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Publication Status of Graduate Theses of Internal Disease Nursing: A Systematic Review

İç Hastalıkları Hemşireliği Yüksek Lisans Tezlerinin Yayımlanma Durumu: Sistemik Derleme

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S.K.: 0000-0003-0604-8008¹Izmir University of Economics, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing, Izmir²Cukurova University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Internal Medicine Nursing, Adana**Sorumlu yazar / Corresponding author:** Ecem Özgül,

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Geliş tarihi / Date of receipt: 27.07.2021**Kabul tarihi / Date of acceptance:** 06.11.2021**Atıf / Citation:** Çürük, G.N., Özgül, E., & Karadağ, S. (2021). Publication status of graduate theses of internal disease nursing: A systematic review. *SBÜ Hemşirelik Dergisi*, 3(3), 173-176. doi:10.48071/sbuhemsirelik.974999**ABSTRACT****Introduction:** Transforming master's theses into publication is important for sharing scientific knowledge.**Aim:** This study was conducted to determine the conversion rate of internal medicine nursing master's theses made in Turkey into scientific articles.**Method:** Between December 2019 and February 2020, the thesis database of the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey was used. All master theses are held, as a legal requirement, and were searched for "Internal Medicine Nursing" and "Nursing" master theses completed between 2004 and 2018. The publication rate of these theses was found by searching for the names of thesis author and supervisor on the following databases: PubMed, Thomson Reuters Web of Science, Google Scholar, Turkish Medline, and Turkish Academic Network and Information Center National Academic Network.**Results:** More than thirty (31.4%) of 616 theses included in the study were published in Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index, 3.5% in Emerging Sources Citation Index, 25.0% in other international refereed journals, 19.9% in national academic network and information center, and 20.2% in other national refereed journals.**Conclusion:** It was determined that less than half of the master's theses in the field of internal medicine nursing were published and that, of these published theses, less than half appeared in journals covered by Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, or Social Sciences Citation Index. Solutions must be generated to promote the Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, or Social Sciences Citation Index publication of master theses.**Keywords:** Academic dissertations; internal medicine; nursing; publications.**ÖZ****Giriş:** Yüksek lisans tezlerinin yayına dönüştürülmesi, bilimsel bilginin paylaşılması için önem arz etmektedir.**Amaç:** Bu çalışma Türkiye'de yapılan iç hastalıkları hemşireliği yüksek lisans tezlerinin bilimsel makalelere dönüşme oranlarını belirlemek amacıyla sistemik derleme şeklinde yapılmıştır.**Yöntem:** Çalışmada Aralık 2019 ile Şubat 2020 tarihleri arasında, Yüksek Öğretim Kurulu Tez Merkezi veri tabanında Anabilim Dalı "İç Hastalıkları Hemşireliği" ve tez konu alanı "Hemşirelik" olan ve 2004-2018 yılları arasında hazırlanmış olan yüksek lisans tezleri taranmıştır. Bu tezlerin yayımlanma oranının belirlenmesi için birçok veritabanı (PubMed, Thomson Reuters Web of Science, Google Scholar, Türk Medline ve Ulusal Akademik Ağ ve Bilgi Merkezi) tez adı, yazarı ve danışmanın adı kullanılarak taranmıştır.**Bulgular:** Çalışma kapsamına alınan 616 tezin %31,4'ünün Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded veya Social Sciences Citation Index, %3,5'inin Emerging Sources Citation Index kapsamına giren dergilerde, %25,0'ünün diğer uluslararası hakemli dergilerde, %19,9'unun Türk Medline ve Ulusal Akademik Ağ ve Bilgi Merkezi tarafından taranan ulusal hakemli dergilerde, %20,2'sinin ise diğer ulusal hakemli dergilerde yayımlandığı tespit edilmiştir.**Sonuç:** İç hastalıkları hemşireliği alanında yapılan yüksek lisans tezlerinin yarısından fazlasının yayına dönüştürülmediği saptanmıştır. Yayına dönüşen çalışmaların yarısından daha azının Science Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded veya Social Sciences Citation Index kapsamına giren dergilerde yayımlandığı tespit edilmiştir.**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Akademik tezler; hemşirelik; iç hastalıklar; yayınlar.Bu eser, Creative Commons Atıf-Gayri
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Introduction

The main indicator of scientific productivity, master theses is an important integral part of specialty training (Lovitts, 2005; Sipahi et al., 2014). The main purpose of thesis preparation is to equip the student to write a systematic scientific study and produce new information. Another purpose is sharing this information, contributing to the literature (Dhaliwal, Singh & Bhatia, 2010). The contribution of theses to the scientific world depends on them becoming articles in scientific journals. Unless published in the world of science, a study is not considered to have been carried out in scientific circles (Quiroz, Curiosa, Encarcion & Gayoso, 2010). For this reason, it is important to publish the theses in journals (Dhaliwal et al., 2010).

The publication rate of theses in various countries, including our country, is low (Sipahi et al., 2014). The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey examined countries' publication and citation counts according to the various branches of science between 2010 and 2015. The most widely published sciences are Medical Sciences, Basic Sciences, Engineering Sciences, and Social Sciences. According to the world ranking, despite recent growth in master programs, there was a significantly lower performance in terms of dissemination in Turkey (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, 2015).

Just like all other branches of science, nursing can be developed through research. Therefore, nursing theses are considered an important source of knowledge production. As a result, there is an increase in the number of graduate programs in nursing. Scientific productivity is of key importance to increase the quality of nursing practices, provide higher quality care, increase scientific knowledge, and meet the needs and demands of the age. Internal medicine nursing, one of the more advanced study areas, is among the most demanded postgraduate branches of nursing with a steadily increasing number of thesis and scientific research (Yılmaz, Yazgan, Dur, Salman & Demir, 2017).

Aim

In the literature, no study has examined the publication rates of master theses in internal medicine nursing in Turkey. Therefore, the objective of this literature review study was to determine the rates at which Turkish internal disease nursing master theses were converted into scientific articles.

Research Questions

1. What is the publication status of internal disease nursing master's theses?
2. What is the rate of publication of theses that have been published in journals?
3. What is the distribution of internal medicine nursing theses according to subject areas?

Methods

The Type of Research

This study is a systematic review study.

Databases Used in Research

As a legal requirement, all master theses are held, the thesis database of the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey (CoHE). Therefore, the database was searched between December 2019 and February 2020 for "Internal Medicine Nursing" and "Nursing" master theses completed between 2004 and 2018. While scanning, Turkish keywords were preferred. In addition, the publication rate of these theses was found by searching for the names of thesis author and supervisor on the following databases: PubMed, Thomson Reuters Web of Science, Google Scholar, Turkish Medline, and Turkish Academic Network and Information Center National Academic Network.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for the Research

Master theses which were from Internal Medicine Nursing and conducted between 2004 - 2018 were included in this study.

Universe and Sample of the Research

This study determined 2000 master thesis records by scanning the keyword 'nursing' in the CoHE system. Among the 2000 records, there are 319 records reached by using the keyword 'internal disease nursing'. Among the remaining 1681 master's theses, there are theses made in internal disease nursing. However, these are specified only as 'nursing' instead of 'internal medicine nursing' in the specialization department. For this reason, 1681 records were examined by the researchers, and 297 theses were added to the sample in the field of internal disease nursing. Thus, among the 2000 nursing master's theses, 616 internal medicine nursing master's theses were reached.

The Evaluation of the Data

The publication rate of these theses was found by searching for the names of thesis author and supervisor on the following databases: PubMed, Thomson Reuters Web of Science, Google Scholar database, National Academic Network, and Information Center, and Turkish Medline. Theses published in journals indexed either in PubMed or Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI-E) were considered international publications.

Published studies are grouped according to the most frequently studied areas in internal medicine nursing, some symptoms such as pain, stress, sleep, and some concepts related to nursing care such as quality of life, occupational health, and self-care.

Results

In our search, six hundred and sixteen theses (616) were recorded. Of these, it was found that two hundred and fifty-two (40.9%) resulted in publications in various journals. The overall publication rate in international journals was seventy-nine (31.4%) in Science Citation Index (SCI), SCI-E and Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), nine (3.5%) in Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), sixty-three (25.0%) in other international refereed journals. On the other hand, the overall publication rate in Turkish national journals was fifty (19.9%) in Turkish Academic Network and Information Center, and fifty-one (20.2%) in other national refereed journals (Table 1).

The majority of the theses were descriptive studies (75.5%), with the remainder, interventional (16.6%) and methodological studies (7.9%). When the overall publication rates of the thesis

Table 1: Publishing rates of theses in journals (n = 252)

Journal	N	%
SCI, SCI-E, SSCI	79	31.4
Other international	63	25.0
ESCI	9	3.5
National Academic Network and Information Center	50	19.9
Other national	51	20.2
Total	252	100.0

SCI: Science Citation Index; SCI-E: Science Citation Index Expanded; E-SCI: Emerging Sources Citation Index; SSCI: Social Sciences Citation Index

research type were investigated, the publication rates of the descriptive studies were found to be one hundred and eighty-two (39.1%). Of these, the percentages were as follows: Turkish Academic Network and Information Center 23.6%, other national refereed journals 20.8%, SCI, SCI-E 23.6%, ESCI, 4.3%, and other international refereed journals, 27.4%. Publication rates of the interventional studies were found to be forty-five (44.1%), and of these, percentages were as follows; Turkish Academic Network and Information Center, 8.8%, other national refereed journals, 15.5%, SCI, SCI-E 57.7%, and other international refereed journals 17.7%. Publication rates of the methodological studies were found to be twenty-five (55.5%). Of these, percentages were national academic network and information center 12%, other national refereed journals, 24%, SCI, SCI-E, 40%, ESCI 4%, and other international refereed journals, 20% in Table 2.

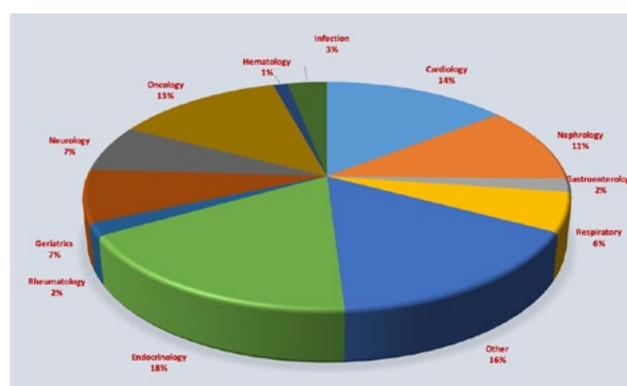
When the research areas of the theses were investigated, the three most common areas were found to be endocrinology (17.6%), cardiology (14.4%), and oncology (13.1%), respectively (Figure 1). According to Figure 1, other subjects were nursing concepts (e.g., pain, stress, sleep) and nursing care (e.g., the quality of care, the use of care method, patient's self-care, work health).

Discussion

Although master theses have scientific validity, their readership is limited. Because they remain in the university library where the thesis was written, in the original language, and maybe not accessible via databases. Publishing a master's thesis in well-known journals is the best way to reach a wider audience and gain recognition (Dhaliwal et al., 2010). Therefore, it is of great importance that master theses are published in terms of their accessibility on national and international platforms. Our findings show disappointing publication rates of master's theses in internal disease nursing (40.9%). In other studies, the publication rate of nursing theses was found to be similar to our findings. In the study conducted by Motamed-Jahromi and Dehghani between 1990 and 2010, 145 master theses in nursing were examined, reveal-

ing a publication rate of 40.8% (Motamed-Jahromi & Dehghani, 2014). Yılmaz et al. (2017) examined 3870 nursing master theses and reported the publishing rate as 14.4% between 1977 and 2016. The causes of this inability to disseminate knowledge were stated as follows: graduate students' insufficient knowledge of scientific research and writing articles in the literature, lack of support for publication from the advisor, advisors not having enough time for graduate students, lack of motivation of the student, the researcher regarding the current publication as sufficient, inappropriate journal choice, insufficient foreign language knowledge, and inadequate support and encouragement (Randall, 2006; Ari, 2007). These may be the main reasons for the low publication rate of internal disease nursing master theses.

Our study determined that the majority (75.5%) of the theses made in the field of internal medicine nursing consisted of descriptive studies. To improve and maintain health, it is important to conduct descriptive research that examines the individual and the community's health-related behavior, beliefs, and values. Descriptive research can produce new insights into risk factors/causes of health problems, and new health events can be identified, contributing to planning health services (Metintaş & Atay, 2019). Similarly, our study is similar to the figure of 80% in the study conducted by Motamed-Jahromi and Dehghani (2014) in research conducted by Baggio, Rodrigues, Erdmann, Figueiredo, and Vieira (2014) again, descriptive studies made up the majority of nursing theses. In contrast, the rate of publication of theses published in our study in foreign indexed journals according to research types are as follows: interventional studies, 57.7%, methodological studies, 40.0%, and descriptive type studies, 23.6% (Baggio et al., 2014). Master's theses are expected to be completed and presented within a semester. Therefore, descriptive studies may be preferred because they are low-cost and easy to complete within a time limit.

**Figure 1:** Distribution of thesis topics**Table 2: Publication Rates of the Thesis Research Type and Publications According to Research Areas**

Research Type	National Journals				International Journals						Total n
	National Academic Network and Information Center		Other National Refereed Journals		SCI/SCI-E		E-SCI		Other International Refereed Journals		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Descriptive studies	43	23.6	38	20.9	43	23.6	8	4.4	50	27.5	182
Interventional studies	4	8.9	7	15.6	26	57.8	0	0.0	8	17.7	45
Methodological studies	3	12.0	6	24.0	10	40.0	1	4.0	5	20.0	25

SCI: Science Citation Index; SCI-E: Science Citation Index Expanded; E-SCI: Emerging Sources Citation Index

Evidence-based information obtained through scientific research is of special importance for the nursing profession to increase the quality of nursing practices, provide better quality care, and meet the needs and demands of the age (Dönmez, Yavuz Van Giersbergen & Soyer Geçkil, 2018). According to our findings, the number of master theses/scientific research in the field of internal disease nursing has increased in recent years. However, the publication rate in the citation index is not proportional to this increase. In our study, the rate of publication of theses in SCI-E and SSCI journals was 31.4%. Similar findings, Yılmaz et al. (2017) concluded that scientific studies in the field of nursing have increased in recent years, but the publication rate in the SCI has not matched this increase. Therefore, it is concluded that 13.6% of these are publications in the citation index. Compared to our findings, a much lower rate was found by Motamed-Jahromi and Dehghani (2014). As a result, only 0.04% of nursing master's theses qualified for the Institute of Science Index. In Turkey, for applications for associate professors in health, science, and engineering, there are requirements to publish in Thomson Reuters indexed journals, i.e., SCI-E, SSCI, and Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI) (Turkey Interuniversity Board Presidency, 2021). It may be why the rate of publication of master's theses in the citation index is much higher in our study than the study by Motamed-Jahromi and Dehghani (Motamed-Jahromi & Dehghani, 2014).

When the literature is analyzed, the publication rate of master's theses in all disciplines, including nursing, is low. For example, the rates for publications of masters theses in SCI or SCI-E indexed journals have been found as follow: in the study by Özgen et al., 6.2% for theses in medicine, in Celikgün et al., 26.6% for theses in audiology, in Mayir et al., 22% of theses in general surgery, 11.4% of theses in the field of microbiology, and Koca et al., 23.2% of theses in orthopedics (Özgen et al., 2011; Celikgün, Derinsu, Çiprut, Torun & Kalcioğlu, 2016; Koca et al., 2016; Mayir et al., 2016).

In our country, as in the whole world, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases are among the most common chronic disease (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). The theses we examined also focus on such common chronic Diseases. We acknowledge that it is important to work in these areas to prevent and rehabilitate chronic diseases and improve nursing care. However, nursing research also needs to consider less frequent diseases.

Conclusion

As a result of this study, it is seen that the rate of publication of a master's thesis in the field of nursing in Turkey is below the desired level, as in other disciplines. In this direction, it can be recommended to carry out studies to investigate the reasons for not publishing nursing master's theses in our country and to plan interventional studies for these reasons. In addition, it is among our suggestions that nursing master's theses should be done on less studied subjects and scientific knowledge should be produced about these subjects.

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