

A METHODOLOGICAL LOOK AT THE RECENT HISTORY OF THE SOCIAL POLICY DISCIPLINE*

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ABSTRACT

This research has been discussed in order to shed light on the recent history of the social policy discipline. In this context, it is aimed to methodologically examine the studies published in the field of social policy in recent years, to reveal their current situations and trends, to contribute to new road maps and social policy literature for researchers. In the research, the document analysis technique, one of the qualitative research method patterns, was used. The scope of the research consists of a total of 226 articles published in the Journal of Social Policy Conferences, between 2011-2023. Articles within the scope of the research; Type, method, sample size, sample group, data collection tools, data analysis and keywords will be systematically analyzed. The findings obtained by using percentage and frequency values in the analysis of the data will be presented with tables and figures.

Keywords: Social Policy, Document Review, Journal of Social Policy Conferences.

JEL classification: J01, J68, C25.

SOSYAL POLİTİKA DİSİPLİNİNİN YAKIN GEÇMİŞİNE METODOLOJİK BİR BAKIŞ

ÖZET

Bu araştırma sosyal politika disiplininin yakın geçmişine ışık tutmak amacıyla ele alınmıştır. Bu bağlamda arařtırmada son yıllarda sosyal politika alanında yayınlanmış çalışmalarının metodolojik olarak incelenmesi, mevcut durumları ve eğilimlerinin ortaya konulması, arařtırmacılara yeni yol haritaları ve sosyal politika yazınına katkı sunulması hedeflenmektedir. Arařtırmada nitel arařtırma

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yöntemi desenlerinden doküman incelemesi tekniği kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın kapsamını Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları Dergisi'nde 2011-2023 yılları arasında yayınlanmış toplam 226 makale oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma kapsamındaki makalelerin; türü, yöntemi, örneklem büyüklüğü, örneklem grubu, veri toplama araçları, verilerin analizi ve anahtar kelimeleri sistematik analiz edilecektir. Verilerin analizinde yüzde ve frekans değerlerinden yararlanılarak elde edilen bulgular çizelgeler ve şekiller eşliğinde sunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Sosyal Politika, Doküman İncelemesi, Sosyal Siyaset Konferansları Dergisi.*

JEL Sınıflandırması: *J01, J68, C25*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is very difficult to express the inclusive limits of the social policy discipline. However, by explaining the concepts of "social" and "policy", it will be possible to make predictions about the areas of interest of the social policy discipline. In phrases containing the word social, a semantic inference is expressed for the protection of economically weak people and groups and the improvement of their current conditions. In this context, the word social generally refers to situations "related to society". Policy literally means "the way, method and regulation to be followed". Therefore, the meaning that the word "policy" evokes in minds can be expressed as the combination of the desired goal and the practices and actions to be taken to achieve the intended phenomenon.

When we look at the literature, it is seen that there are two approaches and therefore two definitions on the concept of social policy. Firstly, the concept of social policy is approached with a "work" focus and is expressed as social policy in a narrow sense. In a narrow sense, social policy emerged as a product of the industrialization and capitalistization process, that is, the Industrial Revolution. The concept of social policy in a narrow sense; It has a semantic content that deals with the struggle between labor and capital and produces peaceful solutions to the conflict between labor and capital. The second is included in the literature as social policy in a broad sense. Social policy in a broad sense; Beyond finding a peaceful solution to the conflict between labor and capital, it goes beyond the focus of "work" and focuses on all groups with conflicting interests in society. It is aimed to ensure that all groups that make up the society live in harmony and in an environment where social peace is maintained, and to minimize the conflict by taking precautions to prevent conflict between these groups.

At this point today, social policy in a broad sense has become a discipline that shows a solution-oriented approach to all social problems, specifically for all individuals and social classes in society, and focuses on all practices in order to ensure social justice and social peace. In this context, social policy in a broad sense, today; In addition to issues such as income and income distribution, education, health, social discrimination, environment, children, elderly, women, disabled people, ex-convicts, immigrants, young people, all groups in society, especially disadvantaged groups, are addressed and referred to as third generation social policy in the literature. brought about the transformation.

In the literature, limited studies on the systematic analysis of studies conducted in the field of social policy have been found. In the scans made, it is seen that the first study for this purpose was handled by Yorgun (2009). Yorgun (2009), in his study titled “Thesis Topics and Paradigm Changes in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations Departments”, aimed to detect the change and trend that emerged between 1984-2007 and to reveal these areas, if there is a periodic shift in thesis topics towards some areas. Another study, which can be called a continuation of Yorgun's (2009) study, was written by Bingöl (2020). Bingöl (2020), with his study titled “A Qualitative Review of Current Graduate Programs in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations in Turkey: Analysis of Doctoral Theses Between 2008-2019”, determined the thematic areas of the doctoral theses and highlighted the prominent topics, methods, etc. in the theses. aimed at identifying phenomena. Another study related to the subject in the literature was examined by Koray (2013). Koray (2013) in “Where is Social Policy in Academic Field?” made various studies and made evaluations about where academic studies in the field of social policy were heading. Another study encountered in the scans is the study titled “Analysis of Articles Written on Social Policy with Text Mining” by Öcal and Herand (2020). In their study, Öcal and Herand (2020) aimed to examine the areas of interest of the articles on "social policy" in the Ulakbilim and Science Direct databases between 2009 and 2019 and the association rules between the keywords used in these articles. Another systematic study encountered in the searches was written by Kocabaş and Özgüler (2021). Kocabaş and Özgüler (2021) in their study titled “Non-Governmental Organizations in Postgraduate Theses within the Scope of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations Departments”, postgraduate theses are examined and evaluated.

The aim of this research is to reveal the bibliometric and methodological current status and trends of academic articles that have been discussed in the social policy discipline in recent years, to present new road maps to researchers and to contribute to the social policy discipline. In the research, answers were sought to the following sub-objectives within the scope of this main purpose.

- What is the title distribution of the author(s)?
- What is the gender distribution of the author(s)?
- Distribution of author(s) according to their departments?
- What is the writing language of the articles?
- What are the research methods applied?
- What are the data collection tools used?
- What is the orientation of the keywords?

2.METHOD

This research, which was carried out in order to examine in depth the academic studies published in recent years in the discipline of social policy and to describe their tendencies, was designed according to the document analysis pattern, one of the qualitative research methods. Qualitative research is a research method that is carried out for the purpose of understanding and interpreting the research problem, can result in assumptions and theories, has little quantification and investigates patterns (Glesne, 2012). According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013); Qualitative research helps to examine a problem, situation, or phenomenon in detail and enables the researcher to obtain in-depth information. Document review can be expressed as obtaining, detailed review, questioning and analysis of documents that constitute the scope of the research (Özkan, 2019). Document review is the process of systematically evaluating documents in printed and electronic media (Bowen, 2009). As in other research methods, in research designed based on document analysis, it is necessary to systematically examine and interpret the data in order to make sense, gain understanding and produce knowledge (Bowen, 2009). In this context, in this research, multiple studies conducted for the same purpose were examined from a holistic perspective using the document analysis technique. The procedures carried out in this context are shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Document Review Process Steps



Figure 1 above explains the steps to be followed in this research. First, the research topic and problem were determined and the purpose of the research was determined. Secondly, inclusion/exclusion elements were determined regarding which criteria would be taken into account in selecting the documents to be examined within the scope of the research. Thirdly, the studies that will constitute the scope of the research were selected. In the fourth step, the documents within the scope of the research were examined and data collection was carried out. In the fifth step, the data collected from the scope of the research were analyzed. In the sixth and last step of the research, the findings obtained through synthesis and analysis were reported and the research was concluded.

2.1. Scope of The Research

The research covers all articles published in the Journal of Social Policy Conferences, which publishes in the field of social policy, between 2011 and 2023. In this context, while the 60th issue of the journal published in 2011 constitutes the beginning of the research scope, the 84th issue published in 2023 represents the last journal of the research scope. Therefore, all articles in these issues for which inclusion/exclusion criteria were not determined in the journals included in the research were evaluated within the scope of the research. To summarize, the scope of this research is; It consists of 226 articles published in the Journal of Social Politics Conferences, including the 60th issue and the 84th issue. This also shows the limitations of the research. The reason why this situation expresses limitation is that current social policy discussions are viewed from the perspective of the Journal of Social Politics Conferences.

2.2. Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected from 226 articles that constitute the scope of the research, using document review techniques. A data collection template was created to collect data from articles. The data collection template of the relevant article includes; There are sections that will allow the collection of bibliometric and methodological data, including the number of authors, author title and gender, research type, keywords, research method, sample size, sample group, data collection tool and data analysis information. In this context, the articles were examined and transferred to the data collection template. The data in the data collection template was grouped and prepared for analysis.

Bibliometric analysis technique was used to analyze the data. Bibliometric analysis aims to examine the content and structure of scientific studies (Pendlebury, 2008). In this context, bibliometric analysis; It is an analysis technique used to examine previous research for a specific purpose, to contribute to the literature, to provide a road map for research in the relevant field, and to enable new research to be conducted (Borgman and Furner, 2005; Hall, 2011). The data in the data collection template was analyzed and visualized with tables and figures, accompanied by frequency and percentage values.

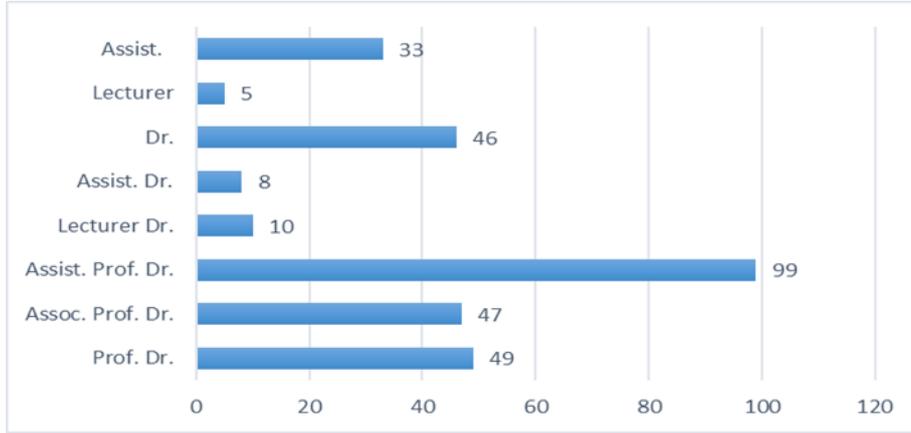
3. RESULTS

The findings of this research, which aims to methodologically examine the studies published in recent years in the field of social policy, reveal their current situation and trends, provide new road maps to researchers and contribute to the social policy literature, are explained with the help of tables and figures. In this context, the articles within the scope of the research; Analyzes regarding type, method, sample size, sample group, data collection tools, data analysis and keywords will be visualized with tables and figures and presented with percentage and frequency values.

3.1. Distribution of Article Authors by Title

Figure 2 below shows the distribution of the titles of the author(s) in the articles within the scope of the research.

Figure 2. Title Distribution of Author(s)

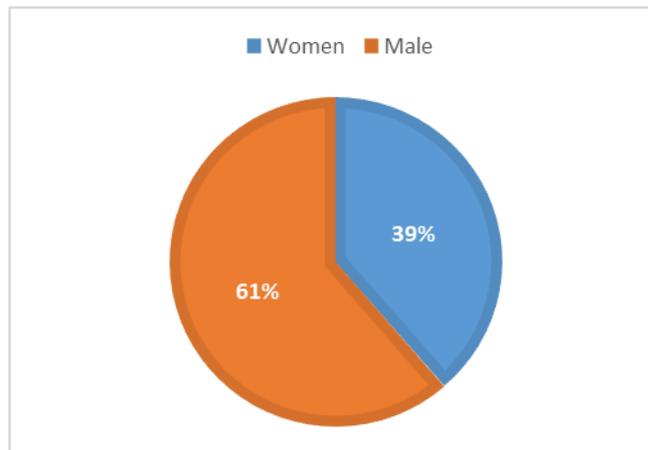


In Figure 2, the distributions of authors' titles are presented with frequency values. In this context, the highest number of author titles is Assist.Prof.Dr., with a frequency of 99, followed by Prof. Dr. and Assoc. Prof. Dr. titles are coming. When compared to the total number of authors, it can be seen that the number of authors without a doctorate degree is relatively low.

3.2. Distribution of Article Authors by Gender

Figure 3 below shows the distribution according to gender of the author(s) in the articles within the scope of the research.

Figure 3. Distribution of Authors by Gender



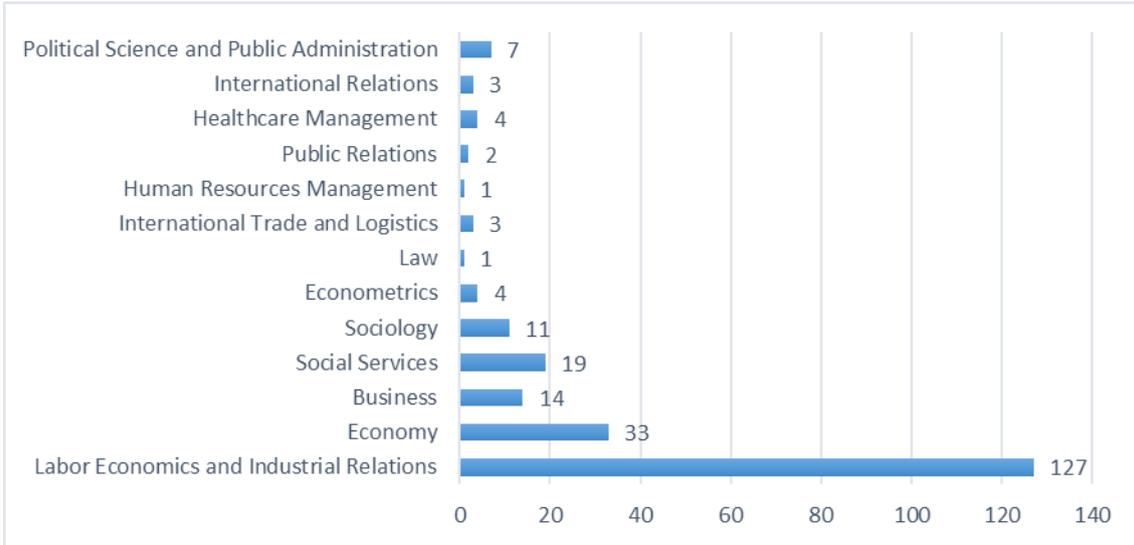
Within the scope of the research, an attempt was made to make a prediction about the gender of the authors in 226 articles. Gender predictions were made based on their names, and when names used culturally for both men and women were encountered, information about their genders was obtained by

researching the relevant authors. In this context, the distribution of authors according to gender was determined as 61% men and 39% women.

3.3. Distribution of Article Authors by Departments

Figure 4 below shows the distribution of the author(s) in the articles within the scope of the research according to the departments where they work or continue their education.

Figure 4. Distribution of Authors According to Their Departments

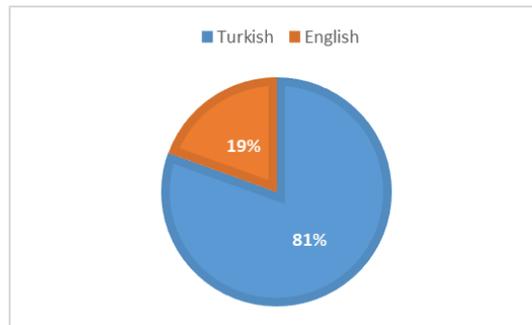


In Figure 4, descriptive information about the sections of the authors of the articles that constitute the scope of the research is presented along with frequencies. It is seen that the authors of the articles published between 2011 and 2023 are from 13 different departments. The majority of the authors (n=127) are from the labor economics and industrial relations departments, followed by economics (n=33), social work (n=19), business administration (n=14) and sociology (n=11).

3.4. Writing Language of Articles

Figure 5 below shows the distribution of the articles within the scope of the research in terms of the language in which they were published.

Figure 5. Writing Language of Articles

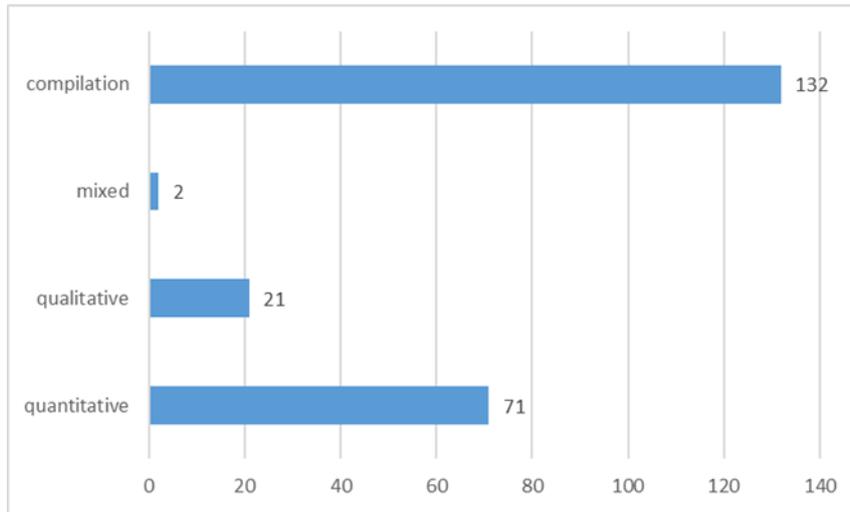


It can be seen that there are two different languages used in the 226 articles published between the 60th and 84th issues of the Social Policy Conferences magazine. While 81% of the articles were written in Turkish, 19% were written in English and published in the journal.

3.5. Research Methods of Articles

Figure 6 below provides information about the scientific research methods used in the articles within the scope of the research.

Figure 6. Research Methods Used in Articles

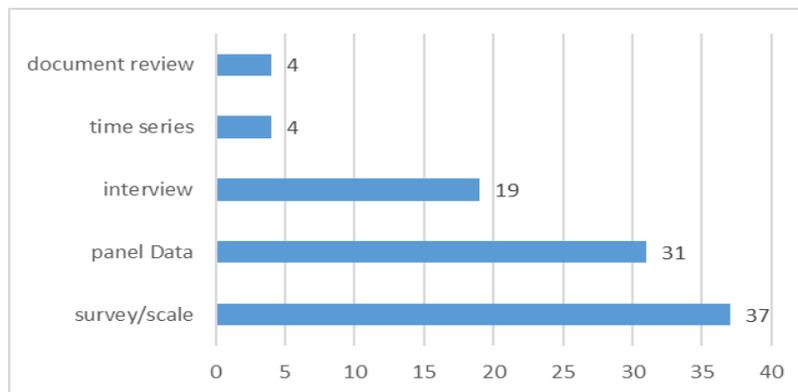


When the methods of the articles within the scope of the research shown in Figure 6 are examined, it is seen that the majority ($n = 132$) are compilation studies. Compilation studies are followed by quantitative ($n=71$), qualitative ($n=21$) and finally mixed studies ($n=2$).

3.6. Data Collection Methods in Articles

Figure 7 below presents the data collection methods of the articles within the scope of the research.

Figure 7. Data Collection Methods Used in Articles



It is seen that surveys/scales (n=37) were mostly used as data collection tools in the articles within the scope of the research. Another data collection method frequently used in articles is panel data (n=31) and interview (n=19) techniques. In addition to these techniques, time series (n=4) and document review (n=4) techniques were also used.

3.7. Keywords Used More Than Once in Articles

In Table 1 below, the keywords used in the articles within the scope of the research are systematically compiled and the keywords used more than once are presented.

Table 1. Keywords That Appear More Than Once in Articles

Keywords	f	Keywords	f	Keywords	f
Migration	13	Corporate Governance	3	Immigrant	2
Unemployment	12	Vocational Training	3	Strike	2
Türkiye	11	OECD	3	Right To Strike	2
Social Policy	10	Panel Data Analysis	3	Climate Refugees	2
Covid-19	7	Welfare State	3	Decent Work	2
Globalization	7	Intra-Union Democracy	3	Job Satisfaction	2
European Union	6	Syndicalism	3	Future Of Work	2
Education	6	Union Perception	3	Fighting Unemployment	2
Employment	6	Non-Governmental Organizations	3	Japan	2
Labor Markets	5	Social Exclusion	3	Public Administration	2
Industry 4.0	5	Social Security Reform	3	Short Term Working Grant	2
Labor Market	5	Social Service	3	SME	2
Union	5	Social Capital	3	Crisis	2
Local Government	5	Stress	3	Corporate Governance Principles	2
Poverty	5	Syrians	3	Clustering Analysis	2
Right to Work	4	Life Satisfaction	3	Global Climate Change	2
ILO	4	Aging Population	3	Logistic Regression	2
Intention to Leave Job	4	Aging	3	Civil Servant Unionism	2
Unregistered Employment	4	Akhism	2	Happiness	2
Neo-Liberalism	4	Family	2	Refugees	2
Social Security	4	Active Aging	2	Qualitative Research	2
International Labor Organization	4	Germany	2	Refugee	2
Demographic Transformation	3	Constitution	2	Civil Society	2
Industrial Relations	3	Minimum Wage	2	Social Care	2
Disabled	3	Care	2	Social Work	2
Youth Unemployment	3	Child Poverty	2	Social Services	2
Human Rights	3	Democracy	2	Social Protection	2
Decent Work	3	Audit	2	Gender	2
Work	3	Digital Transformation	2	Attitude	2
Job Insecurity	3	Economic Crisis	2	Productivity	2
Occupational Health and Safety	3	Inequality	2	New Media	2
Woman	3	Marriage	2	Fighting Poverty	2
Women's Employment	3	Temporary Protection	2	Participation in Management	2
Development	3	Income	2	Forced Migration	2

The keywords of the 226 articles included in the research were examined and compiled systematically, and the keywords that appeared more than once were listed as shown in Table 1. The word cloud technique was used to visually display the multiple repeated keywords in Table 1 in terms of their density. Figure 8 below shows the word cloud visual of keywords with more than one repetition.

accordance with the field of study of social policy. It was observed that the words were used more than once. Issues that are closely related to each other, such as forced migration, refugees, or active aging, aging population; It was concluded that the study was conducted through frequent repetition.

Social policy is a branch of science focused on daily life. The workplace is a vibrant area that is constantly transforming depending on political, economic and social developments. Social policy studies can be provided with a more original content by expanding their framework in line with the flow of life and disseminating different research methods, without deviating from their essence.

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