

**To cite this article:** Tulga, A.Y. (2025). Evolution and Focus of Terrorism Studies in Türkiye: A Comprehensive Analysis of Academic Literature (1992–2024). International Journal of Social and Humanities Sciences (IJSHS), 9(1), 11-34

**Submitted:** January 22, 2025

**Accepted:** April 11, 2025

## **EVOLUTION AND FOCUS OF TERRORISM STUDIES IN TÜRKİYE: A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC LITERATURE (1992–2024)<sup>1</sup>**

Ahmet Yiğitalp Tulga<sup>2</sup>

### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to analyze the evolution and characteristics of the academic literature on terrorism in Türkiye from 1992 to 2024. The study addresses two main research questions: the distinctive features of terrorism literature in Türkiye and the types of terrorist organizations that have been the focus of this literature, along with temporal changes in these focuses. In this direction, the study used descriptive and dictionary-based analyses on a dataset of 1066 academic publications identified through "Publish or Perish" software, focusing on studies with relevant keywords in Turkish. The descriptive analysis examined publication trends, number of citations, number of authors, and study types, while the dictionary-based analysis identified the most studied terrorist organizations and tracked changes over time. The findings reveal that most studies in this literature, which experienced significant growth after 9/11 and peaked in 2019, received fewer than ten citations. The literature predominantly focuses on organizations like the PKK, with shifting attention to groups like ISIS and FETÖ in recent years. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how terrorism studies in Türkiye have developed and evolved over the last three decades.

**Keywords:** Türkiye, Terrorism, Terrorism Studies, Publish or Perish Software, Academic Literature

<sup>1</sup> The article was prepared within the scope of the project titled "Comparative Analysis and Explanation of the Fear of Terrorism in Taiwan and Turkey" and is funded by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TUBITAK) Post-Doctoral Scholarship Program (Grant number: 1059B192301644).

<sup>2</sup> Post-Doctoral Researcher, National Chengchi University, Department of Diplomacy, ahmettulga@hotmail.com, ORCID: 0000 0001-7596-1269.

## TÜRKİYE'DE TERÖRİZM ÇALIŞMALARININ EVRİMİ VE ODAĞI: AKADEMİK LİTERATÜRÜN KAPSAMLI BİR ANALİZİ (1992-2024)

### ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı, 1992'den 2024'e kadar Türkiye'deki akademik terörizm literatürünün evrimini ve özelliklerini analiz etmektir. Çalışma iki ana araştırma sorusunu ele almaktadır: Türkiye'deki terörizm literatürünün ayırt edici özelliklerinin ve bu literatürün odak noktası olan terör örgütü türleri ve odaklanılan terör örgütlerinin zamansal değişimlerinin neler olduğudur. Bu doğrultuda, bu çalışma içerisinde, "Publish or Perish" yazılımı aracılığıyla belirlenen 1066 akademik yayından oluşan bir veri kümesi tanımlayıcı ve sözlük tabanlı yöntemler ile analiz edilmiş ve seçilen Türkçe ilgili anahtar sözcüklerin yer aldığı çalışmalara odaklanılmıştır. Tanımlayıcı analiz ile yayın eğilimleri, atıf sayıları, yazar sayısı ve çalışma türleri incelenirken, sözlük tabanlı analiz ile en çok odaklanılan terör örgütleri belirlenmiş ve odaklanılan terör örgütlerinin zaman içindeki değişiklikleri analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, 11 Eylül sonrasında önemli bir büyüme gösteren ve 2019 yılında zirveye ulaşan bu literatürdeki çoğu çalışmanın ondan az atıf aldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Literatür ağırlıklı olarak PKK terör örgütüne odaklanmakta olup, son yıllarda ise odak IŞİD ve FETÖ gibi terör örgütlerine kaymaktadır. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de terörizm çalışmalarının son otuz yılda nasıl gelişip, evrildiğinin daha derin bir şekilde anlaşılmasına katkıda bulunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Türkiye, Terörizm, Terörizm Çalışmaları, Publish or Perish Yazılımı, Akademik Literatür

### INTRODUCTION

Although terrorism is a longstanding security problem, it has emerged as one of the most significant challenges our world has faced in the past fifty years (Avcı and Demir, 2017; Jackson, 2012). Particularly following the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, terrorism has evolved into a more global and intricate problem (Tulga, 2020). The increasing scale, global reach, and complexity of terrorism have attracted the attention of the academic community, making it one of the key issues that scholars have focused on for many years (Tulga, 2020; Jackson, 2012).

The academic community's interest in terrorism, which intensified after the 9/11 attacks, directly influenced the number of publications (Jackson, 2012; Haghani

et al., 2022). The number of studies focusing on terrorism increased significantly after 2001, and scholars from various regions and countries around the world continue to publish thousands of academic studies on terrorism each year (Tulga, 2020). In Türkiye, a critical player in the global war against terrorism and a country that has been combating terrorism for many years, terrorism-related issues are frequently researched in academia, as they are in many other countries.

Due to the increased number of academic studies focusing on terrorism, some scholars have turned their attention to the terrorism literature in Türkiye, examining it from various perspectives (Avcı and Demir, 2017; Seren and Gültekin, 2022; Dönmez and Timur, 2017). However, despite the presence of valuable studies on this subject, the number of in-depth examinations of the literature remains limited. Therefore, this research examines the studies conducted on terrorism in Türkiye, the characteristic features of the literature, its evolution and change over time, the terrorist organizations focused on in the literature, and the temporal changes in these focused organizations. These analyses are guided by two main research questions. The first research question of this study is: What are the characteristic features of the terrorism literature in Türkiye? The second research question is: What are the terrorist organizations focused on in the terrorism literature in Türkiye, and what are the temporal changes in these focused organizations?

Two main analyses are conducted to address these research questions. Descriptive analyses are used to reveal the characteristic features of academic literature, such as the number of publications, citations, authors, and types of studies, to address the first research question. Additionally, a dictionary-based analysis is conducted to identify the most focused terrorist organization type in the literature, the most frequently studied terrorist organizations, and the temporal changes in these focused organizations to answer the second research question.

In the next section of this research, studies focusing on terrorism literature in both the world and Türkiye are examined, and different perspectives on terrorism literature are presented. The second section details the analysis methods used in this study and outlines the important steps followed during the analysis. The third section presents the research findings. The fourth section summarizes the key findings of the study, compares them with existing literature worldwide and in Türkiye, and highlights the similarities and differences. In the final section, the research questions are answered in light of the findings, and the study is concluded.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic studies on terrorism literature are reviewed in this chapter. Initially, research on terrorism studies worldwide is examined. Subsequently, the study delves into terrorism studies in Türkiye, the focal point of this research, and scrutinizes academic studies specifically on terrorism in that context.

A common perspective among studies focusing on terrorism worldwide and in Türkiye is that the September 11 attacks in the United States were a pivotal moment in terrorism studies (Jackson, 2012; Haghani et al., 2022; Lum et al., 2006). For instance, Mumtaz and Sultan (2011) observed a significant increase in international academic interest in terrorism and a substantial growth in the literature following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Howie (2015) also noted that terrorism and related topics quickly became mainstream in academic literature after the 9/11 attacks, leading to a surge in scholarly interest. Similarly, Haghani and colleagues (2022) argue that studies focusing on terrorism and related topics began to increase in 2001, with the September 11 attacks having the most significant impact on the number of publications in the literature starting in 2002.

Another study that argues the September 11 attacks increased interest in terrorism and related issues was conducted by Richard Jackson (2012). According to Jackson (2012), terrorism studies gained greater recognition worldwide after the September 11 attacks, leading to the creation of university programs on the subject, a rise in the number of think tanks devoted to it, and an increase in scholarly publications. Jackson (2012) argues that these post-9/11 trends have led to the global growth and expansion of the literature on terrorism. Likewise, Aradau and van Munster (2008) observe that academic research on terrorism escalated after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, often concentrating on the international aspects of terrorism. However, the authors also point out that the literature is not confined to this international dimension, as many studies delve into various facets of terrorism (Aradau and van Munster, 2008).

Some studies use numerical data to demonstrate the impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks on terrorism studies. For instance, Lentini (2008) found that academic articles focusing on terrorism and related topics increased by 300% after 2001. Similarly, Young and Findley (2011) found that ten times as many scholarly publications were published following the September 11 attacks compared to the period between 1980 and 9/11 attacks. Additionally, Lum and colleagues (2006)

revealed that 6041 scholarly publications were published worldwide between 1971 and 2002, with the majority appearing in 2001 and 2002.

Some academic studies examine the epistemological approaches used in terrorism research. Lum and colleagues (2006) found that only 3% of the 6041 academic publications from 1971 to 2003 used quantitative methods, while 97% used qualitative methods. Schuurman (2020) reached similar conclusions, noting that although some recent studies have begun to use quantitative methods, the majority of publications in the field still primarily employ qualitative approaches. Andre Silke (2001) also criticizes the heavy reliance on qualitative and journalistic methods in terrorism studies, arguing that these methods often lack the consistency and rigor typically expected in conventional social science research. The author asserts that the quantitative approach is beneficial for identifying and explaining relationships and patterns in terrorism through the use of numbers and statistics (Silke, 2001).

On the other hand, some studies emphasize the importance of qualitative methods in terrorism studies. For instance, Lützinger (2012) highlights the significance of qualitative methods, particularly the importance of interviews with terrorists to understand the phenomenon of terrorism. The author argues that the qualitative interview approach allows researchers to grasp the contextual constructs of significance and the underlying framework of practice in biographical accounts, enabling interviewees to arrange the context and reveal as much information as they wish (Lützinger, 2012).

Various studies focus on the themes discussed in the literature rather than the methodologies of the studies. Desmarais and colleagues (2017) note that articles published between 1990 and 2015 often emphasize the characteristics of terrorist organizations. In contrast, Schuurman (2020) contends that academic research on terrorism has primarily concentrated on defining and conceptualizing terrorism, often relying on literature reviews. The author suggests that in recent years, there has been a gradual increase in studies using quantitative methods due to technological advancements, while the number of literature review-based studies has declined (Schuurman, 2020). LaFree and Freilich (2012) also observe rapid developments in digital data sources for analyzing terrorism in the literature. Schuurman (2020) further highlights that the excessive dependence on secondary sources in many studies has hindered progress in the field. Jones (2014) similarly argues

that the scarcity of primary sources in terrorism studies has significantly impeded methodological advancements. Jones (2014) claims that 80% of terrorism literature lacks systematic focus and heavily relies on secondary sources and data. However, Schuurman (2020) points out that there has been a recent increase in studies based on primary sources.

As there are studies focusing on global literature, many studies also examine the literature on terrorism studies in Türkiye. Some of these studies focus on master's and doctoral theses on terrorism (Dönmez and Timur, 2017), while others concentrate on academic publications (Avcı and Demir, 2017).

First, the studies focusing on dissertations are examined. One such study, conducted by Derin and colleagues (2020), examined 468 master's and doctoral theses prepared in Türkiye between 1991 and 2018. The authors found that 48,5% of the postgraduate dissertations focused on various terrorist organizations and counter-terrorism strategies, 10% concentrated on the relationship between terrorism and media, 7% on the relationship between terrorism and the economy or tourism, and 6,8% on the relationship between terrorism and religion (Derin et al., 2020). The highest number of dissertations were prepared in 2014, 2010, and 2016, with 73,71% of dissertations written in 2010 or later. Additionally, 58,5% of the dissertations were compilation-type, and 77,2% utilized qualitative approaches (Derin et al., 2020). Similarly, Avcı and Demir (2017) found that 52 postgraduate dissertations focused on terrorism and related topics up until 2001. They found that 91% of dissertations on terrorism were written after 2001, with 135 out of 600 written between 2010 and 2016 (Avcı and Demir, 2017). Seren and Gültekin (2022) also analyzed 672 master's and doctoral dissertations focusing on terrorism in Türkiye between 1991 and 2021. They revealed a significant increase in the number of postgraduate dissertations in the literature on terrorism in Türkiye, particularly after 2010, with 82% of the dissertations published in 2010 or later (Seren and Gültekin, 2022).

Another study by Dönmez and Timur (2017) focused on 34 doctoral dissertations on terrorism and related topics written between 1980 and 2017 in Türkiye. They identified three general trends in the analyzed doctoral dissertations (Dönmez and Timur, 2017). The first trend among dissertations focuses on separatist and leftist terrorist groups, particularly the *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê* (PKK). The second trend involves dissertations that evaluate terrorism and counter-terrorism



strategies. The third and last trend, which emerged in the 2000s, focuses on terrorist groups such as Al-Qaida, Hezbollah, and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) (Dönmez and Timur, 2017).

Finally, the study by Avcı and Demir (2017) examines dissertations and academic studies on terrorism in the literature. The authors argue that studies on terrorism in Türkiye began to develop and institutionalize in the early 2000s (Avcı and Demir, 2017). They reviewed 133 academic articles and found that the number of articles increased in 2003, with 92% of them written after the 9/11 attacks (Avcı and Demir, 2017). Avcı and Demir (2017) found that the years with the most published articles were 2013 and 2016. They argue that topics such as international terrorism, terrorism in Türkiye, counter-terrorism strategies, terrorism and media relations, and terrorism and religion relations are the most popular in articles. In contrast, topics like the economy and the relationship between religion and terrorism, which are emphasized in the articles, are relatively few in doctoral dissertations (Avcı and Demir, 2017). Additionally, the authors found that the PKK and Al-Qaeda are the most studied terrorist groups in the literature (Avcı and Demir, 2017). Seren and Gültekin (2022) similarly found that the PKK and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) were the most focused terrorist organizations among the master's and doctoral dissertations they reviewed.

Despite the wealth of insightful research on terrorism and terrorism literature in Türkiye, gaps remain in the literature. Instead of exploring the broader body of academic work, several studies focus primarily on dissertations or individual articles. Additionally, the number of studies reviewed is often insufficient, typically ranging between 30 and 500. Considering these limitations, this study examines in depth the evolution, changes, characteristic features, focused terrorist organizations, and temporal shifts of the organizations emphasized in terrorism literature in Türkiye. The analysis methods and procedures used in this study will be explained in detail in the following section.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The analyses in this study can be grouped into three main stages. The first stage involves finding academic studies that focus on terrorism and related issues in Türkiye. The second stage consists of descriptive analyses that examine the characteristic features of the academic literature and the changes that have occurred in

terrorism literature in Türkiye over the years, addressing the first research question of the study. The third and final stage includes dictionary-based analyses that focus on the types of terrorist organizations studied in the literature, as well as the temporal changes in focus on these organizations, in order to address the second research question of the study.

To identify scholarly research on terrorism in Türkiye, the first step was to utilize the "Publish or Perish" program and adhere to specific fundamental guidelines. The initial stage in the process involved identifying the dataset for analysis. The "Publish or Perish" program utilized in this study encompasses academic literature databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science (WoS). Due to the vast scope of scholarly material, it offers, the main emphasis of this study is on the Google Scholar database.

To access Turkish academic literature in Google Scholar, it is essential to select the main keywords directly relevant to the study subject. Therefore, "terrorism" and "terror" were selected as the primary keywords for terrorism studies in Türkiye. The studies retrieved were then limited to those that included "terrorism" and "terror" in their title, abstract, or keywords. Finally, the search was further refined by selecting studies whose titles or abstracts were in Turkish or included Turkish. This approach allowed the inclusion of academic studies published in English in Turkish journals, as they had Turkish titles and abstracts. However, studies published abroad by Turkish scholars entirely in English were not included in this study. In the next step, since there were few academic studies before 1992, publications from 1992 to 2024 were selected for review. As a result of these steps, 1500 academic studies focusing on terrorism and related topics published between 1992 and 2024 were identified. Following this, the literature was obtained and formatted into a ".CSV" file. This format was chosen because the R programming language was used in this study, and it is easier to process data in ".CSV" files with R.



**Table-1.** Information on Finding Literature

Number of Publication	1500
Start Year	1992
End Year	2024
Main Words in Title, Key Words and Abstract	“terörizm” AND “terör”
Language	Turkish
Software	Publish or Perish
Data set Format	.CSV

The dataset includes 1500 observations and 26 variables, such as title, publication date, and Google Scholar ranking. However, since it was unnecessary to use all 26 variables specifically for this study, 7 variables were selected. These selected variables are name of author, abstract, title, publication date, number of citations, publication type, and publication link. In the next step, duplicate studies were removed from the dataset to reduce the "noise" level and increase the reliability of the data (Tulga, 2023). After cleaning up the duplicate studies, 1066 academic studies remained in the dataset.

In the second main phase of the analysis, five important steps were followed, focusing on the characteristic features of the literature in Türkiye and the changes in the literature over the years. The first step of this phase involved examining the number of publications by year. The second step focused on the total number of citations and the average number of citations per year. The third step identified the five most cited studies. The fourth step examined the number of authors and the changes in the average number of authors over the years. In the final step, the types and distributions of academic studies—such as articles, master’s or doctoral theses, and books—in Turkish academic literature were analyzed.

In the third and final stage of the study, which focuses on the terrorist organizations emphasized in the academic literature and the temporal changes related to these organizations, three basic steps were followed. A dictionary-based analysis was conducted to categorize the studies in the literature based on the types of organizations they focus on. The first step of this stage was to create the dictionaries to be used in the analysis. To perform this analysis, four dictionaries were prepared, representing FETÖ, organizations that use religion, ethnic and separatist

organizations, and leftist terrorist organizations. The main reason for dividing the analysis into four dictionaries representing these different types of organizations is based on findings in the literature (Avcı and Demir, 2017). A manual list was prepared to create dictionaries containing terms related to "organizations that use religion," FETÖ, "ethnic and separatist organizations," and "leftist terrorist organizations" (see APPENDIX-A). The dictionary for "organizations that use religion" includes the terms Hizbullah (Hezbollah), IŞİD (ISIS), Kaide (Qaeda), Cihad (Jihad), İslam (Islam), Selefi (Salafi), IBDA, din (religion), DAEŞ (DAESH), and DEAŞ (DEASH). The dictionary for "separatist and ethnic organizations" comprises PKK, YPG, PYD, ASALA, Ermeni (Armenia), ayrılıkçı (separatist), Öcalan, and Partiya. The dictionary for "leftist terrorist organizations" features DHKP, MLKP, TKP, MKP, sosyalizm (socialism), Leninizm (Leninism), Marksizm (Marxism), Maoizm (Maoism), and devrimci (revolutionary). The final dictionary for "FETÖ" includes FETÖ, PDY, Fethullah, and ByLock. The creation of these dictionaries facilitated a comprehensive, dictionary-based data analysis necessary to categorize and understand the terrorist organizations that are the focus of the existing literature in Türkiye (Tulga, 2023). All words in the dictionaries are unigrams or single words (Tulga, 2023). In the second step of the third phase, the titles and abstracts of the studies in the dataset were analyzed using the prepared dictionaries. This analysis identified the types of terrorist organizations that were prominently featured in the literature.

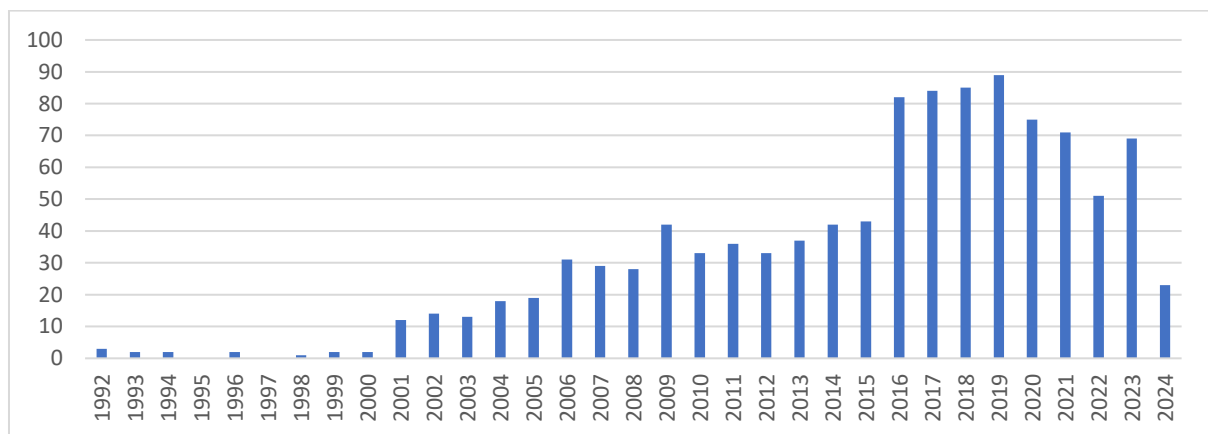
Following this step, the final stage of the study involved analyzing the most frequently discussed terrorist organizations in the literature and examining the temporal changes related to these organizations. In this analysis, four prepared dictionaries were used, though only terms directly relevant to the organizations under study were employed (see APPENDIX-B). For example, to identify studies on ISIS, only the terms IŞİD (ISIS), DAEŞ (DAESH), and DEAŞ (DEASH) were used. The focus was on ISIS, Al-Qaeda, the PKK, Hezbollah, FETÖ, ASALA, and DHKP-C. Studies mentioning these organizations in the title and abstract were categorized accordingly. Due to the limited number of studies on organizations such as MLKP, MKP, and IBDA-C, these three groups were excluded from the analysis.

## RESULTS

In the results section, the descriptive analyses addressing the first research question, aimed at revealing the characteristic features of the terrorism literature in Türkiye, are presented first. This includes examining the distribution of studies by year, the number of citations these studies received, the distribution of average citations by year, the five most cited studies, the number of authors per study, and the types of studies. In the second subsection, the results from the analyses addressing the second research question, focused on the terrorist organizations that the terrorism literature has predominantly studied and the temporal changes in focus on these organizations, are explained.

### 1. Descriptive Analysis Results

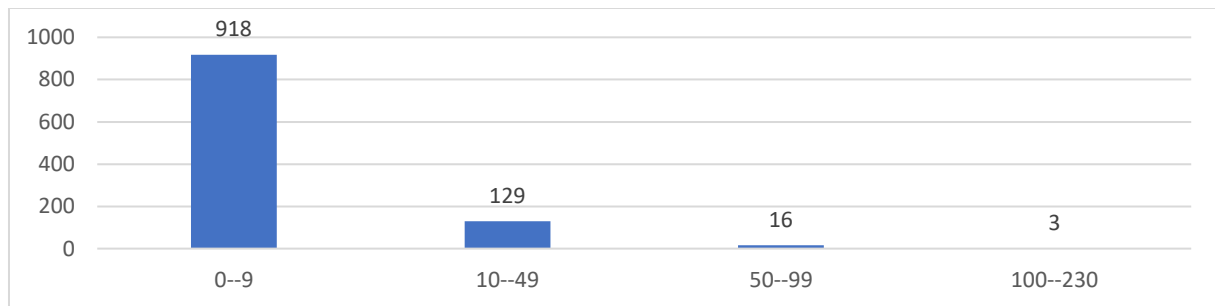
There are 1066 academic studies on terrorism in total between 1992 and 2024. When examining the distribution of these studies by year, it is observed that the number of academic studies published between 1992 and 2000 ranged from 0 to 3 per year. As in many parts of the world, academic studies focusing on terrorism in Türkiye increased after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. However, the most significant increase in the number of studies occurred in 2012, with a gradual rise in the number of academic studies on terrorism from 2012 to 2019, peaking in 2019. After 2019, the number of academic studies began to decline.



**Figure-1.** Number of Publication

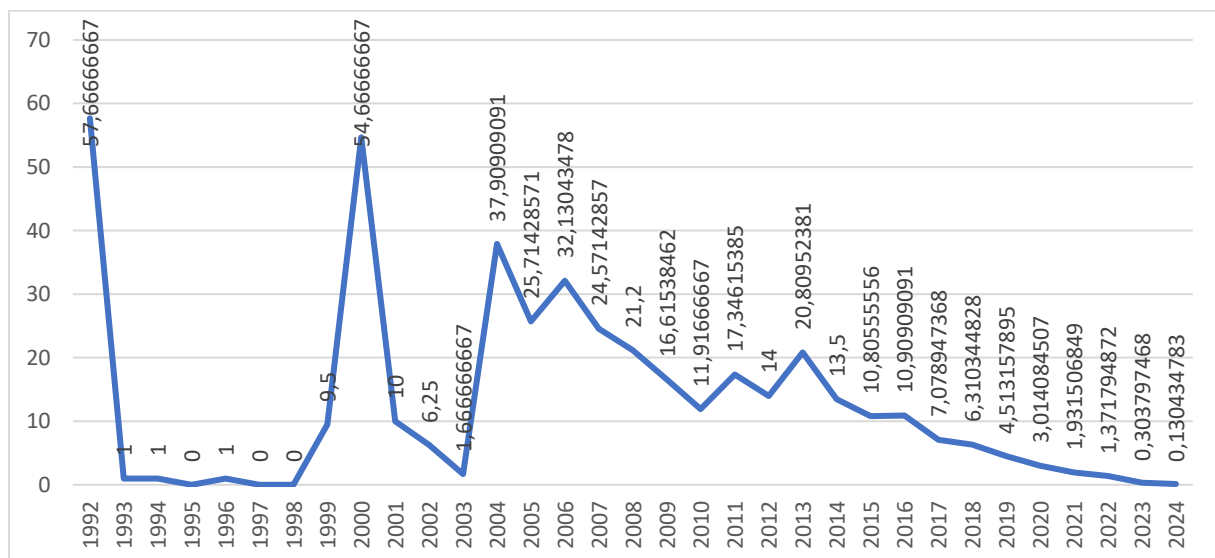
Considering these increases and decreases, it is possible to divide the literature into four main periods. The first period covers the years 1992 to 2000. The second period spans from 2001 to 2008. The third period is from 2009 to 2015. The fourth and final period covers the years 2016 to 2024. It is evident that terrorism and related topics gained significant popularity during the fourth period.

When the number of citations for the studies is examined, it is observed that the majority of the studies have been cited between 0 and 9 times. Specifically, 86,11% of the publications, or 918 studies, have been cited between 0 and 9 times; 12,10%, or 129 studies, have been cited between 10 and 49 times; 1,50%, or 16 studies, have been cited between 50 and 99 times; and 0,28%, or 3 studies, have been cited between 100 and 230 times.



**Figure-2. Number of Citations**

When examining the average number of citations per year, it is evident that the increase in the number of academic studies starting in 2001 did not correspond to a parallel increase in citations. Due to the small number of publications and the high number of citations, 1992 was the year with the highest average number of citations. 2000 was the second-highest, followed by 2004. In contrast to the rising number of publications, the average number of citations steadily decreased after 2004.



**Figure-3. Average Number of Citations**

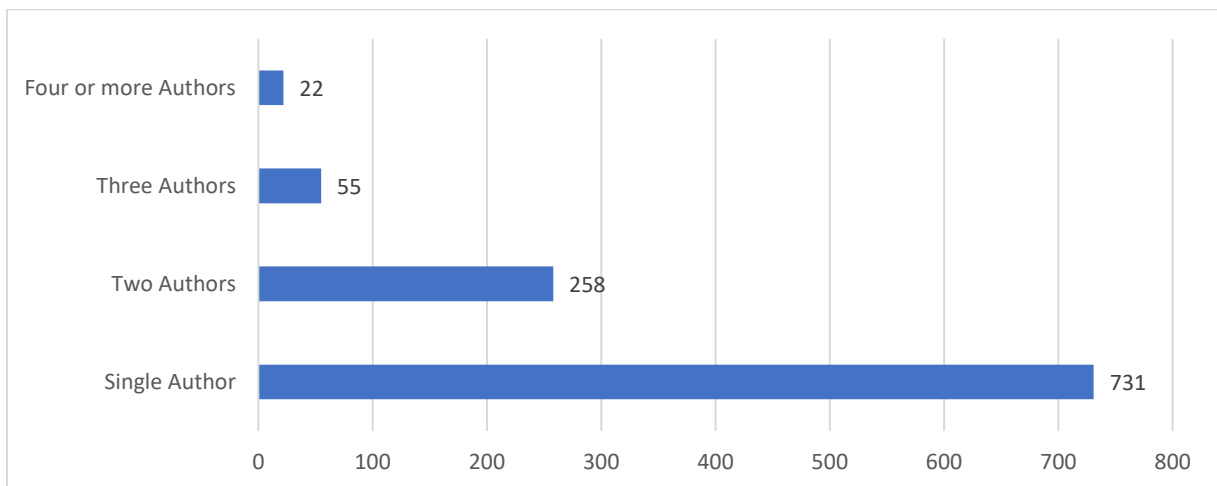
When the five most cited studies are examined, it is observed that a book published in 2006 is the most cited study, with 225 citations. An article published in 2012 is the second most cited, with 211 citations. It was found that three of the

five most cited studies are articles, while two are books. These studies do not directly focus on a specific terrorist organization; instead, they address the definition of terrorism, the legal dimensions of counterterrorism, and the negative effects of terrorism.

**Table-2.** Five Most Cited Studies

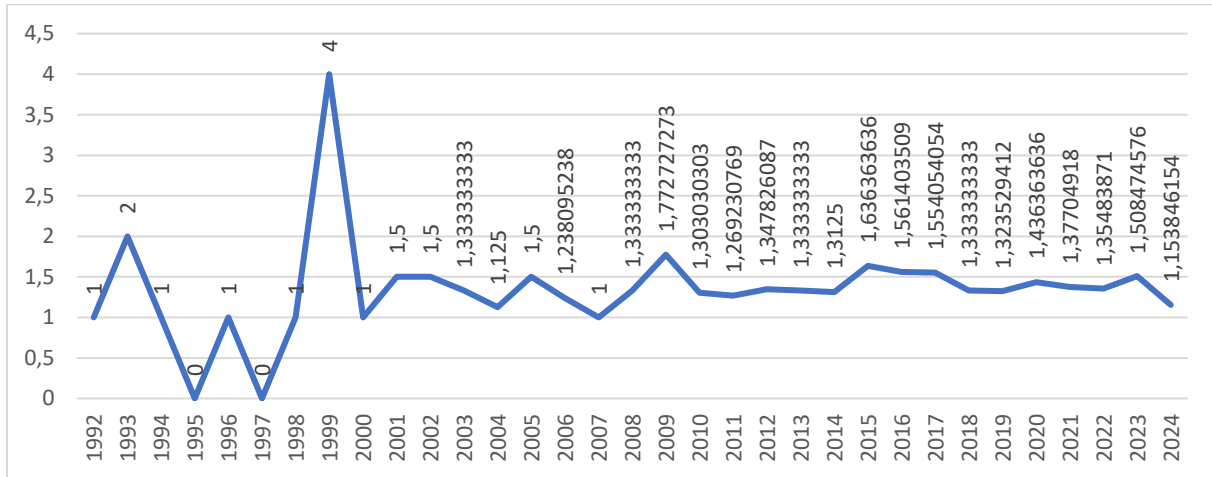
Author(s)	Title	Year	Journal Name	Citations
Fatma Taşdemir	Uluslararası terörizme karşı devletlerin kuvvete başvurma yetkisi	2006	Book	226
Necmettin Özerkmen and Haydar Gölbaşı	Toplumsal bir olgu olarak şiddet	2012	Journal Article	211
Doğu Ergil	Uluslararası terörizm	1992	Journal Article	115
İhsan Bal	Terörizm: terör, terörizm ve küresel terörle mücadelede ulusal ve bölgesel deneyimler	2006	Book	97
Ö. Selçuk Emsen and M. Kemal Değer	Turizm Üzerine Terörizmin Etkileri: 1984-2001 Türkiye Deneyimi	2004	Journal Article	97

When the number of authors in the studies is examined, it is observed that more than half of the studies were written by a single author. Specifically, 731 studies were written by a single author, 258 studies by two authors, 55 studies by three authors, and 22 studies by four or more authors.



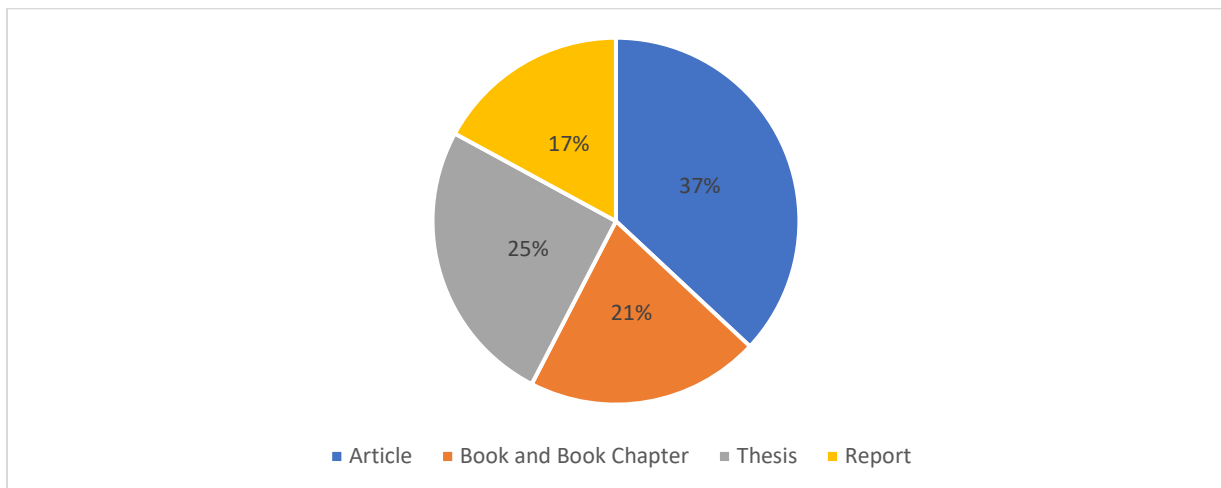
**Figure-4.** Number of Authors

Across all publications, it was concluded that studies were prepared by an average of 1,41 authors. In most years, studies were prepared by an average of between 1 and 1,77 authors, with the exception of 1999, when one study was prepared by four or more authors.



**Figure-5.** Average Number of Authors

In the final step of the descriptive analysis, the types of academic studies were examined. This examination revealed that 37%, or 394, of the studies were articles published in various journals. The second most common type of study in the literature was master's and doctoral theses, accounting for 25%, or 270, of the studies.

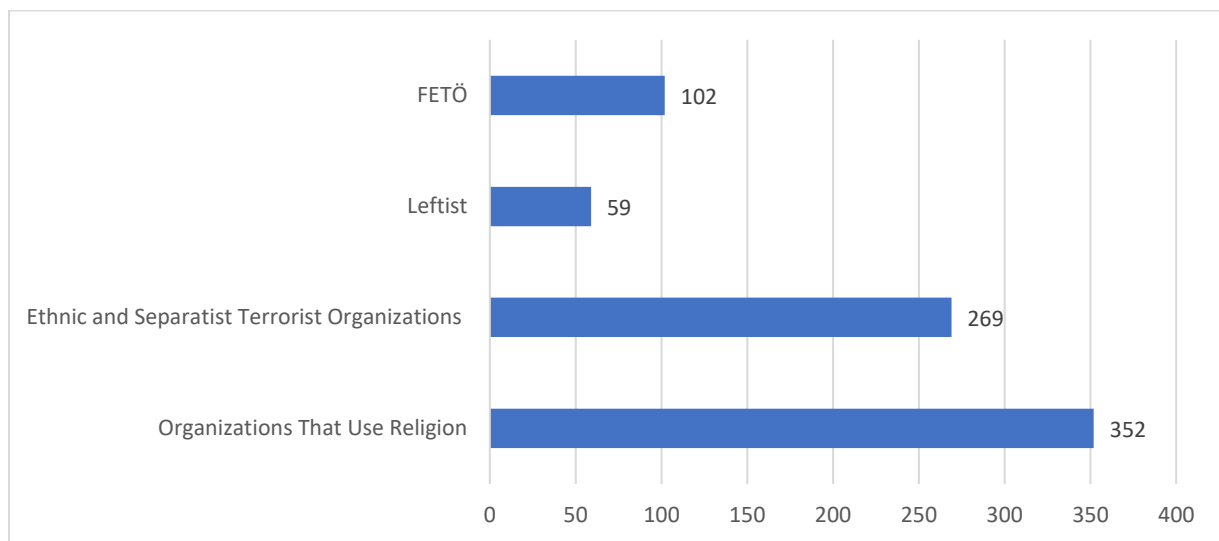


**Figure-6.** Type of Studies



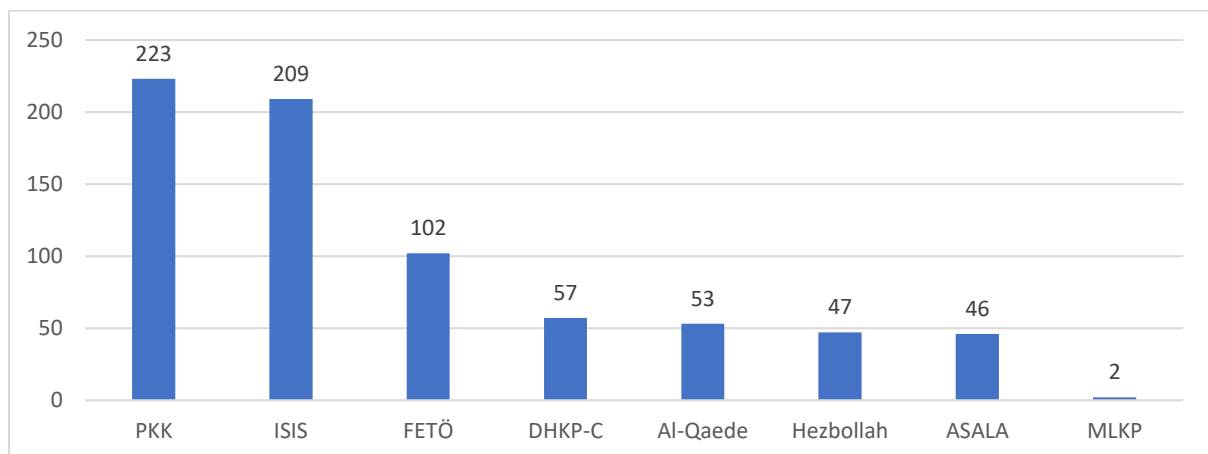
## 2. Results of the Analysis Regarding the Terrorist Organizations Focused on in the Literature and the Temporal Change of the Focused Organizations

As a result of the analyses conducted to answer the second research question of the study, it was found that 782 academic studies in the literature focused on different types of organizations. When these 782 studies were examined, it was concluded that 352 of the studies, or 33,02% of the total literature, focused on organizations that use religion, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, or Hezbollah. Additionally, 269 of the studies, or 25,23%, focused on ethnic and separatist terrorist organizations such as the PKK or ASALA.



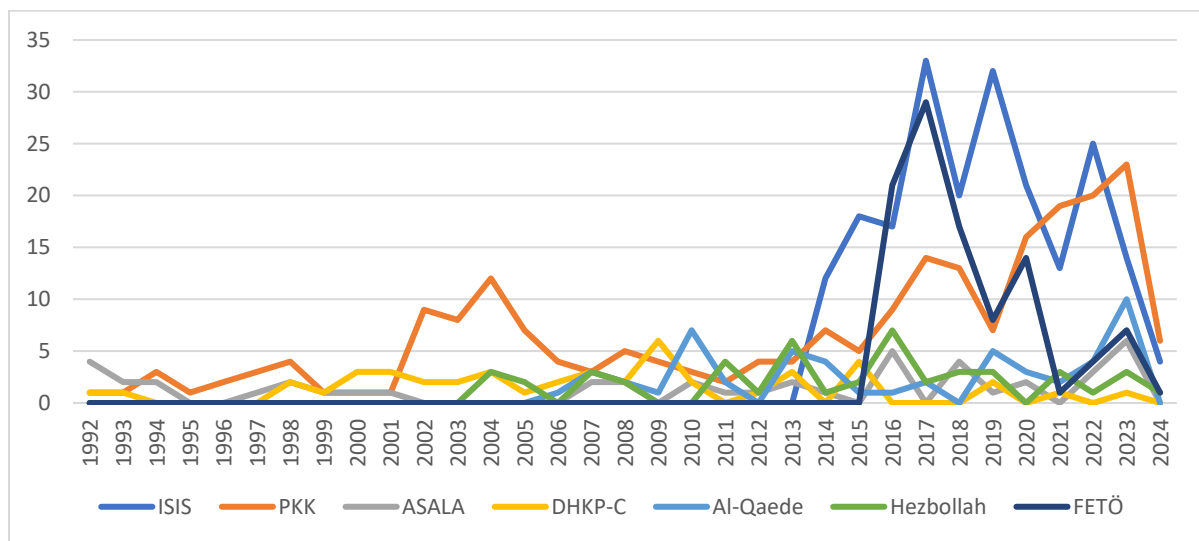
**Figure-7.** Focused Type of Terrorist Groups

Between 1992 and 2024, the terrorist organization most frequently studied in the literature was the PKK, with 223 studies focusing on it. ISIS is the second-most studied terrorist organization, with 209 studies focused on it. The third most studied organization is FETÖ/PDY.



**Figure-8.** Most Focused Terrorist Groups

When examining the distribution of terrorist organizations studied in the literature by year, it is observed that the PKK was the most studied organization up until 2013. Additionally, some studies addressed organizations such as Hezbollah and DHKP-C during this period. However, this trend shifted in 2013, with ISIS becoming the most studied organization in the literature. From 2013 to 2016, the PKK was the second-most studied organization. Since 2016, FETÖ/PDY has surpassed the PKK and become the second most studied organization in terrorism literature.



**Figure-9.** The Distribution of Terrorist Organizations Studied in the Literature by Year

## DISCUSSION

As a result of the analysis, significant findings were obtained. Some of these findings demonstrate both similarities and differences compared to studies examining the existing terrorism literature in Türkiye and globally. This section will explain the significant research findings, highlighting their similarities and differences compared to the current literature.

As a result of the descriptive analyses related to the first research question of the study, which aims to demonstrate the characteristic features of the literature, important findings were obtained. The first of these findings pertains to the number of publications. The analysis reveals that academic studies on terrorism in Türkiye started to increase after 2001. However, it was observed that the number of studies on terrorism in Türkiye significantly rose after 2003, reaching its peak in 2019. Numerous academic studies have emphasized that the global terrorism literature

has expanded since 2001 (Young and Findley, 2011; Schmid et al., 2021). This study discovered that the number of studies in Türkiye began to escalate in 2001. In this context, the study's findings align with existing literature.

Similarly, the notable surge in research conducted after 2003 aligns with the findings of Avcı and Demir (2017) in the existing literature. According to Avcı and Demir (2017), since 2003, there has been a rise in research on terrorism in Türkiye, with 92% of those studies being conducted after the 9/11 attacks.

Additionally, considering the number of publications, this study revealed that the literature can be grouped into four main periods: 1992–2000, 2001–2008, 2009–2015, and 2016–2024. It was concluded that terrorism and related topics gained popularity, with publications peaking in the fourth period.

The second finding is related to the number of citations of the studies. When the number of citations is considered, it is found that 86,11%, or 918, of the studies in the literature have been cited between 0 and 9 times. On the other hand, when the average citation rates are examined by year, it is seen that 1992, 2000, and 2004 are the years with the highest average citations. The main reason why 1992 and 2000 have the highest average citations is that only three and two publications were published in those years, respectively, and these publications received relatively high citations compared to other years. Additionally, since 2004, the annual average citations have been steadily decreasing. In other words, although the number of publications has increased significantly since 2004, the number of citations and annual citations have not kept pace with this growth.

After analyzing the five most cited studies related to the second finding, it was determined that the most cited study was published in 2006. Among these five studies, two were books and three were articles, none of which directly addressed a specific terrorist organization. Instead, they delved into the definition of terrorism, the legal aspects of combating terrorism, and the adverse impacts of terrorism.

The third finding pertains to the number of authors in academic studies. It was found that the studies examined in the literature were written by an average of 1,41 authors, and 68,57%, or 731, of the studies were written by a single author. This finding is consistent with the findings of Silke (2004) and Schuurman (2020). Silke (2004) states that more than 90% of the studies in the terrorism literature are written by a single author. Similarly, Schuurman (2020) reveals that 72,6% of

research articles, research notes, and other sources in the general terrorism literature are written by a single author. Additionally, Schuurman (2020) noted that although the majority of studies were written by a single author, the number of authors in studies has increased over the years. However, the findings of this study differ from Schuurman's findings. This study concluded that the number of authors varied between 1 and 1,77 in all years except 1999.

The fourth finding pertains to the types of studies in the dataset. Out of the 1066 academic studies in the dataset, the majority, 394, are articles. Following the articles, there are master's and doctoral dissertations. This discovery aligns with the research of Haghani and colleagues (2022), who observed that articles constitute the majority of published studies on terrorism globally.

As a result of the analyses related to the second research question of the study, which aims to identify the terrorist organizations that the literature focuses on and the temporal changes in these organizations, important findings were also reached. The first finding was that 782 studies in the academic literature focused on different terrorist organizations, and 352 of these 782 studies focused on organizations that use religion, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, or Hezbollah. The study went one step further by specifically examining the terrorist organizations that were most intensively studied in the literature. It was found that the most focused terrorist organization, with 223 studies, was the PKK, followed by ISIS as the second most focused organization. These findings are partially consistent and partially different from the findings of Avcı and Demir (2017). Avcı and Demir (2017) found that the most focused terrorist organization in the literature was the PKK, which is consistent with the findings of this study. However, they identified Al-Qaeda as the second-most focused organization, a finding that differs from the results of this study.

The final finding of the study pertains to the temporal shift in focus on terrorist organizations within the literature. Prior to 2013, the most researched organization was the PKK. However, post-2013, ISIS took over as the most studied organization. The PKK, previously the primary focus before 2013, transitioned to being the second most studied organization from 2013 to 2016. By 2016, FETÖ/PDY had surpassed the PKK, becoming the second most studied organization in terrorism literature.

## CONCLUSION

One of the most significant problems facing many countries worldwide is terrorism. The issue of terrorism has grown increasingly complex and pervasive, especially since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States (Tulga, 2020; Tulga, 2023). Terrorism has garnered global academic attention, with scholars from various countries conducting studies on terrorism and related topics. Particularly after the 9/11 attacks, interest in terrorism, its various forms, and counter-terrorism efforts has surged within the academic sphere. This surge has led to a consistent increase in the annual publication of studies from 2001 to the present. The academic community in Türkiye also demonstrates a keen interest in terrorism and related topics.

The academic community in Türkiye began focusing on terrorism and related topics in the 1980s, with studies by Turkish scholars gaining momentum in the 1990s and reaching their peak in the 2000s (Dönmez and Timur, 2017). Numerous scholarly works on terrorism and related subjects, including reports, books, articles, and dissertations, were written and published during this time. Several studies in Türkiye have investigated the development, trends, and evolution of research on terrorism and related topics (Avcı and Demir, 2017; Dönmez and Timur, 2017; Seren and Gültekin, 2022). However, a significant portion of these studies have concentrated on specific types within the literature rather than providing a comprehensive framework for the field as a whole.

Given this limitation, various types of studies in the literature were analyzed collectively in this research. A total of 1066 academic studies, including books, reports, dissertations, and articles, were identified using the "Publish or Perish" software and analyzed in two main stages. Through these analyses, which were shaped around two main research questions, the study aims to demonstrate the changes and evolution in the literature on terrorism in Türkiye over the years. Additionally, the study examines the terrorist organizations that the literature has focused on and the temporal changes in focus on these organizations.

Accordingly, the descriptive analyses addressing the first research question, which aims to identify the characteristic features of terrorism literature in Türkiye, revealed several key findings. The literature on terrorism and related topics can be divided into four main periods based on the number of publications. The number of publications started to increase after 2001, with a consistent growth in academic

studies from 2012 to 2019, reaching its peak in that year. However, the rise in publications after 2001 did not align with a similar increase in citations; the majority of publications received between 0 and 9 citations, and the average number of citations per year steadily declined after 2004. Most studies were prepared by a single author, with an average of 1,41 authors per study. With the exception of 1999, studies were typically written by 1 to 1,77 authors. Lastly, it was noted that 37% of the studies in the literature were articles, followed by master's and doctoral theses, which accounted for 25% of the studies.

As a result of the dictionary-based analysis, which aims to address the second research question by identifying the types of terrorist organizations that the literature focuses on, the specific organizations they emphasize, and the temporal changes in focus, several key findings emerged. It was concluded that 782 of the studies focused on different terrorist organizations, with 352 of them concentrating on organizations that use religion, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, or Hezbollah. The terrorist organization most frequently studied was the PKK, but after 2013, ISIS became the most studied organization in the literature. From 2013 to 2016, the PKK was the second most examined organization. However, as of 2016, FETÖ/PDY surpassed the PKK and became the second most examined organization in the terrorism literature.

In conclusion, this study has provided a comprehensive analysis of the evolution and focus of terrorism studies within the Turkish academic community. By examining a broad spectrum of academic studies, it has identified key trends and shifts in the literature, particularly regarding the types of terrorist organizations studied and the temporal changes in focus. The findings highlight the dynamic nature of terrorism research in Türkiye, reflecting both global and domestic developments. This study not only contributes to a deeper understanding of the trajectory of terrorism studies in Türkiye but also serves as a valuable resource for future research in this critical field. Additionally, this study underscores the need to increase the number of citations and authors in the terrorism literature in Türkiye and to further enhance collaboration among authors. In this regard, it is evident that there are still areas for improvement in the literature.



## REFERENCES

- Aradau, C. and van Munster, R. (2008). Insuring terrorism, assuring subjects, ensuring normality: The politics of risk after 9/11. *Alternatives*, 33(2), 191–210. <https://doi.org/10.1177/030437540803300205>
- Avcı, E. and Demir, C. K. (2017). Terörizm çalışmaları: Türkiye’deki araştırmalara ilişkin betimsel bir analiz. *Güvenlik Stratejileri Dergisi*, 13(26), 1-44. <https://doi.org/10.17752/guvenlikstrjtj.356937>
- Derin, G., Ziyalar, N. and Aşıcıoğlu, F. (2020). Türkiye’de terör üzerine yapılan tezlerin değerlendirilmesi: Bir meta-sentez çalışması. *Türkiye Klinikleri Adli Tıp ve Adli Bilimler Dergisi*, 17(1), 58-72.
- Desmarais, S. L., Simons-Rudolph, J., Brugh, C. S., Schilling, E. and Hoggan, C. (2017). The state of scientific knowledge regarding factors associated with terrorism. *Journal of Threat Assessment and Management*, 4(4), 180-196.
- Dönmez, R. Ö. and Timur, K. (2017). An evolution of Ph.d. dissertations on terrorism studies in Turkey. *Alternatif Politika*, 9(1), 131-141.
- Haghani, M., Kuligowski, E., Rajabifard, A. and Lentini, P. (2022). Fifty years of scholarly research on terrorism: Intellectual progression, structural composition, trends and knowledge gaps of the field. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 68(5), 102-130.
- Howie, L. (2015). Witnessing terrorism. *Journal of Sociology*, 51(3), 507-521.
- Jackson, R. (2012). The study of terrorism 10 years after 9/11: Successes, issues, challenges. *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, 8(32), 1-16.
- Jones, C. R. (2014). Are prisons really schools for terrorism? Challenging the rhetoric on prison radicalization. *Punishment and Society*, 16(1), 74-103.
- LaFree, G. and Freilich, J. D. (2012). Editor's introduction: Quantitative approaches to the study of terrorism. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 28(1), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-011-9159-1>
- Lentini, P. (2008). Understanding and combating terrorism: Definitions, origins and strategies. *Australian Political Studies Association*, 43(1), 133-140.
- Lum, C., Kennedy, L. W. and Sherley, A. (2006). Are counter-terrorism strategies effective? The results of the Campbell systematic review on counter-terrorism evaluation research. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 2(1), 489-516.

Lützing, S. (2012). *The other side of the story. A qualitative study of the biographies of extremists and terrorists*. Berlin: Bundeskriminalamt.

Mumtaz, A. A. and Sultan, A. D. (2011). Literature on terrorism: A bibliometric analysis of articles published during 1981-1990. *Malaysian Journal of Library and Information Science*, 16(2), 33-43.

Schmid, A. P., Forest, J. J. and Lowe, T. (2021). Terrorism studies. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 15(3), 142-152.

Schuurman, B. (2020). Research on terrorism, 2007–2016: A review of data, methods, and authorship. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 32(5), 1011-1026.

Seren, M. and Gültekin, E. (2022). Terrorism studies in Turkey: An analysis of graduate thesis and program curriculum. *Journal of Terrorism and Radicalization Studies*, 1(1), 22-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/trad.2>

Silke, A. (2001). The devil you know: Continuing problems with research on terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 13(4), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09546550109609697>

Silke, A. (2004). *Research on terrorism. Trends, achievements and failures*. London: Frank Cass.

Tulga, A. Y. (2020). The role of mass media in terrorism and its effect on individuals. *İnsan ve İnsan*, 7(25), 47-64. <https://doi.org/10.29224/insanveinsan.695346>

Tulga, A. Y. (2023). Comparison of Turkish and English-speaking ISIS sympathizers' Twitter content between 2015 and 2016. *Innovation in the Social Sciences*, 1(2), 234-262.

Young, J. K. and Findley, M. G. (2011). Promise and pitfalls of terrorism research. *International Studies Review*, 13(3), 411-431.

## Appendices

### Appendix-A. Dictionaries for Type of Terrorist Groups

Type of Group	Words in the Dictionary
Organizations That Use Religion	İŞİD, DAEŞ, DEAŞ, Cihad, Selefi, Selefizm, Din, İslam, Kaide, Hizbullah, IBDA, Cihadi
Ethnic and Separatist Terrorist Organizations	PKK, YPG, PYD, Ermeni, ASALA, Öcalan, partiya, etnik, ayrılıkçı, karkeren
Leftist Terrorist Groups	DHKP, MLKP, MKP, TKP, devrimci, sosyalizm, Leninizm, Marksizm, maoizm, sol
FETÖ	FETÖ, PDY, Fethullah, bylock, fethullahçı

### Appendix-B. Dictionaries for Terrorist Groups

Type of Group	Name of Terrorist Group	Words in the Dictionary
Organizations That Use Religion	ISIS	DAEŞ, İŞİD, DEAŞ
	Hezbollah	Hizbullah
	Al-Qaeda	Kaide
Leftist Terrorist Groups	DHKP-C	DHKP
Ethnic and Separatist Terrorist Organizations	ASALA	Ermeni, ASALA
	PKK	PKK, YPG, Öcalan, ayrılıkçı, pyd, partiya, karkeren
FETÖ	FETÖ	FETÖ, PDY, Fethullah, bylock, fethullahçı

