Türk Yükseköğretim Sisteminde Akademik Özgürlüğün Bazı Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi*

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Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de yükseköğretim sisteminde görev yapmakta olan akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlük ile ilgili algılarının demografik değişkenlere göre incelenmesidir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği'nin uygulama düzeyinde öğretim, araştırma ve yayın alt boyutlarında cinsiyet, idari görev, yaş kıdem, görev yılı, unvan ve fakülte değişkenlerine göre anlamlı bir farklılık olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır. Betimsel tarama modelinde nicel bir araştırma olan bu çalışmanın çalışma grubu 2022-2023 eğitim ve öğretim yılında Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey Üniversitesi'nde, Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi'nde ve Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi'nde görev yapmakta olan 311 akademisyenden oluşmaktadır. Veriler demografik bilgileri içeren kişisel bilgi formu ve 27 maddeden oluşan Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği ile toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde; bağımsız örneklem T-testi ve tek yönlü varyans analizi (ANOVA) kullanılmıştır. Analizler sonucunda elde edilen bulgulara göre öğretim, araştırma ve yayın alt boyutlarında cinsiyete, yaşa ve fakülte değişkenlerine göre anlamlı farklılıklar bulunamamıştır. Diğer yandan; akademisyenlerin kıdem ve idari görev değişkenlerine göre araştırma alt boyutunda; görev yılı ve unvan değişkenlerine göre öğretim, araştırma ve yayın alt boyutlarında anlamlı farklılıklar tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgulardan hareketle akademik özgürlüklere dair kültür oluşturulması adına farkındalık eğitimleri düzenlenebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akademisyen, akademik özgürlük, yükseköğretim

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Examination the Academicians' Opinions on Academic Freedom in the Turkish Higher Education System in Terms of Some Variables

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the opinions of academicians working in the higher education system in Türkiye about academic freedom according to demographic variables. For this purpose, we have investigated whether there is a significant difference in the teaching, research, and publication subdimensions at the implementation level of the Academic Freedom Scale according to gender, administrative duty, age, seniority, year of duty, appellation, and faculty variables. This study has been conducted in descriptive survey model which is a quantitative research technique. The working group of this study consisted of 311 academicians working in Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University, Aydın Adnan Menderes University and Kütahya Dumlupınar University in 2022-2023 education year. The data were collected with the personal information form containing demographic information and the Academic Freedom Scale consisting of 27 items. The data analysis was done with SPSS testing techniques which includes independent samples T-test and one-way ANOVA. Findings indicated that there was no significant difference between gender, age, faculty variables and the subcategories of academic freedom -teaching, research, and publication. On the other hand, the results show that academicians at the research sub-dimension have significance difference according to their seniority and administrative duty. At the same time, significance difference was seen in terms of office and appellation variables in teaching, research, and publication subdimensions. Based on these findings, awareness trainings can be organised to develop a culture of academic freedoms.

Key Words: Academician, academic freedom, higher education

Introduction

Universities have a long history of providing scientific services to humanity, producing scientific knowledge and enlightening societies. They are respected institutions that serve as locomotives, especially in today's society. In addition to their role in the development of society in cultural, economic, artistic and social fields, universities have responsibilities including the training of individuals for professional roles and the advancement of personal development (Başarır, 2009). Furthermore, universities are responsible for the production of scientific knowledge, the deepening of existing knowledge and the development of solutions that respond to the needs of society. The realisation of scientific information production depends on the fact that academics, students, and researchers have a free thinking, expression and working environment (Henkel, 2005). Academic freedom is a fundamental tenet of scientific and intellectual pursuits, and is of paramount importance for advancing scientific knowledge, fostering social development, and upholding democratic values. Academic freedom is defined by the free exchange of ideas, critical debate, and the protection of the scientific research environment (Russell, 2002). It establishes an environment that permits the autonomy of higher education institutions,

discourse, diversity, and critique. Nevertheless, there are significant challenges to academic freedom in numerous countries across the globe. These threats may manifest in a number of ways, including political pressures, censorship, limitations on the freedom of expression of faculty and students, as well as legal regulations that impinge on the capacity for free thinking, repressive policies and risks to the security of academics (Hayes, 2021). A review of the literature on scientific methodology reveals a clear imperative for scientists to be free from external constraints and pressures regarding the methods they employ in their research and the outcomes they achieve (Dinler, 2013). The structuring, preservation and promotion of academic freedom in higher education necessitates a multifaceted and ongoing process. Nevertheless, this endeavour represents a pivotal stage in the formation of a free and equitable society. Academic freedom encompasses the autonomy of students and academics to express diverse perspectives, engage in research, and disseminate scientific knowledge (Vrielink, Lemmens & Parmentier, 2011). Academic freedom is a fundamental tenet of a democratic society and an advanced level education system, and it serves to remove obstacles to scientific progress. The effective construction of academic freedom is contingent upon the adherence to certain basic elements and principles. The accountability and transparency of higher education institutions (Fried, 2006; Hoecht, 2006) and their commitment to fundamental values such as diversity and equality (Hénard & Mitterle, 2010; McNay, 2007; Stefani, 2010) are significant elements in the establishment of academic freedom. On the other hand, autonomy and academic freedom in higher education are important elements that are often considered together but considered as different concepts. While autonomy means that a university has independence and freedom in its internal functioning and decision-making processes (Aithal &Kumar, 2019); academic freedom means the right of faculty members, researchers, and students to conduct scientific research, think and express freely (Altbach, 2007). Autonomy is prerequisite for preserving the academic freedom of the university. However, the relationship between autonomy and academic freedom is complex; because autonomy determines the internal functioning of the university while academic freedom directs teaching and research activities. Therefore, the co-evolution of autonomy and academic freedom in higher education is important to create a democratic university culture and promote scientific progress (Matei &Iwinska, 2018; Ren &Li (2013). Hence, the concept of academic freedom in higher education should be considered both at the institutional level and at the social level.

The understanding and application of the concept of academic freedom in Türkiye has faced various difficulties throughout history. When the legal regulations on academic freedom in Türkiye are examined, the 1982 Constitution; in article 130, it is stated that higher education institutions, academicians and their assistants can freely conduct all kinds of scientific research and publications. However, this right to

freedom in the article also includes that it does not give the state the right to operate in a way that jeopardises the existence, independence, the integrity and indivisibility of the nation and the country. Furthermore, Article 22 of the Higher Education Law (No. 2547) establishes the criteria for academic occupations, delineates the rights pertaining to scientific research and publication (Turkish Official Gazette, 2023). Even if academic freedom is intended to be guaranteed by the constitution and laws, it is not clear what its content and framework are (Gedikoğlu, 2013). Additionally, there are also difficulties in the realisation of the decisions taken by the Council of Higher Education on academic freedom and commitments made. As a matter of fact, Seggie and Gökbel (2014) stated that the concept of academic freedom in Türkiye is not clearly on a see-through and solid ground, and they have identified that Türkiye is far behind western countries and America in terms of academic freedoms. In contrast, Doğan (2015) demonstrated that the freedoms of expression and institutional autonomy are constrained within the university context. Moreover, the culture of academic freedom remains elusive within this environment, primarily due to the inability of universities to institutionalise it effectively. As a result of the aforementioned factors, academics in Türkiye do not feel free to express their thoughts, leading to the emergence of a profile of the scientist who is shy, cowardly, unable to express thoughts, and lives under pressure and fear. However, studies have revealed the necessity of forming an ambitious, creative, and productive scientist profile for development and progress (Adem, 2008; Hatiboğlu, 1994). Bozkurt (2012) highlighted the necessity of developing university programmes in accordance with societal and market demands, rather than imposing restrictions on academic freedom in teaching, research and publication. The importance of ensuring the protection of academic freedoms was also highlighted. In contrast, Baskan and Sincer (2019) observed that the regulations pertaining to academic freedom tend to align with significant socio-political milestones in Türkiye. They also noted that academic freedom in higher education is a crucial yet complex issue that requires further examination. It is thought that academic freedom is also important for Turkish higher education to determine the obstacles that academicians face in expressing their opinions clearly while doing their studies (Baskan & Sincer, 2019; Bozkurt, 2012; Doğan, 2015; Gedikoğlu, 2013; Günay, 2004; Güner, 2017).

Higher education institutions make significant contributions to the production of knowledge and transferring of knowledge to societies. These institutions are responsible for adopting the principles of academic freedom and supporting scientific research and teaching activities. However, the concept of academic freedom can be defined in different ways in each country and can be influenced by various factors. Academic freedom in Türkiye which has been formed under the influence of historical, cultural, and political factors. Türkiye, like many other countries, has to accept the common standards of many international organisations established in

order not to lag behind many developments in the globalising world. Among the pivotal resolutions reached by global bodies such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Bologna Process, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European Student Information Bureau (ESIB) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the matter of academic freedom in higher education. The objective of this study was to evaluate the current situation of academic freedom in Türkiye in light of the decisions taken by international organisations. The objective of this study is twofold: firstly, to enhance awareness of this issue and secondly, to provide a foundation for future research by elucidating the significance of academic freedom in the context of higher education in Türkiye. In this respect, it has been seen as important to examine Turkish Higher Education in terms of academic freedom. It is important to work in terms of how academic freedom is perceived by academics, to create an idea in terms of they are exposed to developing their thoughts on the problems and solutions to the problems they are exposed to. From the results obtained in the studies on academic freedom in Türkiye and in the world, this study is expected to contribute to the knowledge and serve the big picture on academic freedom. This study can be considered as a step towards raising greater awareness of academic freedom and developing a foundation for future research. In this context, the aim of the study is to examine the perceptions of academics working in the higher education system in Türkiye about academic freedom according to demographic variables.

The Concept of Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is a fundamental right and freedom recognised to faculty members, researchers, and students in higher education institutions. This concept includes the right to conduct scientific research, ponder freely, express and access information (Abdel Latif, 2014). Academic freedom ensures the creation of an environment where various opinions can be frankly expressed, criticised and discussed. In this way, it is possible to freely reveal the ideas and findings necessary for scientific progress and social improve. Academic freedom is considered one of the core values of a democratic society and forms an important part of higher education institutions. Historically, the definition of the concept of academic freedom has differed in each country and has been interpreted differently depending on various variables. Academic freedom has been defined as the freedom of express, research, teach and learn in relation with they are interested in as a specific right to academicians and students, which are usually the components of academy (Karran, 2009). Akerlind and Kayrooz (2003), on the other hand, underlined that in addition to the definition, the state cannot interfere in people's private areas as that is one of the negative status rights. Therefore, academic freedom is the right of maximum independence so that

scientists who aim to reach scientific reality and validity can reach the most realistic results by getting rid of the determined conditions without submitting to any authority (Dinler, 2013). As the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (AMACAD, 2021) considered this concept, it emphasized the importance of protecting the academy from being forced into any political or religious views. In contrast, Academics for Academic Freedom (AFAF, 2021) provided justification for academic freedom based on two articles. The first article asserts that academics are entitled to unlimited freedoms to test the knowledge acquired both inside and outside the classroom, to inquire, and to put forward opinions even on unpopular and controversial issues. Secondly, they stated that academic personnel are not at liberty to invoke this freedom as a rationale for obstructing, disciplining, or dismissing colleagues (AFAF, 2021). Academic freedom is regarded as a fundamental tenet of higher education institutions. This freedom encompasses the right of faculty members, researchers, and students to engage in scientific research, reason, and express their views freely. Nevertheless, academic freedom is not an absolute concept, and its exercise is subject to certain limits and responsibilities. Researchers are expected to comply with the rules of scientific ethics and to conduct themselves in a socially responsible manner, without being unduly influenced by external pressures (Altbach, 2001; Bozkurt, 2012). Academic freedom can be inquired in three basic dimensions as freedom of teaching, freedom of research and freedom of publication (Bozkurt, 2012; Gibbs, 2016). Freedom of teaching express the independence of how and what kind of they will teach knowledge in their fields of expertise and the ability to choose their own research subjects as well as the freedom of academicians, faculties, institutes, and students who are elements of the university when talking freely within framework of teaching, education, and ethical principles outside the university (Bozkurt, 2012). The World Union of Universities (WUS); in the Lima Declaration, it is named the freedom of research, the right of all members conducting research in the academia to advance their scientific research without any pressure, subject to the universal elements and methods of scientific research, and to spread the research results to the public freely and uncensored. Publication freedom, on the other hand, is the right to publish their research by encouraging and facilitating in the advancement of science, technology, education, and culture in general so that academics who are one of the components higher educations, can achieve the reputation they deserve (UNESCO, 1997, 12). In this study, the concept of academic freedom is discussed in three dimensions. The following research questions have been formulated for this study:

1. What is the level of academic freedom of academics working in Türkiye?

2. Do the academic freedoms of academics show statistically significant differences according to their gender, administrative duty, age, seniority, year of duty, appellation, and faculty?

Method

Research Design

In this study, it was aimed to analyze the perceptions of lecturers working in the Turkish higher education system towards academic freedoms according to demographic variables. A descriptive scanning model which is one of the quantitative research methods was used in this study. Descriptive scanning model, which is an approach that aims to describe a situation that existed in the past or still exists today as it exists (Karasar, 2011).

Sampling

The research population comprises three universities -Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University, Aydın Adnan Menderes University and Kütahya Dumlupınar University, with a total of 5,936 academic staff employed at these institutions. Accordingly, the required sample size is 361 individuals, with a confidence interval of .95 and a significance level of .05. A total of 361 individuals were surveyed (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2018); however, 50 scales were excluded from the analysis due to their unsuitability for the research objectives. The remaining 311 responses were included in the final analysis. A convenience sample was employed in the study. The sample was selected on the grounds of time, cost and labour efficiency (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2018). 64.6% of the respondents were male lecturers. When the seniority status of the lecturers in the research is examined, it is seen that there are lecturers with seniority in the range of 10-14 years (31.2%). In the context of the title variable, research assistants provided the most participation in the study (28.3%), and the least participation was in the ratio of lecturers (5.1%).

Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to embarking upon this research, the necessary permissions were obtained from the Research Impact Committee and the Research Ethics Committee. Subsequently, the researcher conducted on-site visits to the three universities in question, during which the requisite data was collected. In order to facilitate the completion of the data by academics who preferred to do so online, a link to the data collection tool, which had been prepared using Google Forms, was sent to them. The data were collected utilising the measurement tool detailed below:

Academic Freedom Scale: The Academic Freedom Scale (AFS), developed by Bozkurt (2012), was employed to ascertain the extent of academic freedom. The scale comprises 27 articles, distributed across three sub-dimensions: teaching, research and publication. Academic Freedom Scale, which is a 5-Likert type data collection means

and ranges from "non-applicable (1)" to "applicable (5)" at the level of adopting and finding applicable options. There is no reverse article coding in the academic Freedom Scale. Samples of items on the scale; "Providing the environment for students to express their opinions freely while teaching in the faculty", "The instructors in the faculty can study the subject who want without the limitation of resources", "The ability to freely publish the works of the instructors in the faculty" can be shown. There are a total of 5 items in the teaching sub-dimension of the Academic Freedom Scale, the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient as .76 was reported by Bozkurt (2012). The research dimension, which is the second sub-dimension on the Academic Freedom Scale, consists of 4 items and the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .63. In the publication dimension which is the last sub-dimension, there are 18 items, and the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of this factor was calculated as .94. In this study we did that the level of adoption was not included in the statistical analysis, as the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient at the adoption level was calculated as .62 in the teaching sub-dimension, .19 in the research sub-dimension, and .69 in the publication sub-dimension. When we consider at the Cronbach alpha values at the application level of the scale were seen that .78 in the teaching sub-dimension, .93 in the publication sub-dimension, and .55 in the research sub-dimension. The value of .55 in the research sub-dimension is acceptable level (Taber, 2017). In accordance with these data, it is recognised that the Academic Freedom Scale is an adequately reliable and valid data collection means to measure the level of finding the applicable level of academic freedom of individuals.

The data obtained within the scope of the research appeared normal distribution and since no problems were encountered, appropriate statistical analyses were started. It was analysed with the t-test whether the levels of finding applicable the academic freedom of individuals differ according to the variables with two subgroups as gender and administrative duties. According to variables with three or more subgroups such as age, seniority, year of duty, title, and faculty by academics whether the levels of finding applicable academic freedom differed that was examined by one-way variance analysis (ANOVA). All these calculations were performed in version 20.0 of the IBM SPSS program. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated to determine the reliability of the scale.

Findings

In this section of the study, results were placed about whether the instructors differ significantly according to variables such as gender, age, seniority in the profession, years of duty, title, administrative duty and type of faculty.

Table 1. In the Academic Freedom Scale, arithmetic average, and standard deviation of academics according to the sub-dimensions of the application level.

Sub-dimensions	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Teaching	311	3.21	.82
Research	311	2.96	.81
Publication	311	3.43	.77

As is seen in Table 1, publication dimension ($\bar{x}$=3.43) of the application level of the "Academic Freedom Scale" is the highest average compared to the teaching sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$=3.21), and the lowest average is the research sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$=2.96). Based on these findings, it can be said that academics have applied academic freedom relatively, mostly in the sub-dimension of the publication, and they applied it at least in the research sub-dimension.

Table 2. Academic freedom of academics with application sub-dimensions is the t-test results according to gender variable.

Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	Sd	t	p
Teaching	Female	110	3.22	.82	309	.177	.85
	Male	201	3.21	.82			
Research	Female	110	2.94	.86	309	.320	.74
	Male	201	2.97	.78			
Publication	Female	110	3.45	.84	309	.220	.82
	Male	201	3.43	.73			

*p<.05

According to Table 2, the teaching sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= .177, p>.05) meaningfully according to gender at academics' the academic freedom practice level does not differ as statistically. At the same time, the research sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= .320, p>.05) and the publication sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= .220, p>.05) also according to gender meaningful difference at the level of academics' academic freedom practice do not indicate as statistically.

Table 3. ANOVA results with application sub-dimensions of the Academic Freedom Scale according to the age variable.

Sub-dimensions	Age	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	F	p
Teaching	1. 24-34 ages	91	3.25	.82		
	2. 35-40 ages	122	3.22	.80	.273	.84
	3. 41-45 ages	55	3.20	.85		
	4. 46 age and over	43	3.12	.86		
Research	1. 24-34 ages	91	3.07	.82		
	2. 35-40 ages	122	2.92	.77	.754	.52
	3. 41-45 ages	55	2.89	.88		
	4. 46 ages and over	43	2.94	.79		
Publication	1. 24-34 ages	91	3.39	.84		
	2. 35-40 age	122	3.44	.69	.256	.85
	3. 41-45 age	55	3.50	.79		
	4. 46 ages and over	43	3.41	.80		

*p<.05

According to Table 3, a meaningful difference is not as statistically between the age groups in the teaching ($F_{(3,307)}$= .273 p>.05), research ($F_{(3,307)}$= .754 p>.05), and publication ($F_{(3,307)}$= .256 p>.05) sub-dimensions of the application level of the academics at the academic freedom scale. However, it is seen that the average of the total points ($\bar{x}$=3.25) obtained from the academicians between the ages of 24-34 in the teaching sub-dimension, the average of the total scores ($\bar{x}$=3.22) in the teaching sub-dimension of the academicians in the 35-40 ages range, the average of the total points ($\bar{x}$=3.20) in the teaching sub-dimension of the academicians in the 41-45 ages range, and the average of the total scores ($\bar{x}$=3.12) in the teaching sub-dimension of the academicians aged 46 and over are the lowest.

Table 4. ANOVA results with application sub-dimensions of the Academic Freedom Scale according to the seniority in the profession variable.

Sub-dimensions	Seniority	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	F	p
Teaching	1. 0-5 years	45	3.41	.88		
	2. 6-9 years	62	3.14	.84	2.18	.07
	3. 10-14 years	97	3.14	.79		
	4. 15-20 years	59	3.39	.78		
	5. 21 years and over	48	3.05	.82		
Research	1. 0-5 years	45	3.26	.75		
	2. 6-9 years	62	2.87	.80	2.69	.03[*]
	3. 10-14 years	97	2.90	.81		
	4. 15-20 yeras	59	3.07	.88		
	5. 21 years and over	48	2.79	.70		
Publication	1. 0-5 years	45	3.51	.84		
	2. 6-9 years	62	3.35	.82	1.82	.12
	3. 10-14 years	97	3.36	.72		
	4. 15-20 years	59	3.65	.75		
	5. 21 years and over	48	3.36	.71		

*p<.05

To Table 4, there is a meaningful difference in the total points of the research sub-dimension of the application level on the academic freedom scale in accordance with seniority in the proffesion. In other words, academics vary in accordance with seniority in the profession that in the research sub-dimension at the level of practising academic freedom. As a result of the homogeneity test, it was observed that the group variances were not equal, that is, a homogeneous distribution could not be achieved. Dunnett's C test can be done that if there are no equal variances (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2018). At this point; according to the results of the Dunnett's C test, which was performed to understand between which seniority groups the difference, it is seen that average of the total points ($\bar{x}$=3.26) obtained from the research sub-dimension of academics with seniority in the range 0-5 years is relatively higher than the average of the total points ($\bar{x}$=2.79) that of academics with seniority in 21 years and over. However, on the academic freedom scale, there is no meaningful difference between the total points of the teaching sub-dimension ($F_{(4,306)}$= 1.16, p>.05) and the total points of the publication sub-dimension ($F_{(4,306)}$= 1.82, p>.05) on the application level in accordance with seniority in the proffesion.

Table 5. ANOVA results with application sub-dimensions of the Academic Freedom Scale according to the years of duty variable.

Sub-dimensions	Years of Duty	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	F	p
Teaching	1. 0-4 years	134	3.46	.89		
	2. 5-10 years	112	3.02	.72	11.89	.00*
	3. 11 years and over	65	3.02	.68		
Research	1. 0-4 years	134	3.23	.77		
	2. 5-10 years	112	2.79	.75	14.06	.00*
	3. 11 years and over	65	2.70	.83		
Publication	1. 0-4 years	134	3.64	.78		
	2. 5-10 yeras	112	3.27	.72	9.136	.00*
	3. 11 years and over	65	3.28	.72		

*p<.05

As is seen in Table 5, academics have meaningful differences in teaching ($F_{(2,308)}$ = 11.89, p<.05), research ($F_{(2,308)}$ = 14.06, p<.05) and publication ($F_{(2,308)}$ = 9.136, p<.05) sub-dimensions at the practising level of the academic freedom in accordance with the years of duty variable. Accordingly, it has been reached the conclusion as a result of the analyses made of that at the teaching sub-dimension on the academic freedom practising levels of academicians with a duty year between 0-4 years ($\bar{x}$ =3.46) are higher than the academicians who worked in the 5-10 years ($\bar{x}$ =3.02) and 11 years or over ($\bar{x}$ =3.02). Likewise, it is seen that at the practising levels of academic freedom of academicians' perceptions who work in the range 0-4 years in the research sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$=3.23) and publication sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$ =3.64) are high. As a result of the analyses, it was obtained that academicians with 5-10 years of duty have averages in research sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$ =2.79) and publication sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$ =3.27). It can be said that the academic freedom practising levels of academicians with years of duty in the 11 years and over are at the lowest level compared to other groups in the research sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$ =2.70), and at the practising level of academic freedom in the publication sub-dimension ($\bar{x}$ =3.28) is quite low compared to the academics working in the 0-4 years range ($\bar{x}$ =3.64). When the findings are evaluated in general according to the years of duty variable, the reason may be academics with low of duty years academic freedom practising levels are higher that they are more excited and attemptive because they are new to their profession. The reason academics who have more years of duty have a low level of academic freedom practising, in this regard they have had negative experiences or other experiences that may be due to fear of losing their status, fatigation or dismissal from the profession.

Table 6. ANOVA results with application sub-dimensions of the Academic Freedom Scale according to the title.

Sub-dimensions	Title	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	F	p
Teaching	Proffessor	41	3.24	.79		
	Associate Proffessor	82	3.51	.81	6.36	.00[*]
	Assistant Professor	84	3.00	.78		
	Research Assistant	88	3.22	.80		
	Lecturer	16	2.66	.64		
Research	Proffessors	41	3.02	.77		
	Associate Proffessors	82	3.11	.76	2.85	.02[*]
	Assistant Professor	84	2.83	.81		
	Research Assistants	88	3.01	.86		
	Lecturers	16	2.48	.66		
Publication	Proffessors	41	3.61	.68		
	Associate Proffessors	82	3.67	.68	5.26	.00[*]
	Assistant Professor	84	3.23	.82		
	Research Assistants	88	3.39	.78		
	Lecturers	16	3.05	.67		

*p<.05

According to Table 6, it is seen that meaningful difference is in the 'Academic Freedom Scale', in accordance with the title variable in the teaching ($F_{(4,306)}$= 6.36, p<.05), research ($F_{(4,306)}$= 2.85, p<.05) and publication ($F_{(4,306)}$= 5.26, p<.05) sub-dimensions of the application level. As a result of the applied homogeneity test is determined that homogeneous distribution is not provided; that is, group variances are not equal. Likewise, Dunnett's C test can be performed where the variance distribution is not equal (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). According to the results of the applied Dunnett's C test which is to determine the difference in the title variable

between the sub-dimensions; in the teaching sub-dimension, the points average of academics with associate proffessors title ($\bar{x}$=3.51) is higher than the average points of academics with the title of doctor faculty members ($\bar{x}$=3.00) and lecturers ($\bar{x}$=2.66). In the other words, it can be said that academicians with associate professors' title who practice more the academic freedoms in the teaching sub-dimension compared to academicians with other appellations. At the same time, considering the results of the Dunnett's C test in the research sub-dimension, the average points of associate proffessor academicians ($\bar{x}$=3.11) are higher the average points of academicians with other appellations. It is reached from the results of the analysis that a meaningful difference is in the publication sub-dimensional of the scale according to the title variable. Whereas the academic freedom of academicians with the title of associate professors ($\bar{x}$=3.67) is high in the dimension of publication, it has been determined that it is lower in academics with other appellations. In a sense, it can be said that academicians in the title of associate professors apply the rights of academic freedom in terms of both teaching, research, and publication more than academicians with other appellations.

Table 7. Academic freedom of academics with application sub-dimensions is the t-test results according to administrative duties variable.

Sub-dimensions	Administrative Duties	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	Sd	t	*P*
Teaching	Yes	73	3.16	.73	309	-.613	.54
	None	238	3.23	.84			
Research	Yes	73	2.78	.78	309	-2.14	.03[*]
	None	238	3.02	.81			
Publication	Yes	73	3.34	.74	309	-1.22	.22
	None	238	3.48	.78			

*p<.05

Considering the results of the analysis is given in Table 7, it is seen that the academicians do not indicate meaningful differences at the teaching sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= -.613, p>.05) and the publication sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= -1.22, p>.05) of the application level in the academic freedom according to the administrative duties variable. According to this result, it can be said that academicians with administrative duties and academicians without administrative duties are similar level in teaching sub-dimension and publication sub-dimension in terms of practising academic freedom. As the reason for this situation, it can be thought that whether academicians have or not an administrative position does not affect to their opinions with regard of practicing academic freedom. However, when examining the practising level of academic freedom of the academicians at the research sub-dimension ($t_{(309)}$= -2.14, p<.05), it can be seen that it varies meaningfully according to the administrative duties

variable. As a result, it can be said that academicians without administrative duties ($\bar{x}$ =3.02) have a higher level of practicing the academic freedom at the research sub-dimension than academicians with administrative duties ($\bar{x}$=2.78).

Table 8. ANOVA results with application sub-dimensions of the Academic Freedom Scale according to the faculty.

Sub-dimensions	Faculties	n	$\bar{x}$	Ss	F	*P*
Teaching	1	76	3.23	.73		
	2	41	3.04	.66		
	3	38	3.11	.75		
	4	32	3.28	.75	.715	.61
	5	54	3.31	.97		
	6	70	3.24	.93		
Research	1	76	2.94	.74		
	2	41	2.79	.76		
	3	38	2.90	.85		
	4	32	3.04	.88	.720	.60
	5	54	2.98	.85		
	6	70	3.07	.84		
Publication	1	76	3.46	.75		
	2	41	3.33	.56		
	3	38	3.47	.79		
	4	32	3.38	.70	.419	.83
	5	54	3.37	.92		
	6	70	3.51	.79		

*p<.05 Note: 1= Faculty of Arts and Sciences; 2= Faculty of Educational Sciences; 3= Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture / Faculty of Engineering; 4= Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences; 5= Health Sciences / Health Services Vocational School / Dental Medicine / Medical Faculty; 6= The School of Applied Sciences / Islamic Sciences / Sport Sciences / Social Sciences / Communication / The School of Foreign Languages.

In the Table 8, it is reached the finding of that from the sub-dimensions of the practising of academic freedom; academicians do not indicate meaningful differences at the sub-dimensions of teaching ($F_{(5,305)}$= .715, p>.05), research ($F_{(5,305)}$ = .720, p>.05) and publication ($F_{(5,305)}$= 419, p>.05) according to the faculties variable. In the other words, in accordance with the faculty variable, in terms of faculty members' academic freedom degree resemble each other at the teaching, research and publication sub-dimensions on the practicing level. A detailed examination of the average total points awarded to the faculties regarding the sub-dimensions reveals that there are no

significant inter-faculty differences. However, to make a comparison; it is seen that in the sub-dimension of teaching, the highest average total points belong to the faculty of economics and administrative sciences ($\bar{x}$=3.28), and the lowest average total points belongs to the faculty of educational sciences ($\bar{x}$=3.04). In the research sub-dimension, it has been concluded that the highest average total points have the school of applied sciences, the school of foreign languages, Islamic sciences and sports sciences, social sciences and communication ($\bar{x}$=3.07) faculties, and the lowest average total points are also the faculty of educational sciences ($\bar{x}$=2.79). In the publication sub-dimension as well, the lowest average total points are once more again in the faculty of educational sciences ($\bar{x}$=3.33); it was determined because of the analyses that the highest average total points are in the school of applied sciences, the school of foreign languages, and Islamic sciences, sports sciences, social sciences and communication ($\bar{x}$=3.07) faculties.

Discussion

The aim of this study is to examine the level of perceptions of academicians working in the higher education system in Türkiye regarding academic freedom according to the scale of academic freedom. In this context, according to the results obtained from the made statistical analyses, it may be thought that academicians feel more limited in research and teaching dimensions, but they feel relatively free in publishing dimension. However, in terms of the academicians are in conditions, they stated that they do not mention about political, controversial and contrary issues in general regarding the freedom of research and publication, otherwise their works are unvalue and not published, that their publications are determined according to the oppressive authority conditions, in the meantime that these negative conditions are made with the culture and networks formed by the authorities, and moreover that the people are included in this cycle without realising it; afterwards the culture, structure and system in which the academicians are included in them trained people who think results and benefit-oriented, who do not want to encounter situations that would prevent their status from rising (Güner, 2017). In addition to these problems faced by academics, if considering the issue from another point of view; it is seen that in both the number of universities and the number of researchers in Türkiye after 2006 years. Today, the number of approximately 8 million students has increased in the last 15 years, and this raising has reduced the efficiency of the researchers and caused to decrease the value given to both the research and the researched subject. Whereas according to 'Times Higher Education', among the most important factors affecting the value of universities are the number of research and the quality of the research (Yalçınalp, 2021). Therefore, when the problems faced by the academicians in the higher education system as well as they must overcome the issues that are considered together, it can be said that academicians feel more limited in research fields.

The academic freedoms of academicians in practice level does not differ according to the gender variable. The result of the obtained this finding indicates that the thoughts of male and female academicians about academic freedom may be similar. As a matter of fact, when the studies which carried out in the field article are examined; in also Doğan's study (2015), it is stated that the perspectives on academic freedom are similar by all academicians, men, and women. In case of the participation rate of female academicians and male academicians participating in the study is equal, a finding can be obtained in the opposite aspect of the acquired finding, or like the results of the study parallelisation can be reached. In a study on women academicians conducted by Başarır and Sarı (2015), it was concluded that women academicians experienced role conflict due to their multiple duties and responsibilities. Despite the persistence of traditional gender roles, the women in the study evaluated themselves as strong and productive individuals and were satisfied with their performance of duties. The findings of this study suggest that gender is not a significant factor in the production of scientific knowledge from the perspective of academics with diverse intellectual backgrounds. Consequently, there is no discernible difference in academic freedom.

The level of practicing academic freedom according to the age variable of the instructors working in the higher education system does not indicate a significantdifference. It is seen that academic freedom averages of academicians between the ages of 24-34 are higher than academicians in the other age groups. The decreasing averages of academic freedoms gradually, which apply to all instructors among age groups, may be an indication that they have already lost faith in academic freedom in Türkiye. It can be taken into consideration that academicians feel less free because they feel connected to a centre or because of the insoluble different problems in the academia. In the study conducted by Akcan, Malkoç and Kızıltan (2018); academicians express the ideal culture of academic freedom and the inadequacies in the current system with the perceptions of academic freedom in Türkiye. It is stated that academic culture does not occur in Türkiye regarding another study (Doğan, 2015). In the study managed by Summak (2008) at the international level, 10% of the academicians working in Türkiye did not express their opinions about academic freedom. The fact that academicians who study in science, research, teaching and perform a duty in universities, do not give an opinion on the rights of academic freedom regarding the essential right of academics, which may be an indication that more work is to be conducted on this issue of that the existing system and culture need changing.

In the academic freedoms at the applicable finding levels of academicians according to the seniority in the profession variable, there is no significant difference. This situation can be considered that there are problems in terms of practicing

academic freedoms due to different reasons, such as academicians' job assuarance being under pressure, fear of not getting promotion, and academic freedoms are not guaranteed by laws within the higher education system. As a matter of fact, Güner (2017) presented this situation in his study by relying upon different reasons. Summak (1997), on the other hand, according to the results of his survey study, expressed that most of the academicians did not have sufficient academic freedoms and their dissatisfaction with the existing conditions. Sağlam (2011) concluded that academicians with less seniority compared to academicians with more seniority, experienced a greater sense of fatigue and desensitisation in his study. The results obtained from the study and these studies may make academicians think that they evaluate the issue of academic freedom with the sense of fatigue and become desensitised.

A meaningful difference in academic freedoms according to the year of duty variable is achieved through the findings. It can be said that academicians are more positive who have the years of duties between 0-4 years in the academic freedoms on practice than academicians have the years of duties in both 5-10 years and 11 years and over. In the emergence of such a result, it may be commented that the instructors with fewer years of duties are more courageous although, they do not have sufficient experience in their fields, in case their term of duties increases with their work, and they have concern for academic freedoms. According to the study of Seggie and Gökbel (2014); higher education institutions should be rid of vague statements that may restrict academic freedoms in the administrative disciplinary regulation and emphasise that academic freedoms should be integrated in every field with expanded articles in their studies. The case of this study being applied, it can be assumed that academics might increase their awareness about academic freedom and might attract more attention about the issue. In another study that supports this statement, it is pointed out that the basis of the protection of academic freedoms, which is going to be thanks to social conditions and political institutions, is determined through these conditions (Bricall, 2003).

The academic freedoms at the applicable level of the instructors working in higher education could not be found to differ in accordance with the faculty variable. Güner (2017) concluded that there are obstacles towards academic freedom at different levels in universities in his study. In addition to this result, he states that they are shy away from express the opinions and criticisms of academicians in the decisions taken by the senior management due to their potential to use the management power in a negative way. In this context, in the study conducted by Kadıoğulları and Ensari (2020), it is stated that academics should be free, have job security and are to trust the institutions where they work to mention about the existence of academic autonomy in universities. As a matter of fact, in the United States; it is emphasised that

academicians working in higher education institutions, which are pioneers among world universities such as MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Harvard and Yale made free statements on many issues related to their fields, and thus in such cases they do not struggle with difficulties such as investigations and blocking in any way, they made progress in terms of academic autonomy by exceeding their current situation. In the study conducted by Akyol, Yılmaz, Çavuş and Aksoy (2018); higher education administrators stated that higher education is to have an autonomous structure and expressed that autonomy in the field of education can contribute to the development of the Turkish higher education system. In addition to this inference, they remarked that it is necessary to reorganise regulations and laws to remove bureaucratic obstacles due to current higher education regulations and laws. Gündüz (2013), on the other hand, emphasised that the problems of the higher education system in Türkiye will be overcome by ensuring structural integrity in higher education, by annihilating political, ideological concerns and expectations, establishing a real academic organisation system, ensuring autonomy and freedom with a consistent moral ground internalised, determined, self-controlling and stoical studies. Considering that the reasons for the results of the obtained findings in the studies; it can be said that there is no standard in terms of academic freedoms in Türkiye and that academicians have a dilemma at the level of practising their academic freedoms which are the most incontestable rights. The fact that the subject of academic freedom is still discussed from the past to the present; the fact that academic freedom and autonomy are not applied or partially implemented which may be an indication that is inclusive of many problems. (Özcan ve Çakır, 2016). In this context, it important to clearly define the academic freedoms mentioned in the Higher Education Law, which fields it includes, to give certainty on what the application fields may be regarding its limits (Gedikoğlu, 2013).

On the scale of academic freedom in the higher education institutions; the academic freedom application levels of academicians do not alter according to the administrative of duties variable. The possible reason for this situation may be whether the academicians have or not administrative duties, which does not affect their common thoughts on this issue. In this regard, in the findings of the study carried out by Balyer (2011) with 30 academicians working in state and foundation universities; it has been stated that the definition of academic freedom is not clearly, and certainty expressed in the current system, that they are limited in the sense of working and production, and that academic freedom is not at an adequate level in universities. In this respect, when they were asked how they expressed the academic freedom, many academicians referred their academic work to free research environments without any pressure or intervention. In another research report that supports the findings of this study; it was emphasized that instructors were exposed to irrelevant assignments except for their fields of expertise, where they faced with cowering, deterrent,

trivialising and oppressive attitudes (Academy of Science / Human Rights Board, 2023).

The findings from the academic freedom scale used in the study indicate a significant distinction between the title variable of the instructors and the level of practising academic freedom. It is evident that there is a notable discrepancy between the mean scores of academics holding the titles of associate professor and professor, and those holding the title of doctorate faculty members, research assistants, and lecturers. Considering these findings, it can be posited that those with higher titles may have overcome the fear of promotion through a combination of their experience in the profession and their studies, which in turn allows them to feel freer in practising academic freedoms. Conversely, low-title instructors who are preoccupied with their career advancement may perceive their academic autonomy to be more constrained than that of their higher-title counterparts. The inability of academics to reach a consensus on this matter represents a significant challenge to academic freedoms in Turkish universities. Upon examination of the studies referenced in the literature, it becomes evident that there is a degree of similarity in the findings of the present study and those of other studies on this subject. In a separate study, the Turkish Education Union (2009) found that academics with lower titles reported feeling greater pressure to conform when expressing their opinions. The study also revealed a gradual increase in the number of critiques from research assistants to professors at universities. n accordance with the principles of academic freedom and meritocracy, the sole criterion for attaining an academic title within the context of a free university is scientific competence and merit. However, in contrast to this situation, the principle of merit has been undermined within the organisational structure of higher education institutions in Türkiye. Instead, the authority to make pivotal decisions has been vested in the hands of chief managers. To illustrate, while the faculty administration at free universities that prioritise academic freedom is responsible for appointing associate professors, the authority to confer the title of professorship lies with other members of the faculty board who hold the title of professor (Adem, 2008). Considering these circumstances, it becomes evident that there are significant challenges to be overcome to achieve an optimal structure for academic titles in Türkiye. The findings of previous studies on this topic are consistent with the results of the present study.

A review of the historical development of higher education in Türkiye reveals a pattern of evasion through the implementation of superficial solutions, which have proven ineffective in addressing the underlying issues. Instead of pursuing radical solutions, these problems have been allowed to persist and even replicate themselves. The issue of academic freedom, which represents a significant challenge within the context of higher education in Türkiye, has also been affected by this approach. In light of the study's findings, unless tangible solutions are devised to address the

challenges facing higher education and academic freedom, it is likely that similar issues will resurface in the future, potentially taking on new forms. Therefore, when education is considered as a whole, it can be thought that it may be possible by way of taking clearer, certainty and objective actions by getting rid of subjectivity at all levels of education, and by ensuring the rights to academic freedom as the principle of reaching the deserved value of that universities and scientist's works. As a matter of fact, observing the countries with a high level of prosperity, their societies are working to increase the level of education, and universities founded to produce science and producing knowledge are given more opportunities in terms of academic freedoms.

Ethical Issues

The name of the committee that carried out the ethical evaluation: Karamanoglu Mehmetbey University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee

Date of ethics committee decision: 26/05/2021

The issue number of Ethics Committee Document: 04/2021/66

Declaration of Conflict

The authors have committed that there is not any conflict of interest in the collection of the data of this study, in the phase of the interpretation of the results and the interpretation of the article.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Giriş

Üniversiteler, insanlığa bilimsel hizmet sunan, bilimsel bilgi üreten ve toplumları aydınlatan köklü bir geçmişe sahiptir. Özellikle günümüz toplumunda lokomotif görevi gören saygın kurumlardır. Üniversitelerin toplumun kültürel, ekonomik, sanatsal ve sosyal alanlarda gelişmesindeki rollerinin yanı sıra, bireylerin mesleki roller için yetiştirilmesi ve kişisel gelişimlerinin artırılması gibi sorumlulukları da vardır (Başarır, 2009). Ayrıca üniversiteler, bilimsel bilginin üretilmesinden, mevcut bilginin derinleştirilmesinden ve toplumun ihtiyaçlarına cevap verecek çözümlerin geliştirilmesinden sorumludur. Bilimsel bilgi üretiminin gerçekleşmesi, akademisyenlerin, öğrencilerin ve araştırmacıların özgür bir düşünme, ifade ve çalışma ortamına sahip olmalarına bağlıdır (Henkel, 2005). Akademik özgürlük, bilimsel ve entelektüel arayışların temel bir ilkesidir ve bilimsel bilginin ilerletilmesi, toplumsal gelişimin desteklenmesi ve demokratik değerlerin korunması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır. Akademik özgürlük, fikirlerin özgürce paylaşılması, eleştirel tartışma ve bilimsel araştırma ortamının korunması ile tanımlanır (Russell, 2002). Yükseköğretim kurumlarının özerkliğine, söyleme, çeşitliliğe ve eleştiriye izin veren bir ortam oluşturur. Bununla birlikte, dünya genelinde birçok ülkede akademik özgürlüğe yönelik önemli zorluklar bulunmaktadır. Bu tehditler siyasi baskılar, sansür, öğretim üyeleri ve öğrencilerin ifade özgürlüğüne getirilen kısıtlamalar, özgür düşünme kapasitesini engelleyen yasal düzenlemeler, baskıcı politikalar ve akademisyenlerin güvenliğine yönelik riskler gibi çeşitli şekillerde ortaya çıkabilir (Hayes, 2021). Bilimsel metodolojiye ilişkin alanyazın incelendiğinde, bilim insanlarının araştırmalarında kullandıkları yöntemlere ve elde ettikleri sonuçlara ilişkin dış kısıtlamalardan ve baskılardan muaf olmaları gerektiği açıkça görülmektedir (Dinler, 2013). Yükseköğretimde akademik özgürlüğün yapılandırılması, korunması ve teşvik edilmesi çok yönlü ve devam eden bir süreci gerektirmektedir. Bununla birlikte, bu çaba özgür ve eşitlikçi bir toplumun oluşumunda önemli bir aşamayı temsil etmektedir. Akademik özgürlük, öğrencilerin ve akademisyenlerin farklı bakış açılarını ifade etme, araştırma yapma ve bilimsel bilgiyi yayma özerkliğini kapsar (Vrielink, Lemmens ve Parmentier, 2011). Akademik özgürlük, demokratik bir toplumun ve ileri düzey bir eğitim sisteminin temel bir ilkesidir ve bilimsel ilerlemenin önündeki engellerin kaldırılmasına hizmet eder. Akademik özgürlüğün etkili bir şekilde inşa edilmesi, belirli temel unsurlara ve ilkelere bağlı kalınmasına bağlıdır. Yükseköğretim kurumlarının hesap verebilirliği ve şeffaflığı (Fried, 2006; Hoecht, 2006) ile çeşitlilik ve eşitlik gibi temel değerlere bağlılıkları (Hénard ve Mitterle, 2010; McNay, 2007; Stefani, 2010) akademik özgürlüğün temel unsurlarıdır. Öte yandan, yükseköğretimde özerklik ve akademik özgürlük, çoğu zaman birlikte ele alınan ancak farklı kavramlar olarak değerlendirilen önemli unsurlardır. Özerklik, bir üniversitenin kendi iç işleyişinde ve karar alma

süreçlerinde bağımsız ve özgür olması anlamına gelirken (Aithal ve Kumar, 2019); akademik özgürlük, öğretim üyelerinin, araştırmacıların ve öğrencilerin bilimsel araştırma yapma, özgürce düşünme ve ifade etme hakkı anlamına gelmektedir (Altbach, 2007). Özerklik, üniversitenin akademik özgürlüğünün korunması için ön koşuldur. Ancak özerklik ve akademik özgürlük arasındaki ilişki karmaşıktır; çünkü özerklik üniversitenin iç işleyişini belirlerken, akademik özgürlük öğretim ve araştırma faaliyetlerine yön verir. Bu nedenle, yükseköğretimde özerklik ve akademik özgürlüğün birlikte evrilmesi, demokratik bir üniversite kültürü yaratmak ve bilimsel ilerlemeyi teşvik etmek için önemlidir (Matei ve Iwinska, 2018; Ren ve Li (2013). Dolayısıyla, yükseköğretimde akademik özgürlük kavramı hem kurumsal düzeyde hem de toplumsal düzeyde ele alınmalıdır.

Türkiye'de akademik özgürlük kavramının anlaşılması ve uygulanması tarih boyunca çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaşmıştır. Türkiye'de akademik özgürlüğe ilişkin yasal düzenlemeler incelendiğinde, 1982 Anayasası'nın; 130. maddesinde yükseköğretim kurumları ile öğretim elemanları ve yardımcılarının her türlü bilimsel araştırma ve yayını serbestçe yapabilecekleri belirtilmiştir. Ancak maddede yer alan bu özgürlük hakkı, devlete, milletin ve ülkenin varlığını, bağımsızlığını, bütünlüğünü ve bölünmezliğini tehlikeye düşürecek şekilde faaliyette bulunma hakkı vermediğini de içermektedir. Ayrıca, 2547 sayılı Yükseköğretim Kanunu'nun 22. Maddesi akademik mesleklerin kriterlerini belirlemekte, bilimsel araştırma ve yayınla ilgili hakları tanımlamaktadır (Resmi Gazetesi, 2023). Akademik özgürlük anayasa ve yasalarla güvence altına alınmak istense bile, bunun içeriği ve çerçevesinin ne olduğu açık değildir (Gedikoğlu, 2013). Ayrıca, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından akademik özgürlük konusunda alınan kararların ve verilen taahhütlerin hayata geçirilmesinde de sıkıntılar yaşanmaktadır. Nitekim Seggie ve Gökbel (2014) Türkiye'de akademik özgürlük kavramının net ve sağlam bir zemine oturmadığını belirtmiş ve Türkiye'nin akademik özgürlükler açısından Batı ülkelerinin ve Amerika'nın çok gerisinde olduğunu tespit etmişlerdir. Buna ilaveten Doğan (2015), üniversite bağlamında ifade özgürlüğü ve kurumsal özerkliğin kısıtlı olduğunu göstermiştir. Dahası, bu ortamda akademik özgürlük kültürü, özellikle üniversitelerin bunu etkili bir şekilde kurumsallaştıramaması nedeniyle, zor bir kültür olarak kalmaya devam etmektedir.

Yöntem

Araştırma deseni

Bu çalışmada, Türk yükseköğretim sisteminde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının akademik özgürlüklere yönelik algılarının demografik değişkenlere göre incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan betimsel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Betimsel tarama modeli, geçmişte ya da halen var olan bir durumu var olduğu şekliyle betimlemeyi amaçlayan bir yaklaşımdır (Karasar, 2011).

Örneklem

Araştırma evreninde Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey Üniversitesi, Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi ve Kütahya Dumlupınar Üniversitesi'nde çalışan toplam 5.936 akademik personel yer almaktadır. Buna göre, .95 güven aralığı ve .05 anlamlılık düzeyi ile gerekli örneklem büyüklüğü 361 kişidir (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2018); Toplanan 361 veriden 50 tanesi araştırma hedeflerine uygun olmadığı için analizden çıkarılmıştır. Kalan 311 veri ile analiz yapılmıştır. Çalışmada kolayda örneklem kullanılmıştır. Örneklem zaman, maliyet ve işgücü verimliliği temelinde seçilmiştir (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz ve Demirel, 2018). Katılımcıların %64,6'sı erkek öğretim elemanlarından oluşmaktadır. Unvan değişkeni bağlamında araştırmaya en fazla katılımı araştırma görevlileri sağlamış (%28,3), en az katılım ise öğretim görevlileri oranında (%5,1) gerçekleşmiştir.

Veri Toplama Aracı

Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği: Akademik özgürlüğün kapsamını belirlemek için Bozkurt (2012) tarafından geliştirilen Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği (AFÖ) kullanılmıştır. Ölçek, öğretim, araştırma ve yayın olmak üzere üç alt boyuta dağılmış 27 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği, 5'li likert tipi bir veri toplama aracıdır ve uygulanabilir seçenekleri benimseme ve bulma düzeyinde "uygulanamaz (1)" ile "uygulanabilir (5)" arasında değişmektedir. Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği'nde ters madde kodlaması bulunmamaktadır. Ölçekte yer alan maddelere örnek olarak; "Fakültede öğretim yapılırken öğrencilerin fikirlerini özgürce ifade edebilecekleri ortamın sağlanması", "Fakültedeki öğretim elemanlarının kaynak sınırlaması olmaksızın istediği konuyu çalışabilmesi", "Fakültedeki öğretim elemanlarının çalışmalarını özgürce yayınlayabilmesi" gösterilebilir. Akademik Özgürlük Ölçeği'nin öğretim alt boyutunda toplam 5 madde bulunmaktadır.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Akademisyenlerin araştırma ve öğretim boyutlarında kendilerini daha sınırlı hissettikleri, ancak yayın boyutunda nispeten özgür hissettikleri düşünülebilir. Ancak akademisyenler içinde bulundukları koşullar açısından araştırma ve yayın özgürlüğü konusunda genel olarak siyasi, tartışmalı ve aykırı konulardan bahsetmediklerini, aksi takdirde çalışmalarının değer görmediğini ve yayınlanmadığını, yayınlarının baskıcı otorite koşullarına göre belirlendiğini, bu arada bu olumsuz koşulların otoriteler tarafından oluşturulan kültür ve ağlarla yapıldığını, dahası halkın da farkında olmadan bu döngüye dahil edildiğini belirtmişlerdir; sonrasında akademisyenlerin de içinde bulunduğu kültür, yapı ve sistemin sonuç ve fayda odaklı düşünen, statülerinin yükselmesini engelleyecek durumlarla karşılaşmak istemeyen insanlar yetiştirmesi (Güner, 2017). Akademisyenlerin karşılaştığı bu sorunların yanı sıra konuya bir başka açıdan bakılacak olursa; 2006 yılından sonra Türkiye'de hem üniversite sayısında hem

de araştırmacı sayısında artış olduğu görülmektedir. Bugün yaklaşık 8 milyon olan öğrenci sayısı son 15 yılda artmış ve bu artış araştırmacıların verimliliğini düşürerek hem araştırmaya hem de araştırılan konuya verilen değerin azalmasına neden olmuştur. Oysa 'Times Higher Education'a göre üniversitelerin değerini etkileyen en önemli faktörler arasında araştırma sayısı ve araştırmanın kalitesi yer almaktadır (Yalçınalp, 2021). Dolayısıyla, akademisyenlerin yükseköğretim sisteminde karşılaştıkları sorunlar ve üstesinden gelmeleri gereken konular bir arada düşünüldüğünde, akademisyenlerin araştırma alanlarında kendilerini daha sınırlı hissettikleri söylenebilir.

Uygulama düzeyindeki akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlükleri cinsiyet değişkenine göre farklılık göstermemektedir. Elde edilen bu bulgu, kadın ve erkek akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlük konusundaki düşüncelerinin benzer olabileceğine işaret etmektedir. Nitekim alan yazında yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde; Doğan'ın (2015) çalışmasında da kadın ve erkek tüm akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlüğe bakış açılarının benzer olduğu belirtilmektedir. Araştırmaya katılan kadın akademisyenler ile erkek akademisyenlerin katılım oranının eşit olması durumunda, elde edilen bulgunun tersi yönde bir bulgu elde edilebileceği gibi, araştırmanın sonuçları gibi bir paralelliğe de ulaşılabilir. Başarır ve Sarı (2015) tarafından kadın akademisyenler üzerinde yapılan bir araştırmada, kadın akademisyenlerin çoklu görev ve sorumlulukları nedeniyle rol çatışması yaşadıkları sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Yükseköğretim sisteminde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının yaş değişkenine göre akademik özgürlüğü uygulama düzeyleri anlamlı bir farklılığa işaret etmemektedir. 24-34 yaş aralığındaki akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlük ortalamalarının diğer yaş gruplarındaki akademisyenlere göre daha yüksek olduğu görülmektedir. Yaş grupları arasında tüm öğretim elemanları için geçerli olan akademik özgürlük ortalamalarının giderek düşmesi, Türkiye'de akademik özgürlüğe olan inancın çoktan yitirildiğinin bir göstergesi olabilir. Akademisyenlerin kendilerini bir merkeze bağlı hissetmeleri ya da akademide çözülemeyen farklı sorunlar nedeniyle daha az özgür hissettikleri düşünülebilir. Akcan, Malkoç ve Kızıltan (2018) tarafından yapılan çalışmada; akademisyenler ideal akademik özgürlük kültürünü ve mevcut sistemdeki yetersizlikleri Türkiye'deki akademik özgürlük algıları ile ifade etmektedir. Bir başka çalışmada ise Türkiye'de akademik kültürün oluşmadığı belirtilmektedir (Doğan, 2015). Summak (2008) tarafından uluslararası düzeyde yönetilen çalışmada, Türkiye'de görev yapan akademisyenlerin %10'u akademik özgürlük konusunda görüş bildirmemiştir.

Meslekteki kıdem değişkenine göre akademisyenlerin uygulanabilir bulgu düzeylerindeki akademik özgürlüklerde anlamlı bir farklılık yoktur. Bu durum, akademisyenlerin iş güvencesinin baskı altında olması, terfi alamama korkusu, akademik özgürlüklerin yükseköğretim sistemi içerisinde yasalarla güvence altına alınmaması gibi farklı nedenlerle akademik özgürlüklerin uygulanması açısından

sorunlar yaşandığı şeklinde değerlendirilebilir. Nitekim Güner (2017) çalışmasında bu durumu farklı gerekçelere dayandırarak ortaya koymuştur. Summak (1997) ise yaptığı çalışmasında, akademisyenlerin çoğunun yeterli akademik özgürlüğe sahip olmadığını ve mevcut koşullardan memnuniyetsizliklerini dile getirmiştir. Sağlam (2011) çalışmasında kıdemi az olan akademisyenlerin kıdemi fazla olan akademisyenlere kıyasla daha fazla yorgunluk ve duyarsızlaşma yaşadıkları sonucuna ulaşmıştır. Çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar ve bu çalışmalar akademisyenlerin akademik özgürlük konusunu yorgunluk hissi ile değerlendirdiklerini ve duyarsızlaştıklarını düşündürebilir.