

A Review of Graduate Dissertations on Migration in Turkey: 1967-2018

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Abstract

Scholars and practitioners in Turkey have showed visible interest to the notion of immigration within last years. As expected, number of academic works related with immigration has been increasing. In this respect, the aim of the study is to determine how the notion of migration has been studied in Turkey within the academic field, which disciplines are studied in which time period and at which level. In this research, qualitative research methods were used for document examination. In addition, research data were examined in two time periods: 1967-2009 and 2010-2018. 2009 and 2010 are discernible dates, which marked with Arab Spring, is used as a cornerstone for categorization. The research population consisted of 1235 graduate dissertations on migration: 943 masters, and 278 doctoral, 11 medicine and 3 arts. According to the research results, dissertations on migration were mostly completed in sociology and international relations along with changing role of Turkey in migration.

Keywords: Migration, Graduate dissertations, Turkey

Türkiye'de Göç Üzerine Yapılmış Lisansüstü Tezler Üzerine Bir İnceleme: 1967-2018

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Öz

Göç kavramı ve konusuna son yıllarda Türkiye'de akademi ve uygulama alanında gösterilen ilgi artmıştır. Özellikle akademik alan yazında göç üzerine yapılan çalışmaların sayısı artmıştır. Bu bağlamda; çalışmanın amacı, göç konusunun Türkiye'de hangi alanda, hangi düzeyde, hangi disiplinlerde ve hangi yıllarda çalışıldığını belirlemektir. Çalışmada, nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma verileri 1967-2009 ve 2010-2018 olmak üzere iki ayrı zaman diliminde incelenmiştir. Özellikle 2009 ve 2010 yılları Arap Baharı'nın başlaması nedeniyle tezlerin kategorize edilmesinde dönüm noktası kabul edilmiştir. Bu zaman diliminde göç ile ilgili yazılmış 943 yüksek lisans ve 278 doktora, 11 tıpta uzmanlık ve 3 sanatta yeterlilik olmak üzere toplam 1235 lisansüstü tez çalışmanın evrenini oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma sonuçlarına göre göçle ilgili lisansüstü tezlerin Türkiye'nin göç konusundaki değişen rolüyle uyumlu olarak en çok sosyoloji ve uluslararası ilişkiler alanlarında yazıldığı belirlenmiştir

Anahtar Kelimeler: Göç, Lisansüstü Tezler, Türkiye

Introduction

Turkey as a successor of Ottoman Empire has been always embedded with the migration reality. As a heritage of being an empire, multinational and heterogeneity structure of society has been unique characteristics of Turkey. In light of this, Turkey has had changing role through the time, which shape related policies. One of the most effective ways to develop new policies regarding migration in is to provide integrity and coordination between science world and practitioners. In this study, by carrying out the analysis of the postgraduate theses on migration, what areas were focused on, which subjects were discussed in the historical period are examined. The migration movements that have recently along with the effects of globalization are taking place as a result of several problems which reflect in regional and global scale threaten all the people in the world (Castles, 2002). From this perspective, migration movements affect the sending country, transit country and receiving country as well as societies. Number of migrants reached to 258 million since 1990 that is bound to increase in near future (IOM, 2019). These high numbers and reality make the concept of migration as a multifaceted and abysmal issue for researchers in last decade across the world in terms of roots, consequences and reflections. Turkey is not an exception in this trend, researches related with migration has been increasing in last ten years vis a vis its changing role in global migration. In this respect, scholars and practitioners consider researches on migration with its multifaceted nature as vogue topic. Therefore, this article aims to determine how “migration” has been studied in Turkey in the academic field, which disciplines are studied in which time period and at which level.

Concept of Migration

The notion of migration is a concept that has been going along with history of humanity. However its legal definition is contained with historical events. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM)¹, migration is defined as “population movements by crossing an international bor-

¹ IOM Uluslararası Göç Örgütü (2009). *Uluslararası Göç Hukuku: Göç Terimleri Sözlüğü*. Ed. Bülent Çiçekli. İsviçre: IOM Yayınları.

der or displacement within a state, or displacement of people regardless of duration and reason". The factors that cause the emergence of immigration phenomena are not unique to a single factor; they are the same in almost all countries of the world wherever people exist (Koçak and Terzi, 2012). It is necessary to consider the meaning, causes and theories of the concept, as well as the definitions that explore the displacements of individuals in different ways according to the conditions of their homelands. In other words, the majority of people migrate in order to save their lives due to war, ethnic or religious conflicts, political pressure and persecution or economic reasons, or to find better living conditions. In this respect, the notion of migration, referred as displacement movement, is defined according to different types of migration, such as forced and optional migration, permanent or temporary migration, illegal migration, transit migration, progressive and non-progressive migration, chain migration etc. which are mentioned in the various literature.

As the most common classification depend on the route of migration, which are internal and external. Internal migration is defined as the act of displacement within the borders of the country, whereas external migration is the migration of individuals to different countries by crossing the borders of the country (Choucri, 2002; World Migration Report, 2015). Apart from this classification, the phenomenon of migration is subjected to discrimination in the form of forced, voluntary, primitive, mass migration. Volunteering and force appear to be a decisive distinction among these classifications. While the displacement of individuals towards better conditions in accordance with their will and desires implies voluntary migration, forced migration means that people who leave their living spaces for reasons other than their will, often due to political pressure or war. Yet the distinction between internal and external moves becomes increasingly unclear due to geopolitical events, changing nature and migrants' multiple, complex and fragmented migration route (King et al, 2008).

In this respect, migration as a universal phenomenon, can be defined as a notion identifying people who is moving from one place to another for economic, social, political and cultural reasons. Since migration is a phenomenon closely related to social, cultural and economic political institutions in the society, its definition also changes according to different disciplines. Different disciplines analyze the notion of migration in their contextual

background. Changing nature of migration and increasing numbers of immigrants have undeniable political, economic and socio-cultural consequences. Politically; flow of migrant can be considered as a trigger for destabilizing in the host country which is fuelled by the considering immigrant as a competitors for resources and job market (Papademetriou and Banulescu-Bogdan, 2016). In addition to this, socio-cultural effects of migration is generally related with the idea of integration where host societies might see immigrants as a threat to the mainstream norms and values (Erçetin et al, 2018).

Immigrants can be perceived as a threat that create chaos for the host country or as a source for enriching the culture; both can be true. Similarly, the reclaiming of the individual has reinforced the link between security and migration; organizations and states concerned with migration and refugees have shifted the focus from human rights to human security (Ibrahim, 2005). This perception can change due to the country's migration policy; and governance and academia of the country can affect citizen's perspectives on immigrants.

Turkey and Migration

Geography and sociocultural features make Turkey as a unique country in migration. In order to understand, employment of notion of migration in Turkish academia, migrant's historical deployment in Turkey is vital. Turkey's history of the migration is composed of intricate trends of migration patterns, which also transformed the role of Turkey in migration process (İçduygu and Aksel, 2012). Ottoman Empire as a predecessor of Republic of Turkey had huge geographical borders where was home of cohort of different nationals that made migration is crucial reality (Yildirim, 2007; Kale, 2014). In the early years of the republic, Turkey was both sending and receiving country bounded with international agreements related with exchange of population. Also, Turkey experienced internal mobilization from rural to urban areas (İçduygu and Aksel, 2013). Especially in the 1950s, internal migration accelerated with agriculture mechanization in the Turkish countryside, reaching its peak as industrial investment was predominantly in big cities, educational organizations were predominantly in urban areas, and there was extreme disintegration of rural lands, terrorism and security

issues, and consequent bloodshed. Among the reasons for the internal migration to turn into a city-based structure from this period are the fact that educational organizations are predominantly in urban areas (Peker, 1999; Özdemir, 2012).

From 60s to 80s, Turkey experienced international migration as a source country that sent thousands of workers to Europe, then to Central Asia (Martin, 1991; Kirisci, 2003; Van Mol and De Valk, 2016). When it comes to 90s and 2000s, Turkey started to experience circular migration as a result of long-term migration of labor force to Europe between 1960-80 (Tezcan, 2019). Also, Turkey received minor migration waves from the former USSR countries. If we look over the changing pattern of migration in Turkey from a historical perspective, it can be said that research areas related with migration have been directly affected by changing roles of Turkey in case of migration.

After mid of 2000s, Turkey has found itself in a new migration reality which has been dwelling in flux of refugees amid Syrian and regional crises including the ongoing civil war that has already killed more than a quarter million people. Turkey is on the main route of immigrants and first choice as a neighbor country (Ekmekci, 2017). Since 2011 until today, according to UNCHR numbers Turkey has been hosting around four million refugees, which is one of the biggest host countries in the world (UNCHR, 2019). In other words, through the course of history, Turkey has been destination, transit and country of origin (Açıkalın et al, 2020). It triggered institutional and legal transformation in Turkey.

Until the mid of 2010s, there were three legal pillars of migration policy in Turkey. These are the Law on Settlement (1934), the Geneva Convention on Refugees (1951) and the Regulation on Asylum (1994)(Suter, 2013). Within the context of harmonization processes with the EU, Turkey revised legal work directed at changes in the migration law and policy. After the Arab Spring, Turkey's legal and political framework to cope with refugee and immigration flux has been undergoing important changes since 2014, when a new law called "Law on Foreigners and International Protection" came into force. This law includes the establishment of a new government agency called "Directorate General of Migration Management" (DGMM). In 2015, refugee flux to European borders opened a new phase in Turkey's legal governance of migration. The EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan was agreed in

November 2015 and then Turkey and EU signed EU-Turkey statement on additional action points of March 2016.

Methods and Population of the Research

The aim of the study is to investigate researches about immigration in Turkey in the academic field, which disciplines are studied in which time period and at which level. In this research, document examination was used from a qualitative research perspective. The research population consisted of 943 masters dissertations and 278 doctoral theses, 11 medical theses and 3 arts thesis, in total 1235 dissertations on migration, all of which are on the CoHE (Council of Higher Education) database in Turkey. Also, it should be asserted that years have been playing vital role in categorization of dissertations where Arab Spring as a momentum that trigger international migration across the region. Graduate theses are grouped: master, doctoral, medical, arts. The research universe is given in Figure 1 for each year.

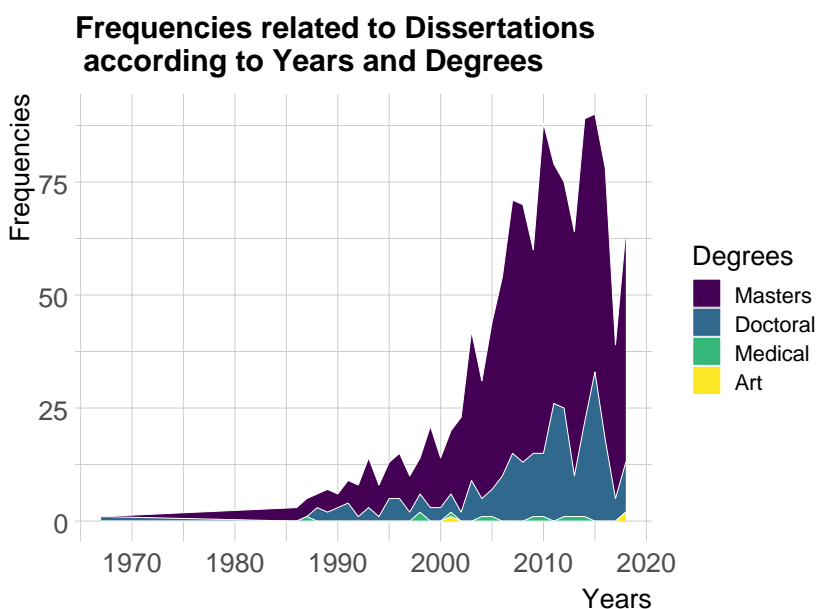


Figure 1. Frequencies related to Dissertations according to Years and Degrees

Figure 1 shows that number of dissertations has been increasing annually since 1967 when the first dissertation related with migration was written. The highest number of dissertations were published in 2015 with 90 which is composed of %63,3 masters and %36,67 doctoral thesis while there were no medical and art dissertations. It should be noted that in 2015 Turkey was mid of Syrian refugee crisis across the Europe and Middle East. Also, it should be considered that researchers prefer to work on migration in master dissertations in general with %76,36 of total 1235 thesis. The least number of dissertations on migration were prepared in the art with only %0,24 of total number. It can be seen that 76.35% of papers on migration in Turkey are masters dissertations, 22.52% are doctoral theses, 0.89% are medical, 0.24% are competence in arts. 53.93% of total dissertations were completed between 2010-2016 and 46.07% between 1967 and 2009. 74.92% completed between 2010-2016 were masters dissertations, 24.16% were doctoral theses and 0.61% are medical dissertations and 0.31% are arts dissertations. 78.03% completed between 1967-2009 were master's dissertations, 20.56% were doctoral theses and 1.23% are medical dissertations.

Results: Fields of Dissertations

As aforementioned in the concept of migration, the notion is taken and analyzed contextually. Therefore, not only numbers and level of dissertations but their fields help us to understand changing patterns of academic works on migration in Turkey In this respect, 1235 dissertations are grouped according to their main fields and given in Table 1.

Table 1. Findings related to Dissertations according to Fields

Economics and Administrative Sciences	396	32.06
Sociology	214	17.33
Engineering	101	8.18
History	88	7.13
Linguistics and Literature	57	4.62
Education and Training	44	3.56
Medical Sciences	42	3.4
Communication Sciences	35	2.83
Architectural Sciences	35	2.83
Fine Arts	30	2.43
Geography	27	2.19
Anthropology	27	2.19

Biology	23	1.86
Psychology	22	1.78
Others	22	1.78
Demography	15	1.21
Law	14	1.13
Religion	12	0.97
History of Turkish Revolution	8	0.65
Agriculture	7	0.57
Zoology	6	0.49
Statistics	6	0.49
Chemistry	2	0.16
Actuarial Sciences	1	0.08
Archeology	1	0.08
Total	1235	100

According to Table 1, 8.18% of dissertations are in engineering, 4.62% in linguistics and literature, 3.4% in medical science, 32.06% in economics and administrative sciences, 17.33% in sociology, 7.13% in history, 3.56% in education and training 2.83% in communication sciences, 2.43% in fine arts, 2.83% in architectural sciences and 1.8% in all other dissertations. Highest numbers in dissertations were written in economics and administrative sciences. It is also important to prevail students in which subfields under economics and administrative sciences work on migration. Subfields are provided in the Table 2.

Table 2. Findings related to Dissertations on Economics and Administrative Sciences

International Relations	139	35.11
Economics	67	16.92
Public Administration	55	13.89
Business Administration	46	11.61
Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	40	10.11
Political Science	29	7.32
Econometrics	8	2.02
Political science and public administration	5	1.26
Home Economics	4	1.01
Banking	1	0.25
Health Care Management	1	0.25
Information and Records Management	1	0.25
Total	396	100

According to Table 2, when we examine economics and administrative sciences dissertations on migration, it can be seen that, 0.25 % are in banking, 10.11% are in labor economics and industrial relations, 16.92% are in

economics, 2.02% are in econometrics, 1.01% are in home economics, 12.5% are in business administration, 11.61% are in public administration, 1.26% are in political science and public administration, 7.32% are in political science, 35.11% are in international relations, 0.25 are in health care management, information and records management. The highest number of dissertations is in international relations department within 1235 total dissertations.

Conclusion and Discussion

The aim of the study is to determine the work of migration in Turkey in the academic field, which disciplines are studied in which time period and at which level. In this research, document analysis was used for qualitative research purposes. In addition, research data were examined in two time periods as 1967-2009 and 2010-2016. Research population is consisted of 1235 dissertations on migration.

While 569 dissertations from 1235 dissertations were published over 44 years, between 1967-2009, 666 were completed over 8 years, between 2010-2018. Therefore, the dissertations written on immigration in Turkey have increased 7 fold in the last 8 years. It could be claimed that this situation is visible evidence of the effects of the Arab Spring, spread first in Middle East and after all over the world. Akar and Atasoy (2020) stated that among the reasons for the increase in written doctoral dissertation on migration between 2008-2012 are outbreak of the civil war in Syria and the wave of immigration of the people from the country after the war as they sought refuge right in Turkey. As we know, it is inevitable that the expenditure made on the issues for Syrian refugees, such as education, health and etc. would bring additional financial burdens on the general budget of different countries (Erçetin et al. 2018), it is very promising for the scientific and social convergence that the impacts and contributions to Turkey, which is the country where Syrian refugees have most intensively migrated by the influence of the chaos in the Middle East, are supported by scientific studies realized by Turkish academics (Erbaş and Türker, 2019; Erçetin et al. 2018; Güngör and Potas, 2018; Akpınar, 2017; Özdemir, 2017; Sayın, Usanmaz, and Aslangiri, 2016).

Research results also show that dissertations on migration have been studied more by academics in fundamental sciences, economic and administrative sciences. Studies show that most of the postgraduate theses investigating refugee and migration are master's theses, almost all of them are made by the department of international relations in the field of social sciences, followed by departments such as political science, law, and sociology (Yerli, 2018; Tatlıcıoğlu and Apak, 2018). Furthermore, Güngör and Potas (2018) designed a research study with the aim of analyzing graduate dissertations on migration in education and training in Turkey. Migration abroad and education, internal migration and reflections on education in various dimensions were the topics investigated mostly. Additionally, migration due to 'brain drain', compulsory migration, educational opportunities in host countries, teaching migration topic in different methods, level of social skills of students who have migrated abroad and those who have not, migration in children's books, primary education, seasonal migration and education, urbanization and training needs of adults were investigated respectively in graduate dissertations on migration in education and training in Turkey. In the study of Yerli (2018), the studies on migration and refugees in 2020 were examined and it was stated that 94% of the graduate theses investigating the refugee focus only on the concept of refugee, do not include the concepts of politics, family, children, and the ratio of studies focusing on the concepts of education, health and women were 1.6% which was emphasized as low. In this sense, migration is a phenomenon that affects the lives of migrants as well as individuals in the host country because it is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, it will be significant to increase the number of studies related to migration in other areas.

Migration can be seen as a threat or can be seen as an opportunity, for immigrants and for citizens. In this study, the most interesting result is the increasing number of theses on migration, since the Syrian refugee migration crisis appeared in Turkey and Europe. This is very promising that, scientific research, especially graduate dissertations have continued increasing during this migration period. In the academia of Turkey, migration issues are quite a popular subject, and it appears that there is an increasing acceleration of the studies in this matter. The reason for this can be considered as the country is in a position of receiving immigrants and the longer stay periods of increasing numbers of migrants. The trend of decreased likelihood

of returning migrants, the host country Turkey is likely to require more social, economic, cultural and ethnic arrangements. For this reason, it can be suggested that postgraduate thesis studies on migration will be needed and the quantitative increase of these studies should be encouraged. It also give insight that works on migration have also contributed integration and related issues of migration in Turkey in a multidimensional way where various fields bring different dimensions. It is thought that the theses to be made especially in the field of doctorate will contribute to the academicians and practitioners interested in immigration. It is expected that local governments, which encounter the phenomenon of immigrants with priority, will benefit more from postgraduate studies. In this sense, it can be suggested that municipalities use postgraduate studies to solve their problems in practice.

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