Research Article

Thematic and Methodological Trends of Graduate Thesis in Comparative Education: A Content Analysis

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Article Info	Abstract
	In this study, it is aimed to examine the graduate theses made between 2016-2021 in Turkey in the field of comparative education. The data used in the study, which was carried out according to the qualitative research design, were reached through document analysis. Within the scope of the study, 133 graduate theses registered in the database of Higher Education Institution National Thesis Center were analyzed by using content analysis technique in line with research problems. As a result of the findings, it was determined that the most thesis in the field of comparative education was made in 2018; It was determined that Hacettepe University and Gazi University were the universities with the highest number of graduate studies. It was determined that the majority of theses were made in the department of educational sciences. It was determined that the qualitative design was widely preferred in the theses examined and the document analysis technique was mostly used in the data collection process. It was concluded that the sample/comparison criteria and comparison approach were not specified in the majority of theses. It was also concluded that while Germany, England, Finland and the USA were the countries with which the most comparisons were made, the majority of theses were made for secondary and undergraduate education levels. In the theses examined, it was concluded that higher education and teacher education were the most frequently compared topics.

Introduction

It is known that with the end of the cold war process around the world, a rapid change process was experienced in the fields such as economy, technology, politics and education in the 1990s, and this change process affected many countries around the world, including Turkey. This entire process of change can be expressed with the concept of "globalization" (Erdoğan, 2003). Globalization, which can also be expressed as the alienation of countries from the local and national consciousness, has strengthened the communication networks of countries and carried the interaction between them to higher dimensions (Holton, 2000). Globalization; It has brought along the process of comparing the practices of

countries in the political, social, economic and educational fields with other countries (Karaman, 2000).

In the field of education, Türkoğlu (1998) defines comparative education as the process of examining the education systems in two or more countries from a theoretical and practical point of view and revealing the similar and different aspects of these systems. According to another definition, comparative education is to examine foreign education systems within the framework of a paradigm based on science in the formation of values in the society and to improve and improve their own education system as a result of these examinations (Sadler, 1900; cited in Crossley & Watson, 2003). It is known that comparative education studies started with Marc Antoine Jullien's work titled "A Study Plan and Preliminaries on Comparative Education" in 1817 (Demirel, 2000). By comparing the studies conducted in the field of comparative education and the perspectives formed in different countries on education, alternative solutions are produced for the problems experienced in the education process (Erdoğan, 2006).

When the definitions of comparative education are examined, it is seen that these definitions converge on some points. These points are; the effort to assimilate and improve the existing education system, the interest and effort to get to know the education systems in other countries theoretically and practically, the effort to produce practices and policies for the solution of problems in education based on the similarities and differences between education systems, different cultures, ideas and practices. It is the effect of the sensitivity developed towards the development of international cooperation (Crossley & Watson, 2003). Comparative education studies to be conducted vary according to what kind of information individuals or groups aim to reach from these studies. Comparative education studies can be carried out by families, practitioners, policy makers, international organizations, and academics for different purposes (Bray, 2007). The aims of comparative education studies are as follows (Demirel, 2000; Erdoğan, 2006):

- To shape the theoretical and practical processes of the education systems of the countries.
- To provide up-to-date information to policy makers by identifying the location and effects of factors affecting education systems in other countries.
- Developing alternative applications and solutions to problems with outdated practices in the education system.

- To ensure that the education systems of countries have an up-to-date and dynamic structure.

- To expand the scope of educational sciences.

- To promote communication, friendship and peace in the international arena.

According to Arnove (2003), there are three dimensions that are shaped in line with the purposes of research in comparative education. Scientific dimension aiming to reach theoretical knowledge about education systems and other economic, social and political structures; pragmatic dimension, which aims to identify successful practices in other countries and adapt them to the education system of their own country; It is stated as the global dimension that aims to contribute to world peace by being sensitive to the cultures and practices of other countries (Arnove, 2003).

There are different approaches and methods generally applied in comparative education studies. These approaches (Türkoğlu, 1998; Ültanır, 2000): In the horizontal approach, education systems are first examined within themselves and then mutually, and their common and different aspects are determined. The vertical approach deals with the historical development of education systems. In the problem solving approach, the existing problem in an education system is determined and examined, and detailed analyzes are made to produce alternative solutions to that problem. In the case study approach, the unique educational experiences and practices of the countries are presented to the reader without comment or comparison. In the structural-functionalist approach, the mutual relationship between the education system and the social institutions that have an impact on the system is examined. In the descriptive approach, on the other hand, the literature on the subject is examined and then the similar and different aspects between the education systems are tried to be determined.

The most frequently used methods in comparative education studies are (Chaube & Chaube, 1993; cited in Bakioğlu, Keser, Doğan, & Çayak, 2017): quantitative method, which provides the opportunity to make comparisons between countries through statistical data; descriptive method that allows comparison through detailed explanations; the Julien method, which provides the opportunity to make comparisons through facts and observations; sociological method that provides the opportunity to make comparisons through the determination of the relationship between the education system and society; historical method that provides the opportunity to make comparisons by determining the

relationship between the education system and geographical, social, political, religious, linguistic and racial structures; the analytical method in which the education system and the elements related to the system are compared with other countries according to established standards; It can be listed as an eclectic method that provides the opportunity to compare the existing problems in education through international platforms and perspectives.

Significance of the Study

When the relevant literature is examined, a limited number of content analysis studies examining the postgraduate theses published in the field of comparative education in Turkey in 2000 and later, Tatlı and Adıgüzel, (2012); Çubukçu, Yılmaz and İnci, (2016); Geçici and Türnüklü, 2020; Ilıman-Püsküllüoğlu and Hoşgörür (2017); Yıldırım and Türkoğlu, (2018); Koç, (2019). In addition, considering that these studies cover the years between 2000 and 2018, there is no current study covering the years 2016 and 2021 in the literature. In this context, it is thought that this study will contribute to the literature. This study, which was conducted in the field of comparative education, is considered important in order to set an example for the education practices in developed countries for underdeveloped and developing countries, and to examine the education practices in developed countries and to be adopted by other countries. In addition, it is thought that this study will contribute to the development of comparative education studies to be carried out in Turkey in the future, with up-to-date knowledge.

Purpose of the Study

In this study, it is aimed to examine the thematic and methodological trends of graduate theses made in the field of comparative education in Turkey between the years 2016-2021. Within the framework of this main purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the study;

1. How is the distribution of theses according to the university?
2. How is the distribution of theses according to the department?
3. What is the distribution of theses by years?
4. What is the distribution of theses according to education level?
5. What is the distribution of theses by countries subject to comparison?
6. What is the distribution of theses by examined school level?
7. What is the distribution of theses according to their subjects?
8. What is the distribution of theses according to the method used?
9. What is the distribution of theses according to comparison criteria/ sampling?
10. What is the distribution of theses according to data collection tool?

11. How is the distribution of theses according to the comparative education approach?

Method

This study is a descriptive research using document analysis, one of the qualitative research methods. Document analysis is a method based on the detailed and systematic analysis of written and visual materials (Sönmez & Alacapınar, 2016). In this study, the graduate theses prepared on comparative education in Turkey between the years 2016-2021 were handled as documents and systematically examined in terms of thematic and methodological aspects. The operations carried out within the scope of the study are summarized in Figure 1 below.
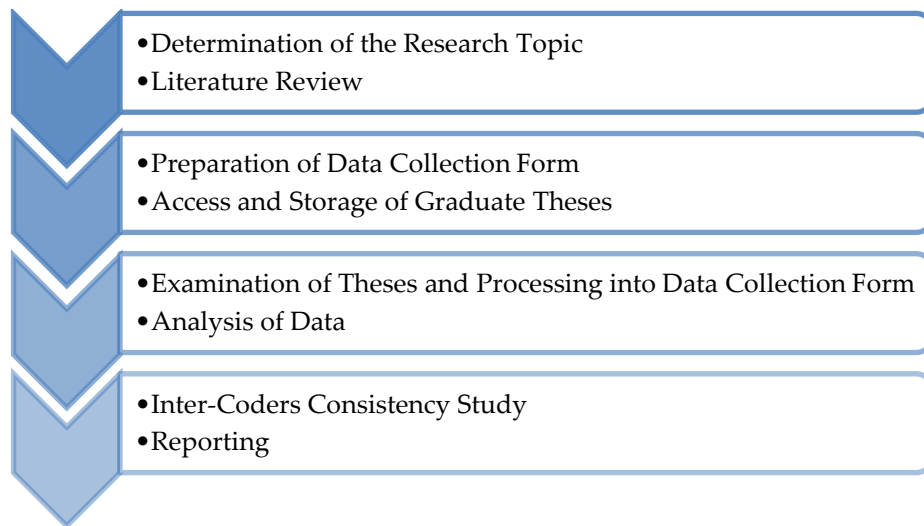
- Determination of the Research Topic
- Literature Review

- Preparation of Data Collection Form
- Access and Storage of Graduate Theses

- Examination of Theses and Processing into Data Collection Form
- Analysis of Data

- Inter-Coders Consistency Study
- Reporting

Figure 1. Operations carried out within the scope of the study

As seen in Figure 1, the researcher first determined the research topic and then conducted a literature review. In the second stage, the Thesis Review Form, which is a data collection tool, was prepared by the researcher. Afterwards, graduate theses were accessed and filed in computer environment. In the third stage, the graduate theses were examined and processed into the Thesis Review Form. Then the data were analyzed. In the last stage, the study was reported by calculating consistency between encoders.

Data Source of the Research

In document review, the data source is the data directly included in the review (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). At this stage, the researcher determines some inclusion criteria for the documents to be included in the review in line with his purpose. The inclusion criteria for this study are as follows: It was made in Turkey, it was prepared in 2016-2021, it was in the Higher Education Institution National Thesis Center database, it was prepared in the

field of comparative education, it was written in Turkish. In this context, by writing "comparative education" in the search section of the Higher Education Institution National Thesis Center database, a search was made in the subject, index and summary fields between the years 2016-2021. 17 of the 180 theses reached as a result of the scanning were excluded from the study because they were written in languages other than Turkish. In addition, 30 theses were excluded from the study because they were not prepared on comparative education at the stage of detailed reading. As a result, 133 graduate theses that meet the inclusion criteria of the study constitute the data source of the study.

Data Collection Tool and Process

The "Thesis Review Form" developed by the researcher was used as a data collection tool in the study. The Thesis Review Form created in line with the purpose of the study is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Thesis review form

Thesis No	University	Year	Department / Type of Thesis	Research Method	Data Collection Technique	Sample	Approach	Education Level	Country	Subject
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...										

In the Thesis Review Form, there are statements to collect information about the thesis number, university, year, department and thesis type, research method used, data collection technique, sampling type, comparative education approach used, the country of comparison and the subject of the thesis. In the process, the researcher first determined the theses, which are the data source. Then, the graduate theses were read using the Thesis Review Form and the necessary information was processed into the form. With the completion of the review process of all theses, data analysis was initiated. The data collection process of the study lasted 50 days.

Analysis of Data

Content analysis was used in the analysis of the data obtained from the study. With content analysis, similar data are brought together in line with certain concepts and themes, organized and interpreted in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this study, the data related to the theses are presented with frequency and percentage values under the previously determined categories. The findings are presented

with tables, graphs and figures. During the analysis of the data, the thesis author's statements were adhered to and no intervention was made by the researcher.

Validity and Reliability

In the study, some measures were taken to ensure validity and reliability. The first of these is consistency analysis. The results of the screening conducted by the researcher in the context of the inclusion criteria were examined by a second researcher. The screening results of both researchers showed 100% consistency. Afterwards, the Thesis Review Form filled by the researcher was filled again by the second researcher and a comparison was made. The data analysis process was continued until the consistency between the two researchers was 100%. In addition, all theses and Thesis Review Form included in the study are kept online by the researcher.

Findings

In this part of the research, which was carried out in order to determine the methodological and thematic infrastructure of graduate theses completed in the field of comparative education in Turkey between the years 2016-2021, the findings are presented in line with the sub-purposes. Table 2 presents the distribution of graduate theses according to universities and departments.

Table 2. Distribution of graduate theses by universities and departments

University / Department	Educational Sciences	Primary Education	Basic Education	Special Education	Mathematics and Science	Social Sciences and Turkish Education	Computer and Instructional Technologies	Fine Arts	Music	Teaching Turkish to Foreigners	Foreign Languages Education	Physical Education and Sports	Religion Culture	Philosophy and Religious Studies	Eastern Languages and Literature	Turkish Folklore	Business	Economy	Econometrics	Information and Document Management	Public Relations and Promotion	Total
Afyon Kocatepe University						1																1
Akdeniz University																			1			1
Anadolu University					1																	1
Ankara University	1	2					1															4
Atatürk University						2																2
Aydın Adnan Menderes University	1																					1
Bahçeşehir University	1																					1
Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University																				1		1
Bartın University	1											1										2
Başkent University		1																				1
Batman University																1						1

University	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University	1	2																				3
Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	1	1																				2
Celal Bayar University											1											1
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University	6																					6
Çukurova University	1																					1
Düzce University	1																					1
Ege University		1																				1
Erciyes University		1																				1
Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University		3			1		1															5
Eskişehir Osmangazi University	4		1																			5
Fırat University					1																	1
Gazi University	2	1			4	2			1													10
Gaziantep University	2	1		1																		4
Gaziosmanpaşa University	1																					1
Giresun University		1																				1
Hacettepe University	13	1		1											2							17
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University	1																					1
İstanbul Cerrahpaşa University		1																				1
İstanbul University		1										1		1	1			1				5
İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University	1																					1
Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University	1																					1
Karadeniz Teknik University				1	1																	2
Kastamonu University		1			1																	2
Kırıkkale University								1														1
Kırşehir Ahi Evran University		1																				1
Konya Necmettin Erbakan University		1			1		1	1														4
Malatya İnönü University			2																			2
Marmara University	2	1	1		2								1									7
Mersin University	2	1			1																	4
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	2																					2
Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University									1													1
Ondokuz Mayıs University										1												1
Ordu University				1																		1
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University	1																					1
Sakarya University	3			1	2																	6
Selçuk University																1			1			2
Uludağ University				1																		1
Uşak University				1																		1
Van Yüzüncü Yıl University				1																		1
Yeditepe University	3																					3
Yıldız Teknik University	2	1																				3
Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University	2																					2
Total	56	20	4	1	10	18	1	5	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	133

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that postgraduate theses have been completed in 21 different departments in 53 different universities. It is seen that the most theses in the field of comparative education were prepared at Hacettepe University, Gazi University, Marmara University, Sakarya University and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. When examined on a departmental basis, most of the postgraduate theses were made in the departments of educational sciences, primary education, social sciences and Turkish education and mathematics and science . Figure 2 below presents the distribution of graduate theses by years and education level.
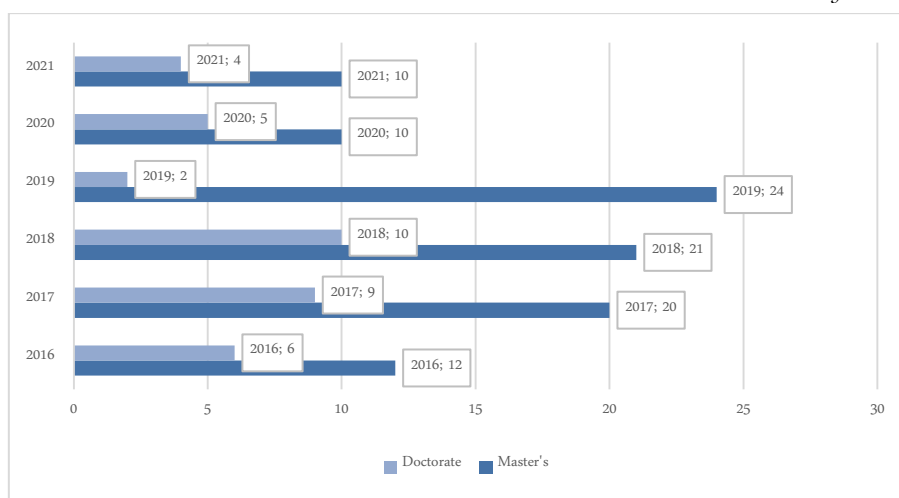
Figure 2. Distribution of graduate theses by years and education levels

When Figure 2 is analyzed, it is seen that In 2020, there is a decrease in the number of graduate theses. The number of master's theses is more than the number of doctoral theses. In addition, it is seen that there is an increasing trend in the theses written in the field of comparative education in 2017, 2018 and 2019. In 2020, there is a decrease in the number of graduate theses. Comparative distribution of master's theses by country is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Distribution of graduate theses by countries subject to comparison

Countries	f	%	Countries	f	%
Germany	27	8,76	Czech Republic	3	0,97
United Kingdom	20	6,49	Ireland	3	0,97
Finland	20	6,49	Georgia	3	0,97
USA	20	6,49	Saudi Arabia	2	0,65
Singapore	16	5,19	Malta	2	0,65
South Korea	14	4,54	Scotland	2	0,65
France	12	3,90	Luxembourg	2	0,65
Canada	12	3,90	Romania	2	0,65
Japan	12	3,90	Slovakia	2	0,65
Azerbaijan	9	2,92	Greece	2	0,65
Holland	7	2,27	Greek Cypriot Part	2	0,65
Russia	7	2,27	Bulgaria	2	0,65
Chinese	6	1,94	Lithuania	2	0,65
Iranian	6	1,94	Slovenia	2	0,65
Sweden	6	1,94	Croatia	2	0,65
Hong Kong	6	1,94	Mongolia	2	0,65
Kazakhistan	5	1,62	Kosovo	2	0,65
Denmark	5	1,62	Turkmenistan	1	0,32
New Zeland	5	1,62	Iceland	1	0,32
Austria	5	1,62	Macedonia	1	0,32
Hungary	4	1,29	Niger	1	0,32
Estonia	4	1,29	Switzerland	1	0,32
Poland	4	1,29	Liechtenstein	1	0,32
Portugal	4	1,29	Chile	1	0,32
Belgium	4	1,29	Argentina	1	0,32
Italy	4	1,29	Wales	1	0,32
Spain	4	1,29	Iraq	1	0,32
Australia	4	1,29	Malaysia	1	0,32
Norway	4	1,29	Jordan	1	0,32
Latvia	3	0,97			

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that comparisons are made with 59 different countries. The most frequently compared countries are Germany, United Kingdom, Finland, USA, Singapore, South Korea, France, Canada, Japan, respectively. In some theses, more than one country was compared. Table 4 presents the distribution of theses examined by school level.

Table 4. Distribution of graduate theses by examined school level

School Level	n	%	School Level	n	%
Secondary School	26	19,54	Undergraduate Education + Master + Doctorate	3	2,25
Undergraduate Education	25	18,79	Doctorate	2	1,50
Elementary School + Secondary School	14	10,52	Secondary School + High School	2	1,50
High School	14	10,52	Master + Doctorate	2	1,50
Pre-school + Elementary School + Secondary School + High School + Higher Education	6	4,51	Pre-school + Elementary School + High School	1	0,75
Pre-school	6	4,51	Pre-school + Elementary School	1	0,75
Elementary School	5	3,75	Elementary School + Undergraduate Education	1	0,75
Elementary School + Secondary School + High School	4	3,00	Pre-school + Elementary School + Secondary School + High School + Higher Education + Adult Education	1	0,75
Pre-school + Elementary School + Secondary School + High School + Vocational and Technical Education	3	2,25	Unspecified	22	10,31

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that comparisons are made at different education levels. Most compared education level secondary school, undergraduate education, elementary school + secondary school and high school. In 22 theses, the school level to be compared was not specified. Table 5 presents the distribution of theses by subject.

Table 5. Distribution of graduate theses by subjects

Subject	n	%	Subject	n	%
Higher Education	17	12,78	Basic Training	1	0,75
Teacher Training	11	8,27	Education Expenditures	1	0,75
Educational Program	10	7,51	Inclusive Education	1	0,75
Mathematics Education	10	7,51	English Education and Teacher Training	1	0,75
Education System	8	6,01	Arabic Education	1	0,75
Education Management and Supervision	7	5,26	Social Studies and Turkish Republic Revolution History and Ataturkism Education	1	0,75
Social Studies Education	6	4,51	Biology Education	1	0,75
Science Education	5	3,76	Turkish and German Education	1	0,75
English Education	4	3,00	Physics Education	1	0,75
International Exams	4	3,00	Teacher Rights	1	0,75
Turkish, Language and Literature Education	4	3,00	Turkish Education System and Education Expenditures	1	0,75
Geography Education	4	3,00	Sports Education	1	0,75

Early Childhood Education	4	3,00	Student Features	1	0,75
Refugee Education	3	2,25	History Education	1	0,75
Music Education	3	2,25	Folklore	1	0,75
Values Education	2	1,50	Gender Equality, Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship	1	0,75
Religious Education	2	1,50	Human Rights and Citizenship Education	1	0,75
Painting Education	2	1,50	Information and Document Management	1	0,75
Literacy Education	2	1,50	Accounting Education	1	0,75
Adult Education	1	0,75	Public Relations Education	1	0,75
Assessment and Evaluation	1	0,75	Special Education	1	0,75
Information Technologies	1	0,75	Chemistry Education	1	0,75

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that there are theses on 44 different subjects. Figure 3 presents the word cloud regarding the distribution of theses by subject.

Figure 3. Word cloud on subjects of graduate theses

In theses on comparative education, the subjects of Higher Education, Teacher Training, Educational Program, Mathematics Education were mostly studied. It is seen that there are very limited studies on special education, inclusive education and rights in education. The research methods used in graduate theses are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Distribution of graduate theses by research method used

Method	n	%	Method	n	%
Qualitative Method	86	64,66	Quantitative Method	1	0,75
Mixed Method	10	7,51	Relational Scan Method	1	0,75
Descriptive Method	10	7,51	Causal Comparison Research	1	0,75
Descriptive + Qualitative Method	3	2,25	Comparative Adult Education Research	1	0,75
Descriptive + Scan method	2	1,50	Unspecified	17	12,78
Scan Method	1	0,75			

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the qualitative method, mixed method, descriptive method, descriptive + qualitative method, descriptive + scan method, scan

method, quantitative method, relational scan method, causal comparison research, comparative adult education research are used in the graduate theses. (No comment has been made by the researcher about the methods stated to be used in the theses and they are presented as they are.) Qualitative research method was chosen in most of the graduate theses and the method used in 16 theses was not specified. Figure 4 presents the distribution of postgraduate theses according to Comparison Criteria / Sampling.
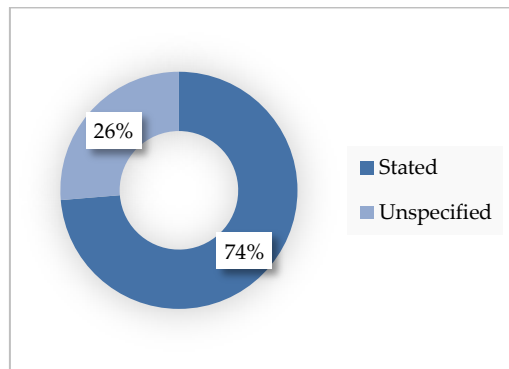

Figure 4. Distribution of graduate theses by comparison criteria/ sampling

As seen in the figure, comparison criteria or samples were specified in 98 (74%) graduate theses. In 35 (29%) theses, there is no information about comparison criteria or sampling. Data collection tools used in graduate theses are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Distribution of graduate theses by data collection tool used

Data Collection Technique	n	%	Data Collection Technique	n	%
Document Review	90	67,66	Scale + Interview + Document Review	3	2,25
Interview + Document Review	13	9,77	Scale + Information Collection Form	2	1,50
Scale	7	5,26	Observation + Document Review	1	0,75
Observation + Interview + Document Review	5	3,75	Interview	1	0,75
Scale + Interview	3	2,25	Unspecified	5	3,75
Scale + Document Review	3	2,25			

Data collection tools used in graduate theses; it is in the form of document review, interview + document review, scale, observation + interview + document review, scale + interview, scale + document review, scale + interview + document review, scale + information collection form, observation + document review and interview. Document analysis technique was used most frequently in theses, and there is no information about the data collection technique used in 5 theses. Figure 5 presents information on the comparison approach used in graduate theses.
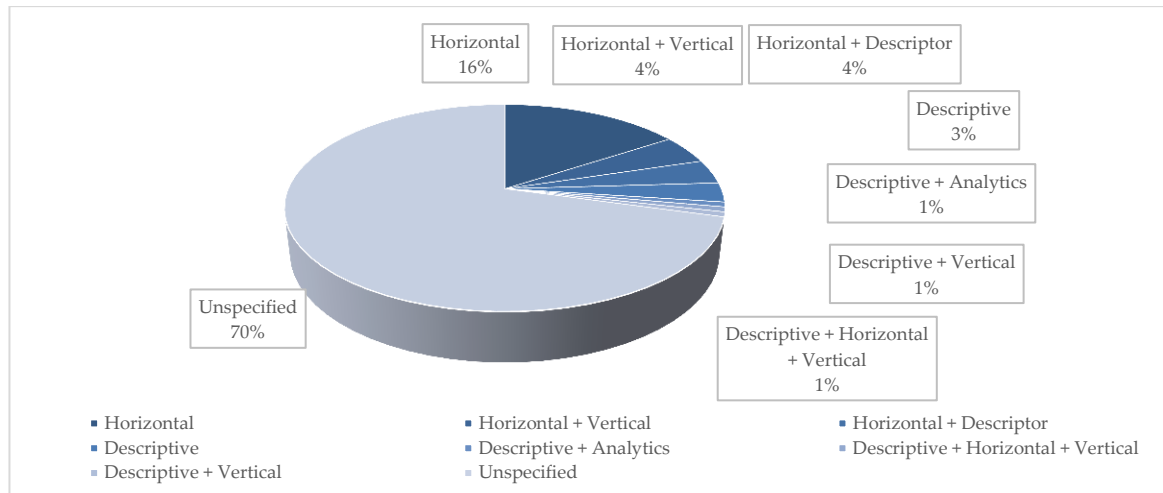
Figure 5. Distribution of graduate theses according to the approach used

Horizontal and vertical approaches were used in theses, as can be seen in Figure 5, which shows the distribution of postgraduate theses according to the comparison approach. In graduate theses; horizontal (n=21), horizontal + vertical (n=6), horizontal + descriptive (n=5), descriptive (n=5), descriptive + analytical (n=1), descriptive + horizontal + vertical (n=1) and explanatory + vertical (n=1) approaches were used. Horizontal approach was used the most in theses and there is no information about the approach used in 85 theses.

Discussion and Conclusion

When the first comparative education studies in Turkey are examined, it can be said that these studies started before the Republic was declared (Demir, 2017). Similar to this study, there are studies in the literature to examine comparative education theses that take different time periods as criteria (Koç, 2019; Geçici and Türnüklü, 2020; Ilıman- Püsküllüoğlu & Hoşgörür, 2017; Tatlı & Adıgüzel, 2012; Yıldırım & Türkoğlu, 2018). Studies examining graduate theses are important in terms of providing a holistic perspective to researchers who will work in the same field (Yüksel, 2022). It is recommended that such studies be carried out at regular intervals in the field (Aydemir & Erdamar, 2018). In this study, the postgraduate theses prepared on comparative education in Turkey between the years 2016-2021 are handled with a holistic perspective and constitute a source for research on comparative education.

When the distribution of the theses prepared within the scope of the study is examined according to the universities, it is seen that the theses on comparative education are mostly produced in Hacettepe University, Gazi University and Marmara University. In

his study, Koç (2019) examines the comparative education theses made between 2005 and 2018, and states that the theses on comparative education were mostly made at Gazi University, Ankara University and Marmara University. This shows that the subject distribution of theses made in universities differs according to years, but more theses are produced at all times in universities with strong postgraduate education. In addition, the thesis on comparative education was produced mostly in the department of educational sciences. When theses are examined in terms of years, it is seen that there is an increasing trend until 2019, but there is a decrease in 2020 and 2021. In terms of education level, theses are mostly prepared at master's level.

In the examined theses, Germany, England, Finland and the USA and Turkey were compared at most. Between 2001 and 2009, the most England, Germany, France (Tatlı & Adıgüzel, 2012); between 2010 and 2016, it is seen that a comparative education thesis was made with England, USA, Germany, Finland (Ilıman- Püsküllüoğlu & Hoşgörür, 2017). Based on this finding, it can be said that developed countries and countries that are successful in international exams are compared.

When examined in terms of education level, it is seen that secondary school and undergraduate education are given more place. The fact that more work has been done at the secondary school level may be due to the fact that both international exams are held at this level and that it is the education level before the high school entrance exam in Turkey. When the comparative education theses are examined in terms of their subjects, it is seen that the focus is mostly on higher education and teacher education. According to the findings obtained from the theses examined, there are very limited studies on teaching Turkish to foreigners and multicultural education. Considering the changing society and student profiles, multicultural education studies should increase (Arslan & Çalmaşur, 2017). In addition, it is thought that making comparison studies for the applications made in different countries will contribute to the field in terms of solving the migration problem that Turkey has had to face in the last 10 years. Similarly, there are limited studies on special education, inclusive education and rights. It is possible to say that there has been an increase in studies on inclusive education in Turkey in recent years (Kayahan-Yüksel & Polat, 2022). However, it is possible to say that there are insufficient studies on this subject.

In theses, mostly qualitative research method was chosen. Kutluca, Birgin and Gündüz (2018), who reached a similar conclusion in their research, state that this situation

contradicts the fact that the quantitative method in educational research in Turkey is more preferred. In addition, most of the theses contain information about the sampling method or comparison criterion. In some of the comparative education studies, skipping this procedure, which is an important part of the scientific research process, can be seen as an inadequacy. It is seen that the most preferred data collection tool in thesis studies is document analysis. This finding coincides with Koç's (2019) study in which he examined the theses between the years 2005-2018.

The most commonly used comparison approach in the examined theses is the horizontal approach, and the comparison approaches are not specified in most of the theses. Çubukçu, Yılmaz and İnci (2016) reached a similar conclusion in their studies in which they examined the trends of comparative education program studies between 2010 and 2014. However, comparative education studies should be systematic studies that include results that will improve the education system of a country. This situation can be considered as an inadequacy in terms of the field.

Based on the research findings, it has been concluded that although comparative education studies, which are of great importance in terms of both the field of educational sciences and the education system of the country, are studies that should be carried out more meticulously, they have many limitations. In particular, the fact that comparison approaches are not specified in many theses seems to be methodologically problematic. In addition, the fact that only the document analysis technique is used in the vast majority of theses is not supported by field studies, which is seen as a limitation. International partnerships and projects can be produced in order to examine the education systems of different countries in detail. In this way, the systems of different countries can be examined in more detail and holistically, and more functional suggestions can be presented in terms of the Turkish education system. In addition, it is thought that a more rigorous approach should be adopted in the context of the scientific research process in comparative education studies.

The fact that postgraduate theses mostly focus on higher education and teacher education can be a source for teacher education studies in Turkey. However, especially regarding the migration problem that Turkey has had to face in the last ten years; It is seen that there are very limited studies on immigrant education and Turkish teaching. Similarly, it has been observed that there are very few studies on human rights, special education and inclusive education, which are the subject of much debate in the international literature. In

this context, it is recommended that studies to be carried out in the field of comparative education should be carried out on subjects such as teaching Turkish to foreigners, multicultural education, special education and inclusive education.

Education systems are open systems that have to constantly renew themselves. In this respect, it is a necessity to examine the education systems of different countries and to identify good examples. Postgraduate studies in Turkey should be handled with a more holistic perspective and enriched methodologically. For this reason, it is recommended to carry out more methodologically effective studies in different departments of different universities. In order to support and encourage the good works done, it is recommended to be supported by making project calls in this regard. In this research, postgraduate theses made in 2016-2021, which have not been addressed before, were examined. In the following years, it is recommended to carry out similar studies on the examination of comparative education studies.

Author Contribution Statement

Didem KAYAHAN YÜKSEL: *Literature review, determination of the problem situation, determining the method, selection of the studies for the research, collecting data, analyzing data, creating conclusion and discussion sections, reporting, writing, auditing and editing processes.*

Binnur BAKA: *Literature review, determination of the problem situation, selection of the studies for the research, collecting data, analyzing data, reporting.*

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