

Response to the letter to the editor: Clarifications on literature review and study contributions

Editöre mektuba cevap: Literatür taraması ve çalışma katkılarına ilişkin açıklamalar

Yasemin Denizli¹ , Abdullah Uçar² , Mahmut Talha Uçar³ , Muhammet Yunus Tunca⁴ 

Dear Editor,

We would like to express our gratitude for forwarding the letter regarding our article to the Editor. This has provided us with the opportunity to address the reasons for not citing the study by Öztürk et al. In the following section, we present our responses to the points raised in their letter:

The data collection period for the study by Öztürk et al. was between June 1, 2022, and July 15, 2022. The submission and acceptance dates of the article are 15 August 2022 and 28 October 2022, respectively (1). In our study, the literature review and data collection phase ended on 2 August 2022 at 17:30, after which the analysis phase began and was extended to include the 2022 dissertations. The analysis phase was not only a cross-sectional analysis, but software coding was done to create a real-time dynamic database architecture in which the findings would be automatically updated as new data were entered into the system. All entries and digital footprints in our database have log records to verify this timeline. Our preliminary analyses were presented as a conference paper at the 6th International Public Health Congress held the same year, and we subsequently included new theses published in 2022 as we completed advanced analyses in 2023 (2). Thus, the literature review for our study was conducted before the publication of Öztürk et al.'s article, which had not been released during our review phase. By its publication, our study had progressed to the analysis stage.

When one of the studies started and conducted simultaneously is published earlier and the other is published later, should the late published article not citing the other be considered as a lack of literature review? A literature review is usually conducted at the beginning of the study, followed by data collection and analysis. With the exception of bibliometric analyses, systematic reviews and meta-analyses, where the subject of study is 'original articles in the literature', it should not be necessary to search the literature repeatedly throughout the entire process from the beginning to the end of a study. Systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses are typically characterized by exhaustive and comprehensive searches of all available literature. As our study focused on dissertations (doctoral, master's and specialist), rather than published original articles, we did not conduct a systematic search beyond these materials; our systematic approach was specific to dissertation studies. Although cross-referencing similar studies is valuable in terms of strengthening scientific rigor, we believe that it is incompatible with scientific practice for authors working on similar topics to put pressure on each other to cite their own studies or to consider this as an obligation.

In comparison, the study by Öztürk et al. primarily examined the research methods of public health theses, which is a valuable contribution. However, our research focused on the distribution of

ESTUDAM Public Health Journal.

2025;10(1):117-8.

1-University of Health Sciences, Hamidiye Health Sciences Institute, Public Health Dep., Türkiye.

2-Sakarya University, Faculty of Medicine, Public Health Dep., Türkiye.

3-University of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, Public Health Dep., Türkiye

4-Ataturk University, Health Sciences Institute, Public Health Dep. Türkiye

Sorumlu Yazar /

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Yasemin DENİZLİ

e-posta / e-mail:

yasemindenizli96@gmail.com

Geliş Tarihi / Received:

07.11.2024

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted:

08.11.2024

research topics and trends within the public health field. Öztürk et al. conducted a brief analysis of public health issues, but the methodology for selecting these issues is not detailed. Findings on these topics were presented very briefly, with only a single table and a short paragraph dedicated to them. By contrast, our study introduced a unique classification system for public health subfields, identifying 33 sub-topics based on established textbooks and categorizing them under three main headings (main, emerging, and methodological fields) (3).

Additionally, although Öztürk et al. highlighted the importance of trend analysis in bibliometric studies in the introduction, their findings did not include a historical trend analysis beyond a single graph showing the total number of theses over time. Our study provides a unique contribution by presenting a trend analysis of public health topics over five decades, detailing the temporal changes in topic prevalence. A key differentiator of our study is the co-occurrence analysis of public health topics, which adds a distinctive layer of insight.

Another feature that distinguishes our work is the presentation format of our innovative, interactive, dynamic visualizations, which are designed to be updated with new dissertation data established on a dynamic database. We have made these interactive tools available through our research group's online platform EVREKA (<https://sites.google.com/view/evreka>) inspired by Nature's work to support future researchers and facilitate new discoveries (4).

Thank you once again for the opportunity to clarify these points, and we appreciate the scholarly exchange on this matter.

Best regards,
Yasemin Denizli

References

1. Yıldırım Öztürk EN, Yücel M, Uyar M. Bibliometric Analysis of Theses Made in Public Health and Registered in the National Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education in Turkey. *Hipokrat Tıp Dergisi / Hippocrates Medical Journal*. 2022;2(3):15-22.
2. Denizli Y, Uçar A, Uçar MT, Tunca MY. Bibliometric Analysis of Phd, Residency Dissertations and Master's Theses in Public Health Departments in Türkiye Between 1970–2022. *ESTÜDAM Halk Sağlığı Dergisi*. 2024;9(2):142-53.
3. Ucar A. ve Ark., 1970 - 2022 Yılları Arasında Türkiye'de Halk Sağlığı Anabilim Dallarında Yapılmış Doktora, Uzmanlık ve Yüksek Lisans Tezlerinin Bibliyometrik Analizi, Sözlü Bildiri, 6. UHSK - Antalya, Aralık 2022.
4. Nature at 150: evidence in pursuit of truth. *Nature*. 06 Nov 2019;575(7781):7-8.

ORCID:

Yasemin DENİZLİ:
0009-0003-1305-549X,
Abdullah UÇAR:
0000-0002-0220-3720,
Mahmut Talha UÇAR:
0000-0002-1433-4832,
Muhammet Yunus
TUNCA:
0000-0002-8220-7974

Nasıl Atıf Yaparım / How to Cite:

Denizli Y., Uçar A.,
Uçar M.T., Tunca M.Y.
Response to the letter to
the editor: clarifications on
literature review and study
contributions. *ESTUDAM
Public Health
Journal*.2025;10(1):117-8.