

THE EVOLUTION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN TÜRKİYE'S EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION PROCESS: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study aims to systematically examine academic research on Türkiye-European Union (EU) relations, assessing the historical and thematic evolution of this relationship. The research identifies trends, thematic focus areas, and gaps in the literature using bibliometric analysis methods. Based on quantitative data, it provides insights into the dynamics of the relationship and offers new perspectives to guide future studies. The bibliometric data of 884 publications indexed in the Web of Science database between 1996 and 2024 were analyzed in this study. The years with the highest publication density were identified as 2011 (72 publications), 2019 (54 publications), 2016 (49 publications), 2020 and 2022 (48 publications each). The most prolific authors were found to be Meltem Müftüler Baç (13 publications), Çiğdem Kentmen Çin (10 publications), and Bahar Rumelili (10 publications). Prominent research fields included government and law (617 publications), international relations (416 publications), and public administration (38 publications). Country-wise, Türkiye (474 publications), the United Kingdom (91), the United States (73), and Germany (51) stood out as leading contributors. Most publications were in English (789), followed by Turkish (42) and Russian (21). The majority of the publications were indexed in SSCI (525 publications) and ESCI (359 publications). The analysis reveals that while Türkiye has a high academic production capacity, its international impact remains limited. The findings highlight the need for increased international collaboration and a greater focus on publishing in prestigious academic journals to enhance global visibility and influence.

Keywords: *Türkiye-EU relations, European Union, Bibliometric analysis, International relations, Literature review*

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TÜRKİYE’NİN AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ ÜYELİK SÜRECİNDE BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALARIN EVRİMİ: BİR BİBLİYOMETRİK İNCELEME

Öz

Bu çalışma, Türkiye ile Avrupa Birliği (AB) ilişkileri üzerine yapılan akademik araştırmaları sistematik bir şekilde inceleyerek taraflar arasındaki ilişkinin tarihsel ve tematik evrimini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Literatürdeki eğilimleri, tematik yoğunlaşma alanlarını ve bilgi boşluklarını belirlemeyi hedefleyen araştırma, bibliyometrik analiz yöntemleriyle gerçekleştirilmiştir. Nicel veriler temel alınarak, ilişkilerin dinamiklerini anlamaya ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için rehberlik etmeye yönelik yeni perspektifler sunulmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, 1996-2024 yılları arasında Web of Science veri tabanında yayımlanan 884 eserin bibliyometrik verileri incelenmiştir. Yayın yoğunluğunun en fazla olduğu yıllar 2011 (72 eser), 2019 (54 eser), 2016 (49 eser), 2020 ve 2022 (48 eser) olarak belirlenmiştir. En çok eser üreten araştırmacılar Meltem Müftüler Baç (13 eser), Çiğdem Kentmen Çin (10 eser) ve Bahar Rumelili (10 eser) olarak tespit edilmiştir. Çalışma alanları arasında hükümet ve hukuk (617 eser), uluslararası ilişkiler (416 eser) ve kamu yönetimi (38 eser) öne çıkmaktadır. Ülkeler bazında Türkiye (474), İngiltere (91), ABD (73) ve Almanya (51) başı çekmektedir. Çoğu yayın İngilizce (789 eser) olup, Türkçe (42 eser) ve Rusça (21 eser) gibi dillerde de çalışmalar bulunmuştur. Yayınların büyük kısmı SSCI (525 eser) ve ESCI (359 eser) indekslerinde taranmıştır. Analizler, Türkiye’nin yüksek akademik üretim kapasitesine sahip olduğunu ancak uluslararası etkisinin sınırlı kaldığını ve daha fazla uluslararası iş birliği yaparak prestijli dergilerde yayımlama oranını artırması gerektiğini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye-AB ilişkileri, Avrupa Birliği, Bibliyometrik analiz, Uluslararası ilişkiler, Literatür taraması

Introduction

Bibliometrics refers to the analysis of books and other communication tools using mathematical and statistical methods (Pritchard, 1969). In bibliometric studies conducted through publication analysis, publications in any given field can be examined and evaluated in various ways. Bibliometric analysis is an

analytical method based on formal and quantitative data, used to understand and evaluate the current state of a specific research area and to examine its academic dynamics in depth. Unlike systematic literature reviews, bibliometric analysis facilitates the identification of academic trends, the exploration of literature networks, and the measurement of research performance through visualization software. Although this method is often confused with other analytical approaches such as scientometrics, webometrics, cybermetrics, altmetrics, and infometrics, bibliometrics primarily aims to evaluate the research performance of a field through quantitative indicators and numerical measurements. Today, the quantitative analysis of publication and citation data is carried out in most countries. Bibliometrics, used as a performance tool, is frequently utilized by researchers and administrators (Pendlebury, 2010).

Bibliometric analysis provides detailed information on the productivity of countries, authors, universities, and journals; strong and weak research trends; gaps in the literature; collaboration networks; potential research opportunities; and the widespread impact of academic outputs. In this context, the findings obtained serve as a critical foundation in the process of evaluating research performance.

In multidisciplinary fields, comprehensively analyzing the rapidly growing body of literature using traditional methods is becoming increasingly challenging (Zou and Vu, 2019). In the face of vast and complex pools of scientific data, identifying discipline-specific reading approaches and appropriate analysis strategies is of critical importance. Otherwise, challenges in managing the literature arise, leading to significant time losses (Agarwal, et al. 2016).

Bibliometric analysis, based on mathematical and statistical foundations, provides the opportunity to examine the historical development of a specific scientific field through key components such as publications, citations, authors, countries, and sources (Arslan, 2022). Bibliometric and scientometric methods have a wide range of applications, spanning from information science, sociology, and the history of science to research evaluation and science policies. These methods are widely used across various research fields to assess the overall impact of a field, evaluate the contributions of individual researchers, measure the influence of a specific article, or identify particularly impactful articles within a research area.

Turkish-European Union relations have been a significant research topic in the fields of politics, economics, and social sciences for many years. This study aims to comprehensively examine the academic trends, key actors, and thematic developments in this area by presenting a bibliometric analysis of scientific publications on Turkey-EU relations. The findings aim to be a guide for future

research by identifying the evolution of the topic over time, prominent research fields, and international collaboration networks.

Literature on Türkiye-EU Relations

Before and during World War II, Türkiye pursued a policy of staying away from international conflicts. However, after the war, it sought to establish alliances with European institutions. Türkiye's primary relationship with European institutions is rooted in the politics of the Cold War era (Müftüler-Baç, 1998: 243). The Cold War presented Türkiye with a golden opportunity to achieve European status. The ideological and geopolitical dynamics of the Cold War led Türkiye to adopt a pro-Western stance and align itself with the Western bloc (Bilgin, 2004). Positioned as a buffer between the Soviet Union and Western Europe, Türkiye became a critical element of Western security (Müftüler-Baç, 1998: 243).

The end of the bipolar world order destabilized the relationship and highlighted the need for the EU to redefine itself and determine its own identity. This situation had a direct impact on Türkiye's position within the EU (Çapan and Onursal, 2007). Türkiye's position within European institutions provided Turkish policymakers with an opportunity to express and define the country's Western and/or European identity, while also offering a strategic tool to protect Türkiye's security needs and national interests (Bilgin, 2004: 278). While Türkiye was an important part of the Cold War balance, with the collapse of this balance, it became necessary to redefine Türkiye's role (Çapan and Onursal, 2007: 105). The dissolution of Cold War structures reduced Türkiye's strategic importance and weakened the key justifications for its integration into the European order (Müftüler-Baç, 1998: 245).

There have always been conflicting approaches within the EU regarding Türkiye's membership. One group views Türkiye's EU membership as a security risk, while the other sees it as a security opportunity (Desai, 2005: 368). However, Türkiye's relationship with the EU is more complex than that of any other European country seeking membership. This complexity stems from doubts about Türkiye's European identity (whether Türkiye is European) (Müftüler-Baç, 1998: 240). Therefore, Türkiye-EU relations are centrally focused on identity. While the process of building an EU identity continues, the answers to the questions surrounding Türkiye's identity are closely linked to how the EU conceptualizes its own identity. However, in the context of Türkiye-EU relations, the debate over whether Türkiye is European is irrelevant, as Europe itself is a contested concept (Çapan and Onursal, 2007: 104). The main factor complicating Türkiye's ambiguous relationship with the EU is Europe's own identity crisis, which raises the question, "What is Europe?" (Müftüler-Baç, 2000: 22).

Türkiye-EU relations can be analyzed in three main periods: The first period covers the Cold War years, particularly the period from Türkiye's application for associate membership to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1959 until its application for full membership in 1987. The second period represents the years of the 1990s, when both sides redefined their post-Cold War identities and interests. The third period is characterized by the period of increased optimism between the two sides in the 2000s (2001-2005), followed by a period of stagnation that continues to the present day (Aydın-Düzgüt and Tocci, 2015: 9). In 1959, Türkiye applied for associate membership to the EEC, and this application was accepted in 1963. The same year, the Ankara Agreement was signed between Türkiye and Brussels, establishing a partnership legal framework between the parties. However, this process followed an ups and downs trajectory in historical context. Due to the political developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Türkiye's application for full membership could only be made in 1987 (Hoekman and Togan, 2005). In 1987, the Özal government's application for full membership to the EEC was rejected by the European Commission in 1989. The rejection was based on the priorities within the Community and transformations in the international system. At the time of Türkiye's 1987 application, the main agenda of the Community was to create a single market and deepen economic integration; therefore, enlargement was not a priority issue. At the same time, international events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe coincided with Türkiye's membership application, influencing the course of the process (Çapan and Onursal, 2007: 105). Although the EU did not accept Türkiye's accusations of discrimination, it developed a European strategy and invited Türkiye to the European Conference. However, Türkiye's exclusion from the enlargement process led to disappointment, resulting in a response that led to a suspension of Türkiye-EU relations (Kütük, 2006: 277).

Until the Helsinki Summit in December 1999, an effective political dialogue between Türkiye and the EU had not been achieved. The acceptance of Türkiye as a candidate country for EU membership at the Helsinki Summit marked a significant milestone in Türkiye-EU relations. This decision is noteworthy as it signaled a shift in the discourse based on civilizational differences (Bilgin, 2004: 285). Moreover, the decision, made by the European Heads of State and Government, was the first concrete development towards full EU membership for Türkiye, coming forty years after Türkiye's application to join the EEC in July 1959 (Kaya and Kentel, 2005: 5). When Türkiye began accession negotiations with the EU in September 2005, it had firmly positioned itself as a democratic country deeply integrated into the European order (Müftüler-Baç, 2016: 2). Paradoxically, however, the momentum in Türkiye's accession process was lost following the opening of accession negotiations in 2005 (Tocci, 2014: 2). While this event is often described as a turning point in Türkiye-EU relations,

it created significant uncertainty regarding the process and the ultimate outcome of the negotiations (Camyar and Tagma, 2010: 371). Following the stalemate in accession talks in 2006, Türkiye and the EU began to diverge in their political objectives (Cengiz and Hoffmann, 2013: 3). According to Schimmelfennig, the initiation of accession negotiations with Türkiye is one of the most controversial foreign relations decisions ever taken by the EU (Schimmelfennig, 2009: 413). In fact, for the EU, answering the question “What to do with Türkiye?” has always been a challenging task (Müftüler-Baç, 1998: 240).

There are different approaches to defining the EU, and these definitions lead to various perspectives on Türkiye’s position within the EU. Defining the EU as a secular structure aiming to become a political and even military power supports the view that Türkiye’s inclusion in the EU is a strategic necessity. On the other hand, defining the EU as an institution based on the rule of law, democracy, and respect for human rights suggests that Türkiye would only be eligible for membership once it fulfills the criteria set by the Union. Conversely, defining the EU primarily as a religious (Christian) union results in Türkiye’s outright exclusion from the EU (Çapan and Onursal, 2007: 107). According to Nas, Türkiye’s full membership application has been met with continuous opposition from most European governments and public opinion (Nas, 2008). While some national governments and the majority of European public opinion openly oppose (or are not particularly enthusiastic about) Türkiye’s accession, the EU agreed in 2005 to open the path for Türkiye’s membership (Font, 2006: 211). In his study, Schimmelfennig demonstrates that supporters of Türkiye within the EU and Türkiye itself have managed to overcome opposition to Türkiye’s membership proposal to the extent that Türkiye adheres to the EU’s fundamental norms (Schimmelfennig, 2009: 413). Similarly, Redmond argues that concerns about Türkiye’s suitability for EU membership due to its Islamic identity and lack of “Europeanness” are unfounded and/or irrelevant. He asserts that the best way to facilitate Türkiye’s ongoing contributions to European (and global) security and its Western orientation is to allow it to join the EU as a full member (Redmond, 2007). After outlining the benefits of enlargement for the EU, Desai raises the question of why Türkiye’s potential EU membership remains so controversial (Desai, 2005: 366).

In the literature, it is argued that the assumption of Türkiye becoming a full member of the EU is unsustainable and that the process should be conducted through a more flexible relationship model (Buzan and Diez, 1999). Furthermore, it is suggested that keeping membership constantly on the agenda and initiating negotiation processes should replace the approach of seeking alternatives to Türkiye’s EU membership (Diez, 2005: 178). The literature emphasizes that due to Türkiye’s economic capabilities, geographical location, and political significance, it has always been a key actor on the periphery of the EU (Müftüler-

Baç, 2016). Additionally, the view that Türkiye is one of the most important countries for the EU, maintaining this position and likely continuing to do so in the future, is widely supported (Tocci, 2014: 1). While Türkiye's membership stands out as one of the most controversial issues in the EU's foreign policy (Schimmelfennig, 2009: 413), Türkiye-EU relations have experienced a fluctuating trajectory. This process represents a transformation from Türkiye being perceived as a candidate country within the framework of the EU's enlargement policy to being viewed as a strategic partner (Yalman and Göksel, 2017: 24).

This brief literature review on the evolution of Türkiye-EU relations highlights the deep uncertainty surrounding the relationship between the two parties. While the current state of the relationship paints a pessimistic picture, it also points to a growing alienation, competition, and even the risk of potential conflict between Türkiye and the EU (Tocci, 2014: 5). However, making a definitive assessment of the nature and future of Türkiye-EU relations has long been a contentious issue both within Türkiye, within the Union, and between the two sides (Aydın-Düzgüt and Tocci, 2015: 1). Türkiye's complex historical ties with Europe render the future trajectory of this relationship both somewhat predictable and highly uncertain. Shaped by centuries of cycles of historical cooperation and conflict, the depth of existing economic, political, security, social, and cultural ties makes a complete rupture nearly impossible (Tocci, 2014: 13). Despite all these uncertainties and the problematic past, Türkiye continues to steadfastly pursue its goal of EU membership (Camyar and Tagma, 2010: 371).

Method

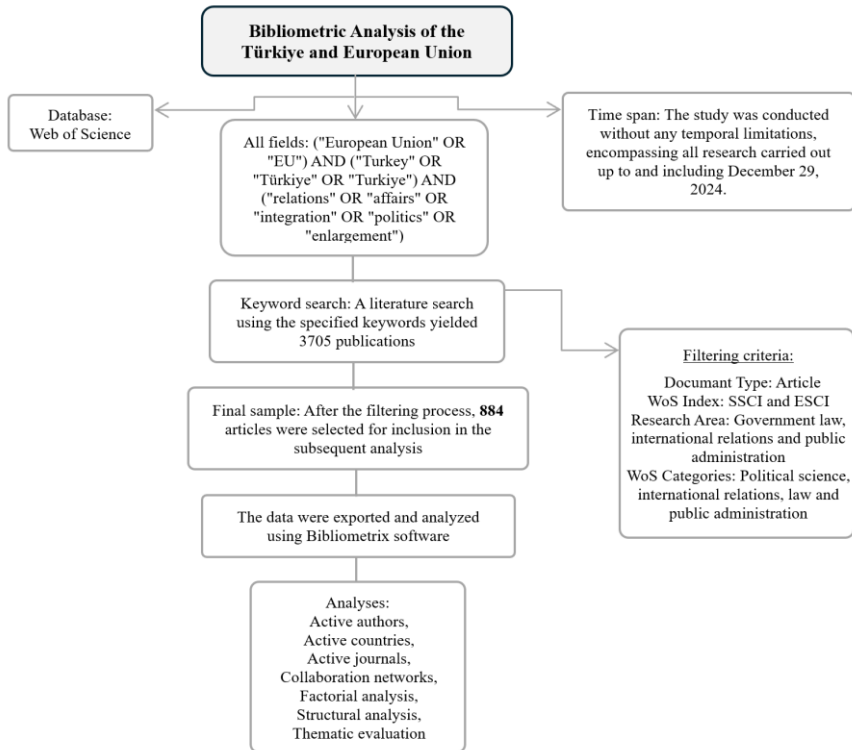
In this study, scientific studies on Türkiye and the EU from the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection database were identified and subjected to bibliometric analysis. WoS, one of the search engines used to scan scientific studies, was preferred for this study due to its status as the most widely accepted and frequently used database for analyzing scientific publications (van Nunen, et al. 2018). The WoS database contains detailed information about a scientific publication, including the author, publication year, connections with other authors, title of the work, abstract, source journal, subject categories, and references (Chen and Xiao, 2016; Passas, 2024; Ragazou, et al. 2022).

To analyze the obtained scientific studies, the Rstudio-Bibliometrix software was used to analyze and visualize the relationships between authors, countries, co-citations, and terms (van Eck and Waltman, 2010). Bibliometrix, being open source, is one of the fundamental bibliometric analysis methods, particularly utilized in concept mapping analysis (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017).

One of the effective databases in the social sciences is WoS (van Leeuwen, 2006). In this context, data obtained from the WoS database on Türkiye-EU relations

were analyzed using the aforementioned program, and bibliometric maps, tables, and graphs were created.

Figure 1: Methodological Scheme of the Study



Source: Author.

Based on the content indexed in the WoS database as of December 29, 2024, a search using the keywords (“European Union” OR “EU”) AND (“Turkey” OR “Türkiye” OR “Turkiye”) AND (“relations” OR “affairs” OR “integration” OR “politics” OR “enlargement”) in “All Fields” yielded 3,705 results.

For filtering, the “Research Areas” section in the WoS database was used, and social science fields were selected (excluding natural and health sciences). The selected research areas included: government law, international relations, and public administration. Additionally, filtering was applied within the Web of Science Categories, selecting the social science categories of political science, international relations, law, and public administration. Within the WoS Index, only SSCI and ESCI-indexed articles were included, while other options were excluded. No time filter was applied; the oldest publication identified was from

1996 (Arslan and Akyol, 2023). The main reason for applying filtering was to achieve more consistent results. Following the applied filtering process, a total of 884 articles from 1996 to 2024 were identified. The search and analysis process is shown in Figure 1.

In the design of bibliometric studies, answers to a set of questions formulated within the scope of the defined research problem are sought. Within the scope of this study's bibliometric analysis on Türkiye-EU relations, the research questions are as follows:

What is the annual number of publications on the topic?

What is the impact of sources (journals) and authors related to the topic?

What is the distribution of scientific publications on the topic by country, institution, and authors?

What is the citation status of authors and countries?

What are the relationships between academic institutions, authors, and keywords?

What are the trending topics and the years they were trending?

What are the collaboration networks of influential authors, institutions, and countries?

How have thematic concepts evolved and differentiated?

What are the conceptual structure maps of co-occurring keywords?

The core research problem of this study is: How does a bibliometric analysis of scientific publications on Turkey-EU relations reveal changes in the number of publications over time, the collaboration networks formed by influential authors, institutions, and countries, as well as the prominent keywords and thematic developments?

Findings

When examining other parameters related to the articles presented in Table 1, which displays basic information about the research data, it was found that a total of 204 distinct sources, including journals, books, and others, were utilized.

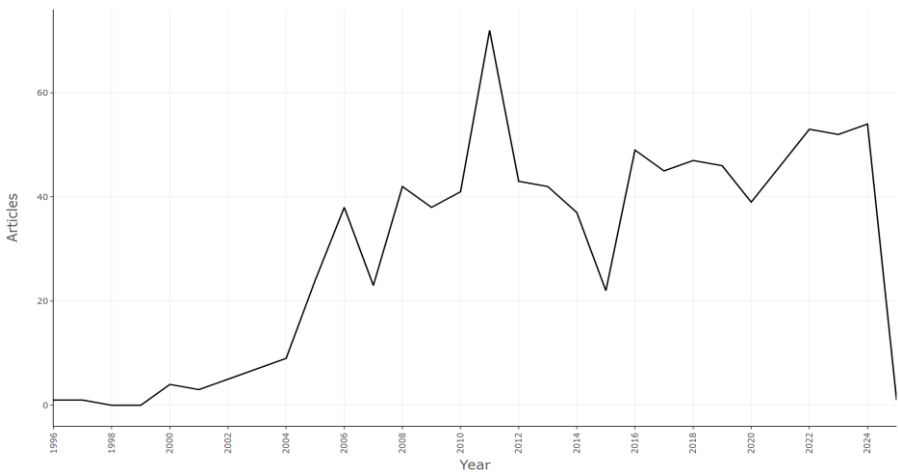
Table 1: Basic Information on Research Data

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1996-2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	204
Documents	884
Document Average Age	9,23
Average citations per doc	9,782
References	32676
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	750
Author's Keywords (DE)	1881
AUTHORS	
Authors	1017
Authors of single-authored docs	480
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	586
Co-Authors per Doc	1,46
International co-authorships %	16,29
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	853
article; early access	20
article; proceedings paper	11

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

The average number of citations per article was determined to be 9.78. Out of the studies conducted by 1,017 researchers, 480 were single-authored. The number of single-authored documents was 586. The average number of articles per author was 1.46, and 16.29% of the publications resulted from international collaborations between authors.

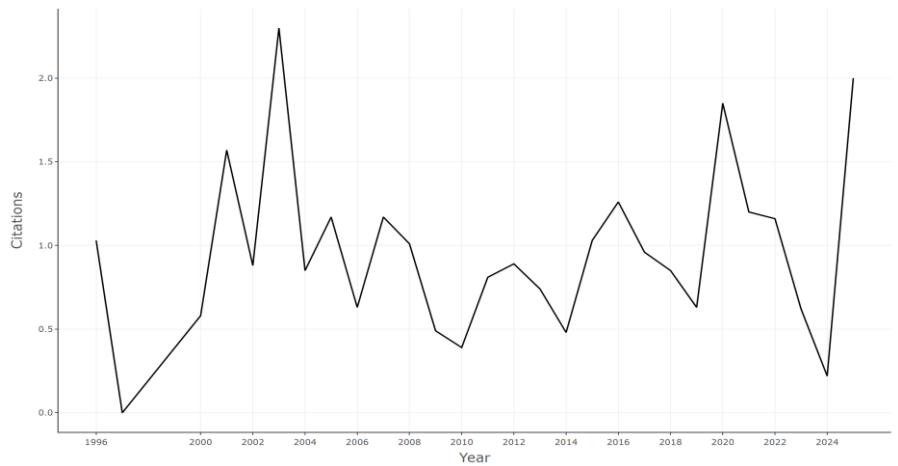
Graph 1: Annual Scientific Production



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

In Graph 1, the number of articles by year is shown. During the period studied (1996–2024), it is observed that the number of publications has gradually increased over the years, with the highest number of publications in 2011 ($n=72$) and the lowest in 1996 ($n=1$), which marks the start of the study period. The number of publications before 2005 is relatively low.

Graph 2: Average Citations per Year



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Graph 2 shows the average number of citations per publication by year. Overall, it can be said that there are fluctuations in citation density during certain periods, with a notable increase in recent years. During the period between 1996 and 2000, citation numbers started at a low level. This could indicate that the topics had not yet attracted sufficient academic attention or that the number of publications was relatively low during this time.

Between 2001 and 2004, there was a significant increase in citation density, with a peak observed around 2002. This suggests that studies conducted during this period garnered more attention and were widely referenced by the academic community.

During the 2005–2016 period, while there were general fluctuations in citation rates, no major leaps were observed. This indicates a steady interest in the literature without any period-specific significant spikes. Between 2017 and 2024, a sharp increase can be observed, starting around 2018 and continuing with a notable rise toward 2024.

Table 2: Source Impact

Source	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
South European Society and Politics	17	24	0,895	705	42	2007
JCMS-Journal of Common Market Studies	13	25	0,684	636	27	2007
European Union Politics	11	13	0,5	478	13	2004
Mediterranean Politics	10	15	0,526	245	23	2007
International Affairs	9	11	0,346	243	11	2000
Journal of Contemporary European Studies	9	15	0,45	264	35	2006
Security Dialogue	9	10	0,36	265	10	2001
Insight Türkiye	8	12	0,381	186	54	2005
Journal of European Public Policy	8	9	0,444	291	9	2008
Journal of European Integration	7	14	0,538	213	15	2013

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Table 2 summarizes the total citations (TC), number of publications (NP), year of first publication (PY_start), and other relevant information for the top ten journals in the field. Upon examining the table, it can be seen that the journal with the highest values according to the h-index, g-index, and m-index is *South European Society and Politics*. In terms of the number of publications, *Insight Türkiye* ranks first with 54 publications.

Table 3: Author Impact

Author	h_index	g_index	m_index	TC	NP	PY_start
Meltem Müftüler-Baç	8	12	0,444	153	13	2008
Bahar Rumelili	7	10	0,304	412	10	2003
Dimitris Tsarouhas	7	7	0,35	221	7	2006
Senem Aydın-Düzgit	6	9	0,429	170	9	2012
Ziya Öniş	6	7	0,231	193	7	2000
Rachid Azrout	5	5	0,333	109	5	2011
Ayhan Kaya	5	6	0,333	59	6	2011
Çiğdem Kentmen Çin	5	6	0,417	129	6	2014
Alexander Bürgin	4	7	0,286	88	7	2012
Claes H. de Vreese	4	4	0,222	158	4	2008

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Table 3 presents the characteristics of the works of the top ten authors in the field. Upon examining the table, it is observed that *Meltem Müftüler Baç* ranks first in the h-index, g-index, and m-index. Additionally, the author who has conducted the most studies on the topic is also *Meltem Müftüler Baç*. The author with the highest number of citations is *Bahar Rumelili*, with 412 citations.

Table 4: Most Relevant Authors

Authors	Articles	Articles Fractionalized
Meltem Müftüler-Baç	13	10,50
Bahar Rumelili	10	7,83
Senem Aydın-Düzgit	9	6,83
Ebru Ertugal	8	5,00
Alexander Bürgin	7	6,00
Emel Parlar Dal	7	3,17
Ziya Öniş	7	5,00
Dimitris Tsarouhas	7	3,33
Ayhan Kaya	6	5,00
Çiğdem Kentmen Çin	6	3,83

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

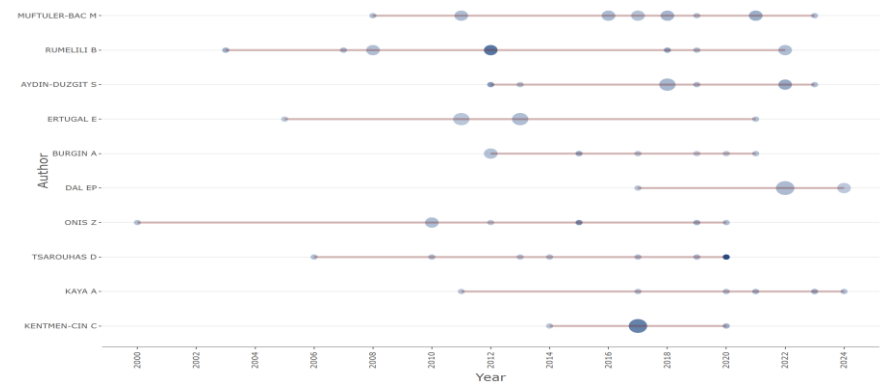
Table 4 is presented to evaluate the authors who have made the most significant contributions in a specific research area and their impact. The “Authors” column lists the names of the authors, the “Articles” column shows the total number of articles written by each author, and the “Articles Fractionalized” column indicates the fractional contribution of each author in co-authored works.

Meltem Müftüler-Baç is the author with the most articles (13 articles). Additionally, based on the fractionalized evaluation, she has a contribution of 10.50, indicating significant collaboration with other authors. She is followed by *Bahar Rumelili* (10 articles) and *Senem Aydın-Düzgüt* (9 articles).

The articles fractionalized column indicates the total contribution of an author to a paper. For example, although *Meltem Müftüler-Baç* has written 13 articles, her fractionalized contribution is 10.50. This suggests that in some of the papers, she collaborated with other authors, and her contribution was shared. In the case of *Emel Parlar Dal*, although she wrote 7 articles, her fractionalized contribution is 3.17, indicating a lower individual contribution in the papers she co-authored. *Alexander Bürgin* has only written 7 articles, but his fractionalized contribution is 6.00, which suggests that he had a higher individual contribution in the articles he authored. Similarly, *Ayhan Kaya* has written 6 articles, with a fractionalized contribution of 5.00, indicating a high individual contribution.

Dimitris Tsarouhas and *Emel Parlar Dal* have lower fractionalized contribution values (3.33 and 3.17, respectively), suggesting that they participated in many collaborative works, leading to lower individual contributions.

Graph 3: Authors’ Production over Time



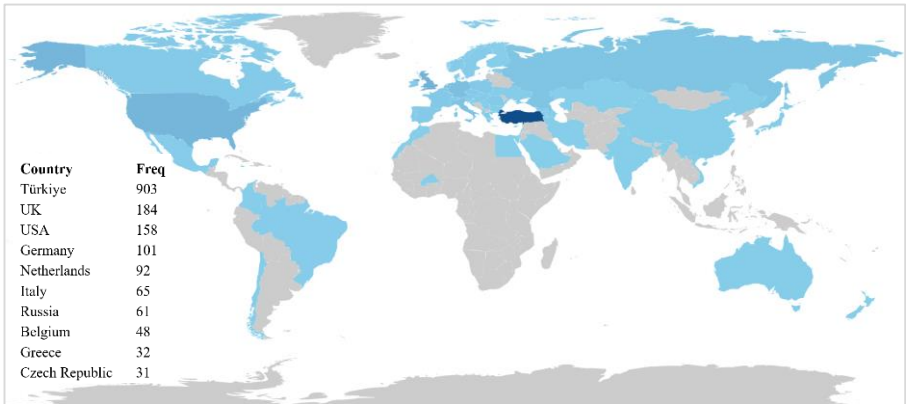
Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

In Graph 3, the article production and citation patterns of specific authors over time are analyzed. Each horizontal line represents an author, and the points on these lines indicate the number of articles published by that author in a given year. The size of the points reflects the number of articles (N. Articles) produced in that year, with larger points indicating higher production. The fill ratio of the points represents the total citations received by the articles in that year (TC per Year).

Darker or more filled points signify that the articles published in that year received more citations. While some authors' productivity (number of articles) is concentrated in specific periods, others have a more consistent output over the years. For example, *Müftüler-Baç M* and *Aydın-Düzgüt S* demonstrate steady productivity, while *Bürgin A* and *Kaya A* show periods of more intense activity.

The insights drawn from this graph reflect not only individual authors' academic contributions but also the general trends and developments in the field. From the 2000s to the 2020s, there has been an increase in both productivity and impact. This suggests that the academic field in question has gained more attention over time, and the research has become more visible.

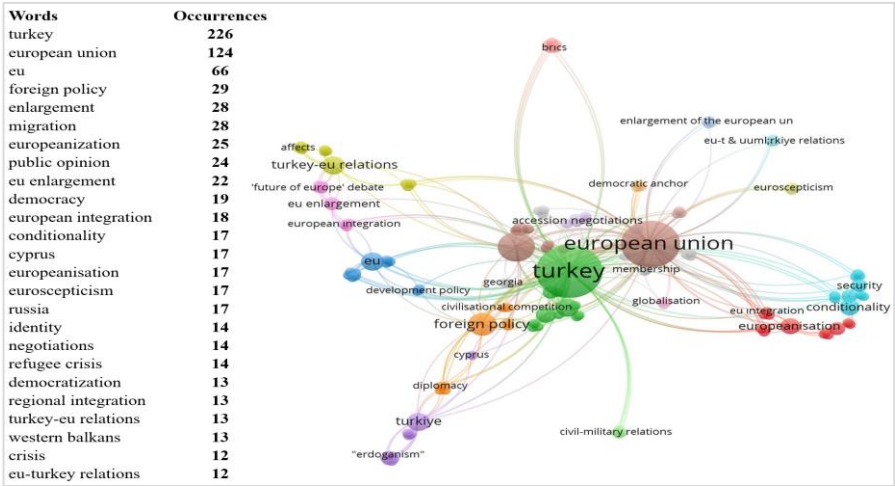
Figure 2: Country Scientific Production



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

In Figure 2, the map highlights various countries in shades of blue and gray. The blue shades represent countries with academic output related to the topic, while the gray shades indicate countries and regions not included in this criterion. Overall, the map visualizes Türkiye's strong position and global influence within the analyzed context of the topic.

Figure 3: Most Frequent Words According to Authors’ Keywords



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 3 visualizes a network of the most frequently used keywords based on authors’ inputs. Each node represents a keyword, while connections between nodes indicate relationships. Larger nodes signify terms that are highly connected and frequently mentioned. Different colors represent thematic clusters.

As expected in a bibliometric analysis of Türkiye-EU relations, “Turkey” and “European Union” are the largest nodes, highlighting their central role.

Frequently used terms like “membership”, “accession negotiations”, “foreign policy”, and “Europeanisation” show strong connections between “Turkey” and “European Union”.

Keywords around “Turkey” focus on foreign policy, the membership process, and relations, such as “Cyprus”, “diplomacy”, and “civil-military relations”.

Terms like “Europeanisation” and “conditionality” relate to EU integration and conditionality processes. Keywords like “EU enlargement”, “European Integration”, “Turkey-EU relations”, and “future of Europe” reflect discussions on enlargement policies and the broader context of Türkiye-EU relations.

Table 5: Most Relevant Sources

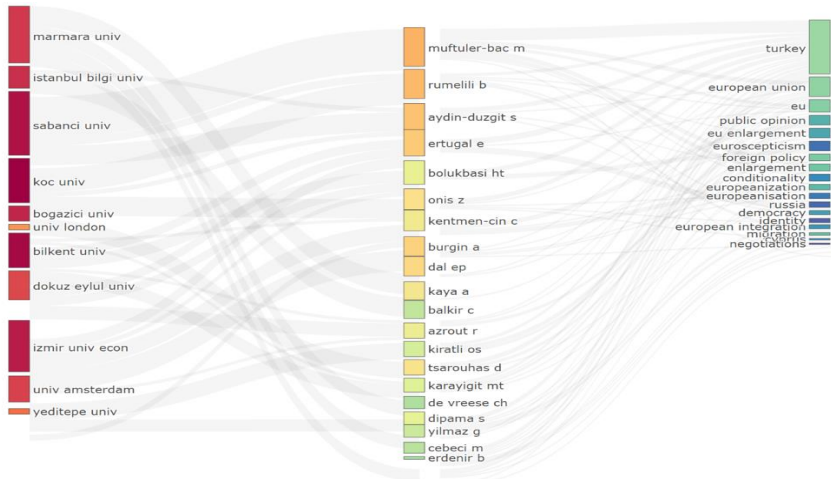
Sources	Articles
Turkish Policy Quarterly-TPQ	90
Uluslararası İlişkiler-International Relations	78
Insight Türkiye	54
South European Society and Politics	42
Journal of Contemporary European Studies	35
Journal of Common Market Studies-JCMS	27
Mediterranean Politics	23
International Spectator	17
Comparative European Politics	15
Journal of European Integration	15

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Table 5 highlights the academic journals where articles on Türkiye's foreign policy, relations with the EU, and international relations are predominantly published. With 90 articles, *TPQ* emerges as a leading journal focusing on Türkiye's foreign policy and regional relations. *Uluslararası İlişkiler* ranks second with 78 articles, offering a platform for theoretical contributions in both Turkish and English. *Insight Türkiye* follows in third place with 54 articles, featuring more analytical and policy-oriented studies on Türkiye's domestic and foreign policies.

The articles are predominantly published in journals addressing Türkiye's foreign policy, its relations with Europe, and its regional roles. The high number of articles in Türkiye-based journals such as *TPQ* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler* reflects the widespread attention this topic receives within the Turkish academic community.

The presence of articles in Europe-focused and internationally oriented journals indicates Türkiye's significant role in the international relations literature. The journals feature both theoretical approaches (*Uluslararası İlişkiler*, *JCMS*) and more policy-focused analyses (*Insight Türkiye*, *TPQ*), illustrating a diversity in the literature that encompasses both academic and applied perspectives.

Figure 4: Network of Affiliations – Authors – Keywords

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 4 is a Sankey diagram visualizing the relationships between universities, authors, and related themes. The diagram highlights academic collaboration and thematic intensity, identifying key institutions and authors, as well as popular themes in Türkiye-EU relations.

The left column represents universities active in this area, the middle column lists researchers and academics, and the right column shows the main research themes. The lines connecting these columns illustrate which academics focus on specific themes.

Institutions such as *Marmara University*, *Sabancı University*, and *Koç University* are prominent for their impactful publications in the field. *İzmir Economy University* and *Bilkent University* have also made notable contributions to the literature.

Key researchers include Muftuler-Bac M (Meltem Müftüler-Baç), Rumelili B (Bahar Rumelili), Aydın-Düzgit S (Senem Aydın-Düzgit), and Ertugal E (Ebru Ertugal), who are frequently cited in studies on this topic. Öniş Z (Ziya Öniş) appears to focus on Türkiye's integration and democratization processes within the EU context.

Prominent themes include Turkey, the European Union, and EU Enlargement, alongside socio-political concepts such as democracy, European integration, and identity. Process-focused themes such as migration, negotiations, and Europeanization also stand out.

Meltem Müftüler-Baç and *Senem Aydın-Düzgit* have made significant contributions to topics like enlargement, identity, and foreign policy.

The diagram showcases the interdisciplinary nature of this academic field, with contributions from social sciences, political science, international relations, and European studies. Research on Türkiye's EU relations and democracy plays a significant role in shaping discussions within this area.

Table 6: Most Relevant Affiliations

Affiliation	Articles	Affiliation	Articles
Koc University	73	Yeditepe University	17
Bilkent University	68	Bahçeşehir University	15
Sabancı University	63	Free University of Berlin	14
İzmir Economy University	50	Hacettepe University	14
Boğaziçi University	44	University of London	14
İstanbul Bilgi University	44	Ankara University	13
Marmara University	41	İstanbul Kültür University	13
Amsterdam University	33	Queen Mary University London	13
Dokuz Eylül University	31	Atılım University	12
Kadir Has University	27	Galatasaray University	12
İstanbul University	24	Middle East Technical University	12
European University Institute	20	Isık University	11
Leiden University	19		

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Table 6 reveals that Türkiye demonstrates strong diversity in academic productivity and holds notable visibility at an international level. The top five universities—Koç University, Bilkent University, Sabancı University, İzmir Economy University, and Boğaziçi University—play a leading role in Türkiye's academic studies in the field of international relations.

International universities such as *Amsterdam University* (33 articles), *European University Institute* (20 articles), *Leiden University* (19 articles), *Free University of Berlin* (14 articles), and *University of London* (14 articles) have also made significant contributions to studies related to Türkiye.

Table 7: Most Cited Countries

Country	Citations	Average Article Citations
Türkiye	3573	9,30
United Kingdom	1508	22,50
Netherlands	611	16,10
Germany	535	17,30
USA	466	8,80
Italy	238	10,80
Austria	225	37,50
Switzerland	164	41,00
Chile	132	44,00
Estonia	117	58,50
Greece	116	10,50
Belgium	92	5,80
Portugal	68	11,30
Ireland	67	13,40
France	60	7,50
Spain	60	6,70
Norway	37	6,20
Canada	35	4,40
Hungary	28	9,30
Israel	26	8,70
Australia	25	6,20
Egypt	22	11,00
Russia	21	1,00
Croatia	20	5,00
Poland	20	2,00

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Table 7 compares the total citation counts and average citations per article across different countries, offering insights into their academic contributions, impact, and intensity.

Türkiye (n=3573) has the highest total citations, indicating a high volume of academic output. The United Kingdom (n=1508) and the Netherlands (n=611) also rank highly in total citations but fall behind Türkiye. However, the UK stands out with an average of 22.50 citations per article, suggesting fewer but more impactful publications.

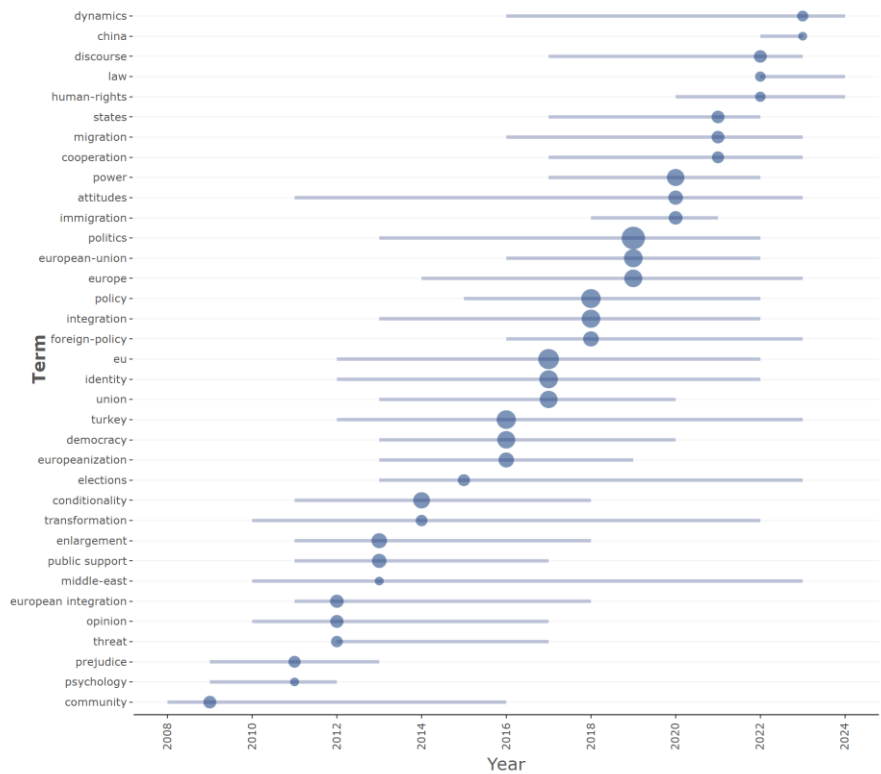
Estonia (58.50), Chile (44.00), Switzerland (41.00), and Austria (37.50) have the highest average citations per article. These countries have produced fewer but

highly impactful publications. For instance, Estonia, with only 117 total citations, achieving the highest average citation score, indicates a focus on publishing a small number of highly influential articles.

Türkiye’s average citation per article is 9.30, which is below the global average. This suggests that while Türkiye produces a higher volume of articles, their overall impact lags behind some other countries. In contrast, countries like Poland (2.00) and Russia (1.00) perform poorly in both total and average citations, indicating limited academic influence.

Türkiye demonstrates a highly active academic community with significant total citations. However, improving the quality and global impact of its publications remains a priority. The UK, the Netherlands, and Germany achieve broader global influence with higher average citation rates, while Estonia, Chile, and Switzerland excel in producing fewer but highly impactful works.

Graph 4: Trend Topic



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Graph 4 compares the importance of specific terms over time, showing how international relations and policies have evolved. Each term is represented by a line across the years, and the blue dots indicate when these terms were discussed more intensely.

Most terms, such as those related to international relations, policy, Türkiye-EU relations, and social processes, are linked to the period between 2008 and 2024. Some terms emerged earlier, while others gained importance more recently.

Terms like “European integration”, “enlargement”, and “identity” were prominent in the early years (2008-2012), reflecting discussions on EU expansion and integration policies. Terms such as “prejudice” and “community” pointed to the focus on societal perceptions and psychological impacts during that period.

In the middle period (2013-2018), terms like “Turkey”, “Europeanization”, “democracy” and “conditionality” became central. This period saw discussions on Türkiye’s democratic process and alignment with EU norms. “Public support” and “elections” were also heavily discussed, and “migration” and “refugees” gained prominence during the 2015 refugee crisis.

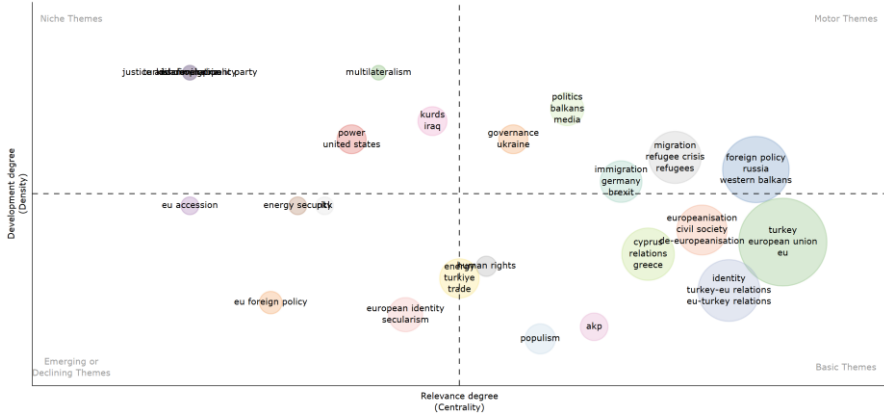
In the recent period (2019-2024), terms like “dynamics”, “China”, “discourse”, and “power” gained importance, reflecting shifting international dynamics and increased focus on the EU’s relationships with global actors. “Law” and “human-rights” became more prominent, especially after 2020.

Some terms (e.g., European integration, identity) have been consistently discussed over the years, while others (e.g., China, dynamics) emerged later. The ongoing discussion of certain terms highlights the lasting relevance of these topics.

Years with denser dots represent times when these terms were more frequently discussed, indicating periods of increased focus or research. Notably, 2016-2018 was a peak period for topics like migration, public opinion, democracy, and Türkiye-EU relations. After 2020, broader international issues (e.g., China, power dynamics) and legal/human rights topics took center stage.

This figure demonstrates that Türkiye-EU relations are multi-dimensional and complex, shaped by various concepts like integration, identity, politics, democracy, conditionality, reform, and migration.

Figure 6: Thematic Map (Author's Keywords)



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

The themes in Figure 6 were identified through bibliometric analysis methods. In the first stage, the co-occurrence of keywords in publications was examined to reveal their relationships, and then similar concepts were grouped using clustering techniques. Finally, the internal density of each cluster and its centrality in relation to other clusters were measured to determine the positioning of the themes.

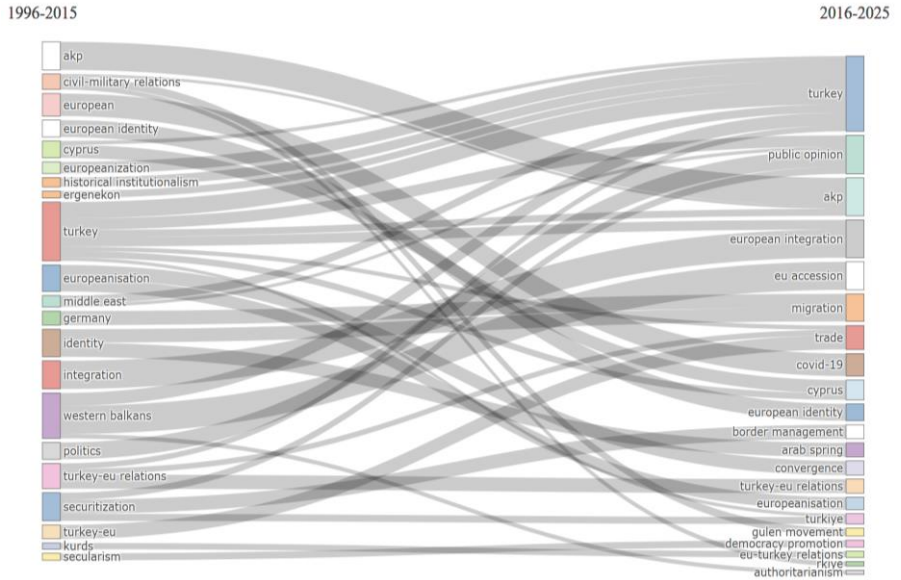
Figure 6 visually presents the key themes in Türkiye-EU relations, their levels of development, and their interconnections. Each point in the figure represents a theme; the size of the circles indicates the importance (development level) of the theme, while their position reflects the degree of proximity or distance to other themes. In this way, Türkiye-EU relations are classified into four main thematic categories:

- **Niche Themes:** Narrower and less common topics within the field. Concepts like “power”, “Islamophobia”, “Justice and Development Party”, and “multilateralism” reflect narrower discussions within the field.
- **Emerging or Declining Themes:** These themes are either on the rise or in decline. Neither central nor well-developed; they are either in the early stages of formation or losing their relevance. Themes such as “European identity”, “EU foreign policy”, “energy security”, and “EU accession” were more intensely discussed in the past but appear to have lost some importance recently.

- **Basic Themes:** Central to the field but not yet fully developed. These are indispensable issues, represented by the largest circles, and are among the most widely debated in Türkiye-EU relations. Concepts like enlargement”, “Europeanisation”, “identity”, “Cyprus”, “public opinion”, “Turkey-EU relations”, “integration”, and “populism” play central roles in the relationship.
- **Motor Themes:** Both central and well-developed; strong themes that drive the field and shape its direction. These themes are broader issues that influence and guide other themes. “Foreign policy”, “migration”, “refugee crisis”, “power”, and “governance” are key topics shaping the overall trajectory of Türkiye-EU relations.

This thematic map illustrates the multidimensional and complex nature of Türkiye-EU relations. It highlights how various factors—such as migration, the refugee crisis, European integration, identity, political and economic issues, and regional dynamics—shape the relationship, while also demonstrating their strong interconnections and significance.

Figure 7: Thematic Evaluation (Author’s Keywords)



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 7 visually represents the key concepts in Türkiye-EU relations between the periods of 1996-2015 and 2016-2025, highlighting how these relationships have evolved over time. The figure shows that Türkiye-EU relations are complex

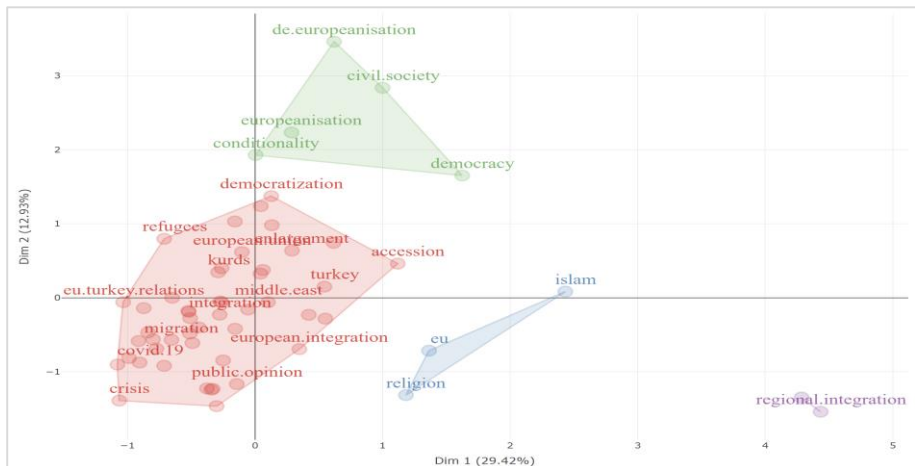
and multi-dimensional in both periods, with different concepts playing a significant role in shaping the relationship (As seen in Figures 5 and 8).

In the 1996-2015 period, concepts like “Europeanization”, “European identity”, and “EU accession” were central, reflecting Türkiye’s integration process into the EU. The relationship between Türkiye and European identity, as well as its impact on identity debates in Türkiye, was also a key topic. Concepts such as “politics”, “democracy”, and “trade” emphasized the political and economic dimensions of the relationship. “Cyprus” was another major issue during this period, indicating the ongoing conflict over the Cyprus problem. “Civil-military relations” showed the importance of security and military ties in Türkiye-EU relations.

In the 2016-2025 period, “migration” and the “refugee crisis” became prominent, illustrating the deep impact of the migration crisis on Türkiye-EU relations. “Security” and “Terrorism” gained more focus, highlighting the growing importance of regional security and counterterrorism efforts. The broader discussion of “democracy” and “human rights” emphasized their sensitive and central role in the relationship. Additionally, concepts like the “Arab spring” and the “Gülen movement” became significant, reflecting the influence of regional and local developments on Türkiye-EU relations.

The analysis of the figure shows that Türkiye-EU relations have undergone substantial changes over time, with the integration process, migration crisis, security concerns, democracy, and human rights being key factors shaping the dynamic nature of these relations.

Figure 8: Factorial Analysis (Author’s Keywords)



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 8 presents the results of a factor analysis conducted on Türkiye-EU relations, simplifying the complex relationships between variables into key themes. The main findings from the figure are:

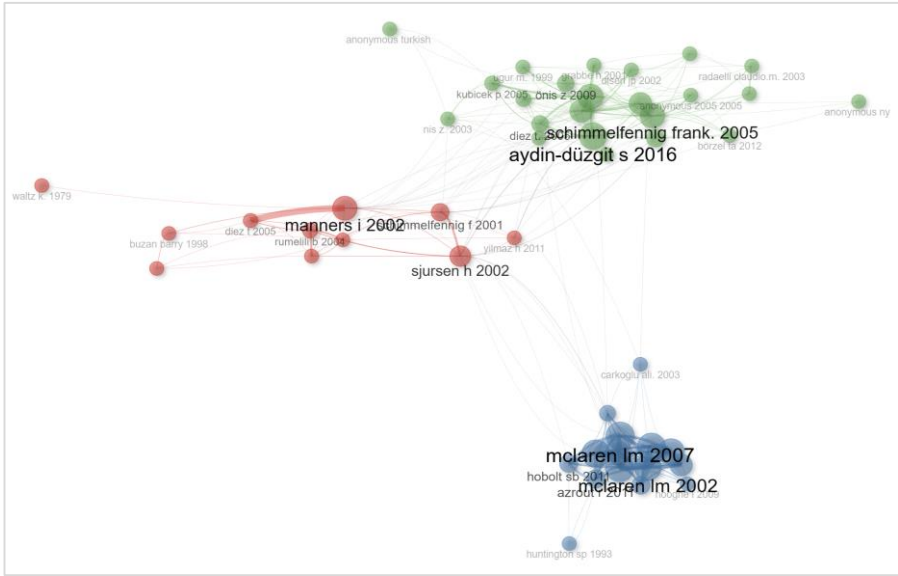
In the top right corner, concepts like “Europeanization”, “democracy”, “civil society”, and “conditionality” highlight the importance of Türkiye’s EU alignment and democratic reforms. The proximity of these concepts suggests that EU membership is seen as a driving force for democratization in Türkiye. “Civil society” is closely related, indicating its significant role in democratic reforms. The separation of “de-Europeanization” reflects Türkiye’s tendency to move away from the EU.

In the center, concepts such as “migration”, “refugees”, “Kurds”, “European integration”, and “public opinion” reflect critical issues shaping both Türkiye’s internal and foreign policies. These concepts emphasize the impact of the European migration crisis on Türkiye-EU relations and the tension between Türkiye’s identity politics and European identity.

In the bottom right, the concepts of “Islam”, “religion”, and “EU” show the role of religion in Türkiye-EU relations. The relative distance of “Islam” from other concepts suggests that religion is a sensitive topic, sometimes causing division in these relations.

Concepts like “COVID-19”, “crisis”, and “regional integration” reflect Türkiye’s efforts to address global and regional challenges. Their positioning suggests that Türkiye seeks solutions through cooperation with Europe and as a regional actor.

The factor analysis reveals that Türkiye-EU relations are shaped by both long-term goals, like European integration and democratization, and short-term issues, like migration, refugees, and identity. Global crises and regional dynamics also significantly influence these relations, indicating that Türkiye-EU ties should be viewed in both bilateral and broader global and regional contexts.

Figure 9: Co-citation Network Analysis

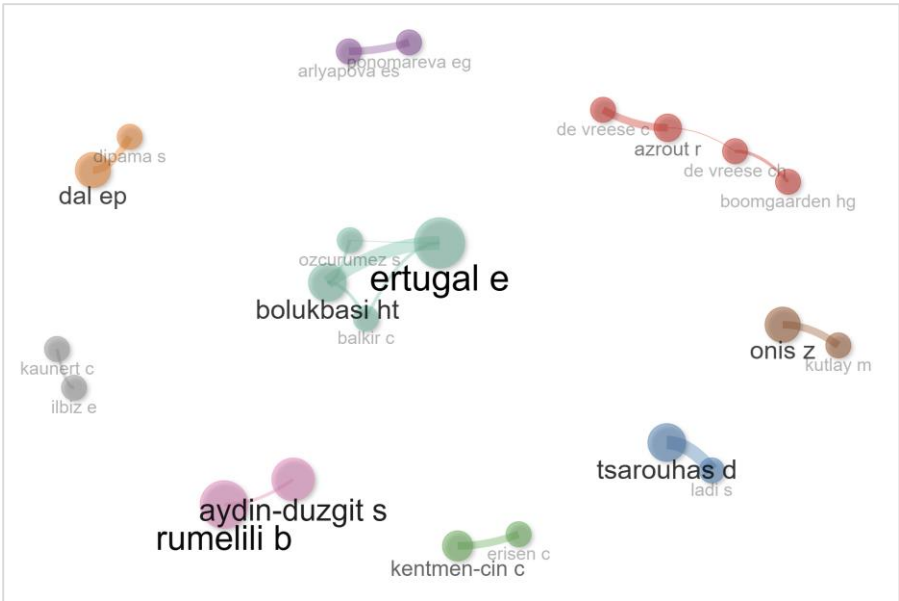
Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 9 visualizes a citation network, showing connections between studies in the academic literature and highlighting influential works. In this network, nodes (circles) represent authors or studies, while edges (lines) indicate relationships between them, such as co-citations, co-authorship, or shared topics. If two studies cite the same third source, they are connected, suggesting they may address similar issues or use the same theoretical framework.

Some nodes are larger and have more connections, indicating central studies that have made significant contributions to the field. These central works are critical for understanding key theoretical and empirical contributions. For instance, authors like Ian Manners (Manners I. 2002), Lauren M. McLaren (McLaren IM. 2007), and Frank Schimmelfennig (Schimmelfennig F. 2005) occupy central positions in the network. Manners' 2002 work appears to be especially influential, impacting many other studies.

This figure is useful for understanding general trends in the literature and identifying future research directions. New researchers can refer to these central works to connect with ongoing debates in the field.

Figure 10: Collaboration Network (Authors)



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

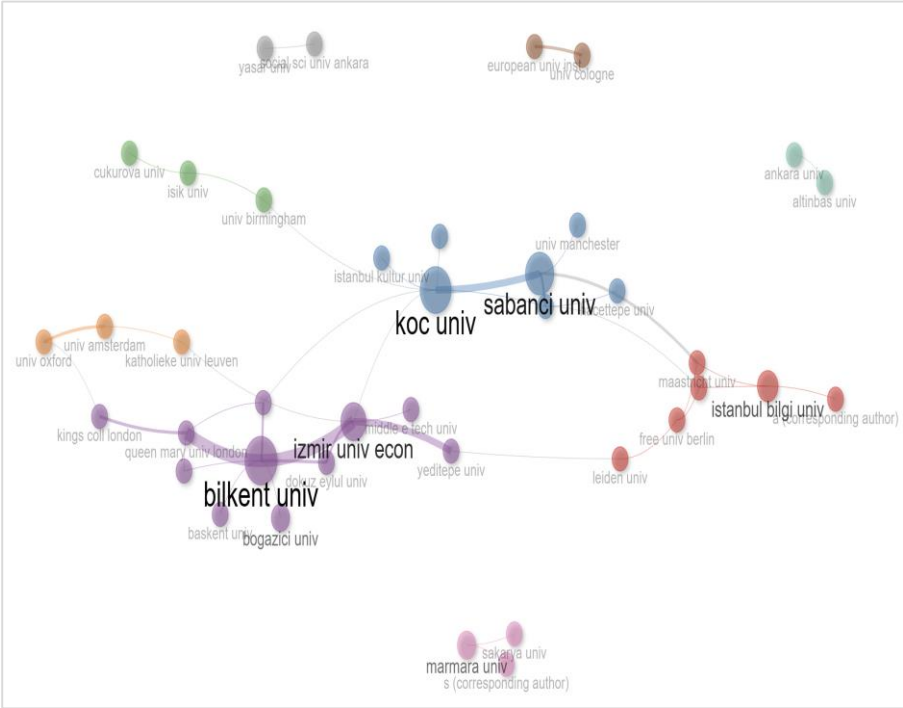
Figure 10 visualizes the collaboration network among authors, showing who works together and their common research interests. Each circle represents an author, and lines between the circles indicate collaboration. The thickness or color of the lines shows the intensity of the collaboration, with thicker lines representing closer or more frequent partnerships. Key findings include:

Ertugal E (Ebru Ertugal) stands out with the largest node, indicating frequent collaboration with other researchers. Bolukbasi HT (H. Tolga Bölükbaşı) and Ozcurumez S (Saime Özçürümez) are closely connected to Ertugal E, suggesting strong collaboration among them.

Authors like Kaunert C (Christian Kaunert) and Ilbiz E (Ethem Ilbiz), represented in gray, are more isolated, indicating either independent work or fewer collaborations.

Stronger connections, like between Aydin-Duzgit S (Senem Aydın-Düzgit) and Rumelili B (Bahar Rumelili), show intense collaboration, possibly due to multiple joint publications.

Figure 11: Collaboration Network (Institutions)



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Figure 11 visualizes the academic collaboration network between universities. Each node represents a university, and the lines between them indicate collaborations. The thickness of the lines reflects the intensity of the collaboration, with thicker lines representing stronger or more frequent partnerships. The figure highlights both domestic and international collaboration patterns among universities. Key findings include:

Koç University and *Sabancı University* are centrally positioned, indicating frequent collaboration and strong academic partnerships. Their connection is particularly thick, showing a close relationship.

Bilkent University and *İzmir Ekonomi University* have formed a broad collaboration network, with multiple connections.

İstanbul Bilgi University has strong ties with several institutions in Europe.

Ankara University, *Çukurova University*, and *Işık University* appear more isolated, with fewer connections to other universities.

Figure 12: Collaboration Network (Countries)

Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

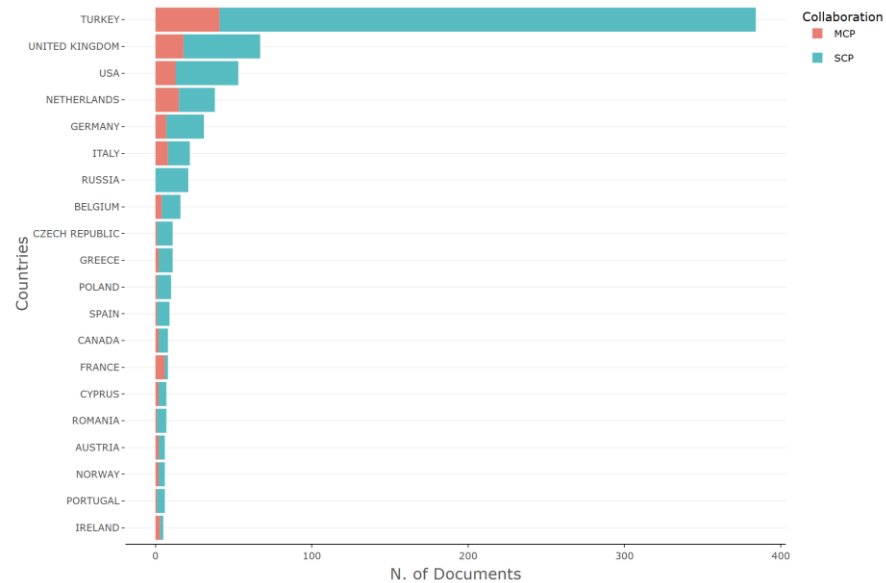
Figure 12 shows a network analysis of scientific or academic collaboration between countries, with Türkiye at the center. Key findings include:

Türkiye is in the central position, indicating its significant role in international collaborations, both regionally and globally. It has the most connections with other countries, emphasizing its importance as a key player in international academic networks.

The thickness of the lines reflects the strength or frequency of collaboration. Countries with stronger ties to Türkiye, like the UK and the USA, have thicker connections. On the other hand, countries further from the center, like Finland, Serbia, and Slovenia, have weaker or fewer connections.

The analysis highlights Türkiye's strong scientific cooperation with European countries, especially in the context of its EU accession process, and its partnerships with neighboring countries such as Bulgaria, Greece, and other Balkan nations, influenced by geographical proximity, historical ties, and cultural similarities.

Graph 5: Corresponding Author’s Countries



Source: Rstudio-Bibliometrix.

Graph 5 shows academic collaborations and publication numbers with different countries based on the countries of the corresponding authors. Two types of publication counts are shown in the figure: Multiple Country Publications (MCP) and Single Country Publications (SCP).

In the graph, Türkiye is in the lead in terms of academic collaboration with other countries, with its total publication count (SCP + MCP) significantly higher than other countries. This indicates Türkiye’s high level of academic productivity both nationally and internationally. The majority of Türkiye’s scientific output is categorized as SCP, suggesting that collaborations are primarily domestic. Compared to other countries, Türkiye’s MCP ratio remains low, indicating limited international collaborations.

Following Türkiye, the United Kingdom and the USA hold significant positions in terms of collaboration. Both countries’ MCP ratios reflect their strong commitment to international cooperation.

European countries like the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Belgium rank high in the chart, showing that Türkiye has strong academic ties with Europe. Collaborations with EU member countries particularly reflect Türkiye’s visibility within European scientific networks.

Discussion

Meltem Müftüler-Baç stands out as one of the leading scholars in the field, making significant contributions to the literature both in terms of total article count and fractionalized authorship. This highlights Müftüler-Baç's prominent position in her field and the substantial academic impact she has achieved. Additionally, Bahar Rumelili and Senem Aydın-Düzgit are other notable researchers whose work has drawn attention in this area.

While Müftüler-Baç emerges as one of the most influential figures in the field due to her productivity and fractionalized contributions, other researchers also bring valuable contributions to the literature through diverse collaboration strategies. Ayhan Kaya and Alexander Bürgin, despite having a limited number of total articles, demonstrate high fractionalized contributions. This indicates that they take on more leadership roles in individual studies and provide unique contributions.

The most prominent theme emerging from the analysis is the relationship between Türkiye and the European Union. This demonstrates that the authors focus heavily on Türkiye-EU relations in their work, with this topic occupying a central place in the literature. Türkiye-EU relations have been approached from a multidimensional perspective, addressing issues such as membership, foreign policy, European integration, security, and conditionality. The inclusion of economic and social dimensions, such as enlargement, integration, and globalization, alongside political processes, reflects the richness and diversity of analyses in the literature.

Türkiye's position as the leader in total citation count indicates a high academic production capacity. However, the low average citation count suggests that these works are not as influential in the international literature as those of other countries. To better leverage its production capacity, Türkiye should focus on enhancing international collaboration and developing strategies to increase publication rates in prestigious academic journals.

To improve the quality of academic work, broader international collaborations should be encouraged, and research efforts should be directed toward journals with high international visibility. These strategies would contribute to increasing both academic impact and Türkiye's visibility in the global academic arena.

Several significant insights can be drawn from the conceptual network analysis of publications examining Türkiye-EU relations. First, Türkiye-EU relations are influenced by a wide range of political, economic, social, and cultural factors. The EU membership process has been a significant driving force behind political, economic, and social reforms in Türkiye. Migration and the

refugee crisis remain some of the most critical and contentious issues in Türkiye-EU relations. Another prominent topic in the literature is Türkiye's identity within the EU and the impact of this identity on the relationship. Additionally, the EU's enlargement policy and the conditions it imposes on Türkiye play a crucial role in shaping the future of these relations.

The thematic analysis results indicate that "migration" and "refugee crisis" are prominent issue areas in Türkiye-EU relations. The migration crisis has been a significant turning point, deeply influencing the dynamics between the parties. The association of the "EU accession" theme with the slowing and increasingly uncertain membership process reflects the stagnation in this process. The proximity of themes like "identity" and "Turkey-EU relations" highlights the importance of Türkiye's identity within the EU and its impact on bilateral relations. Additionally, the presence of themes such as "power", "governance", and "trade" demonstrates that Türkiye-EU relations are shaped not only by political but also by economic and geopolitical factors. The inclusion of themes like "Balkans", "Russia", and "Western Balkans" further illustrates that Türkiye-EU relations are influenced not only bilaterally but also by global and regional dynamics.

According to the academic collaboration analysis, Koç University, Sabancı University, and Bilkent University hold central positions within the network. These institutions play a strategic role in fostering collaborations, and partnerships with these universities have the potential to enhance the impact of contributions to the literature. Istanbul Bilgi University's strong connections with academic institutions in Europe clearly demonstrate the contribution of international collaborations to academic advancement.

Other Turkish universities increasing similar international collaborations would strengthen Türkiye's academic visibility and enable them to contribute more significantly to global literature. In this context, promoting international connections and expanding academic collaboration networks are crucial for Turkish academia to assume a more active role on a global scale.

Conclusion

The academic literature on Türkiye-EU relations reveals that these relations have a multidimensional structure, with political, economic, social, and cultural factors playing a decisive role. Notably, migration and the refugee crisis stand out as some of the most significant and contentious issues in Türkiye-EU relations, deeply influencing the dynamics between the two parties. Türkiye's identity within the EU and the impact of this identity on relations is another prominent area of discussion in the literature. Additionally, the EU's enlargement policy and the conditionalities imposed on Türkiye are seen as critical factors in shaping the future of these relations.

The analyses indicate that while Türkiye's academic production capacity is high, its international impact remains limited. Low average citation counts suggest that Türkiye needs to increase its international collaborations and raise the proportion of its work published in prestigious academic journals. Institutions such as Koç University, Sabancı University, and Bilkent University hold central positions within academic networks, highlighting the strategic importance of collaborations. In particular, Istanbul Bilgi University's strong connections with international academic institutions clearly demonstrate the contribution of international partnerships to academic development.

In conclusion, to enhance Türkiye's academic influence and strengthen its contribution to international literature, it is essential to promote international collaborations, expand academic networks, and increase visibility in high-impact publications. Academic studies addressing the multidimensional and complex structure of Türkiye-EU relations are expected to play a crucial role not only in enriching the literature but also in shaping the future of these relations.

Limitations

This study was conducted based on the Web of Science (WoS) database. WoS is one of the world's most comprehensive and respected academic databases used to search scientific literature. Consequently, other national and international databases such as Scopus and TR Index were excluded from the scope of the research. This should be considered one of the primary limitations of the study. The reliance on a dataset derived from the Web of Science may limit the scope of the analysis and the potential for comparisons. Additionally, the differing publication criteria and coverage areas of various databases restrict the generalizability of the study's findings to other databases.

To expand the scope of research, it is recommended that future studies include alternative databases such as Scopus and TR Index. This would allow for a broader literature review and provide stronger support for the international validity of the findings. While this limitation does not reduce the originality of the current study, it serves as a guide to highlight the need for comparing findings with literature included in other databases.

Bibliometric analysis, while a powerful tool in the early stages of research processes, also plays a significant role in understanding the general dynamics of academic literature. However, for this method to be effective, the quantitative data obtained must be contextualized and linked to the literature. It is important to note that bibliometric analysis, being based solely on quantitative data, cannot replace in-depth qualitative analyses. Therefore, awareness of the methodological limitations is essential, and the findings should be supported with more comprehensive methodological frameworks to enhance their robustness.

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