.

Of the 66 theses on change, 56 are master's theses and 10 are doctoral dissertations. Eser (2017) found, 10 are doctoral thesis, 31 are master's thesis, and 31 are articles on change management. According to Ayyıldız (2021)'s research; 3 of the theses on individual innovativeness were at the doctoral level and 37 of them were at the master's level. It has been observed that the number of doctoral theses were quite low. Conducting more doctoral studies on change can be very effective in enriching the literature in our country.

Of the 66 theses on change, 23 were carried out at the institute of educational sciences, 39 at the institute of social sciences, 1 at the institute of science and 1 at the graduate education institute. While the most theses were conducted in the social sciences institute, the least thesis was conducted in the science and graduate education institute. According to Ayyıldız (2021)'s research; theses on individual innovativeness were conducted in educational sciences, social sciences, health sciences, science and graduate education institutes.

While the most theses were conducted in educational sciences and social sciences institutes, the least theses was conducted in health sciences and graduate education institutes. In Eser's (2017) study, it was seen that the most studies are in the fields of education (11), public (10) and health (10), respectively.

Quantitative method was adopted in 55 of 66 theses on change, qualitative method in 7 and mixed method in 4 of them. It has been observed that the quantitative method is preferred more than other methods. Eser (2017) observed that the quantitative method was used in 62.5% of the studies in most of the studies. 12.5% of the studies used qualitative and 4.1% used qualitative and quantitative methods together. It is argued that the traditionally widely used research methods in both natural and social sciences are quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods have been influenced by the positivist paradigm. In the positivist paradigm, it adopted a science understanding based on the realities of the physical or material world and influenced the sciences in terms of thought. Since the sciences were more effective in history than the social sciences, the methods of the sciences also affected the social sciences. As a result of these interactions, quantitative research methods have also been used extensively in the field of social sciences. Therefore, the field of educational sciences has also been included in this interaction (Yıldız, 2004).

Of the 66 theses on change, 49 were survey model, 6 case study design, 4 relational model, 2 semi-experimental design, 1 phenomenological design, 1 action research design and 1 document analysis preferred. It has been observed that the survey model is used more than other models and designs. Conducting more qualitative studies on change can be very effective in enriching the literature in our country.

Simple random sampling method was used in 23 of 66 theses, convenient sampling in 6, cluster sampling in 3, stratified sampling in 5, disproportionate sampling in 1, maximum variation in 1, and purposive sampling in 1 of theses. The most commonly used sampling method is simple random sampling, while the least used methods are disproportionate element sampling, maximum diversity and purposive sampling. Conducting different studies that has different sampling methods on change can be very effective in enriching the literature in our country.

Scale was used in 54 of the 66 theses, semi-structured interview form in 9, questionnaire in 4 and observation in 1 of the theses. While the most used data collection tool is scale, the least used data collection tool is observation. Eser (2017) observed that the scale used in 39.58% of the studies was developed by the researcher. According to Ayyıldız (2021)'s research; 39 of the theses on individual innovativeness were used scale and 1 of them semi-structured interview form.

Change management in 11 of the theses, change process in 15, organizational change in 7, resistance to change in 19, readiness for change in 12, change leadership in 2, organizational change cynicism in 2 and perception of change in 1 were discussed as topics. The most discussed topic is resistance to change, and the least discussed is the perception of change. Eser (2017) found different topics related to "change" have been discussed in the studies. Among these variables, planned change, change management, change management competence, change process and change success are directly related to "change management".

Independent samples t-test in 40, one-way Anova in 42, Scheffe in 7, LSD in 7, Tukey HSD in 6, Dunnett C in 1, Tamhane's T2 in 2, Levene in 3, 7 Content analysis in 3, descriptive analysis in 3, Kruskal Wallis in 8, Mann Whitney U in 9, correlation analysis in 18, structural equation modeling in 3, regression analysis in 9, Kolmogorov Smirnov in 6, Descriptive statistics were used in 66 , factor analysis in 33, and one-way Manova in 3 were used in the theses. The most used data analysis technique is descriptive statistics, and the least used is Dunnett C.

In order to increase the number of theses, it may be recommended to support graduate students and academicians. It can be suggested to examine the subject of change together with different variables, to repeat the thesis research studies on this subject at different times and to compare the results. Conducting more studies on change can be very effective in enriching the literature in our country and making the change heard by wider masses. It is very important for the institutes, thesis advisors and academic staff to be more sensitive to this issue and to support the studies to be done.

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**Etik, Beyan ve Açıklamalar**

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1. Etik Kurul izni ile ilgili;

Bu çalışmanın yazar/yazarları, Etik Kurul İznine gerek olmadığını beyan etmektedir.

2. Bu çalışmanın yazar/yazarları, araştırma ve yayın etiği ilkelerine uyduklarını kabul etmektedir.

3. Bu çalışmanın yazar/yazarları kullanmış oldukları resim, şekil, fotoğraf ve benzeri belgelerin kullanımında tüm sorumlulukları kabul etmektedir.

4. Bu çalışmanın benzerlik raporu bulunmaktadır.

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