

Homeless Children: A Bibliometric Analysis

Nur Özdemir^{1,2}

ABSTRACT

Homelessness is an important social problem that should not be ignored for all societies around the world and can be defined as the inability of individuals to find a permanent residence for reasons such as family, economic or mental health. Especially the lack of literature on subcategories such as child, youth, women and elderly homelessness reveals the need for more comprehensive research in these areas. This study aims to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the literature on homeless children from different perspectives such as year, field, country, university and keyword. Using the bibliometric analysis method, a total of 452 studies, which were added to the literature from 2000 to 26 July 2024, were analyzed with the VOSviewer program as a result of the search with the keyword ‘homeless children’ in the Web of Science database. The studies were evaluated from the perspective of year, field, country, university, keyword, co-author, citation links of authors, bibliometric analysis of texts and co-citation analysis of authors. This study aims to contribute to the identification of trends and research gaps in the literature by revealing the current state of research on homeless children.

Keywords: Homelessness, Homeless Children, Bibliometric Analysis, Web of Science.

Evsiz Çocuklar: Bibliyometrik Bir Analizi

ÖZET

Evsizlik, dünya genelinde tüm toplumlar için göz ardı edilmemesi gereken önemli bir sosyal sorun olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır ve bireylerin aile, ekonomik ya da ruh sağlığı gibi nedenlerle kalıcı bir konut bulamaması şeklinde tanımlanabilir. Özellikle çocuk, genç, kadın ve yaşlı evsizliği gibi alt kategorilerdeki literatür eksiklikleri, bu alanlarda daha kapsamlı araştırmalar yapılması gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu çalışma, evsiz çocuklar konusuna ilişkin literatürün yıl, alan, ülke, üniversite ve anahtar kelime gibi farklı açılardan bibliyometrik bir analizini yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bibliyometrik analiz yöntemi kullanılarak, Web of Science veri tabanında “homeless children” anahtar kelimesiyle yapılan tarama sonucunda, 2000 yılından 26 Temmuz 2024 tarihine kadar literatüre kazandırılan toplam 452 çalışma VOSviewer programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmalar, yıl, alan, ülke, üniversite, anahtar kelime, ortak yazar, yazarların atıf bağları, metinlerin bibliyometrik incelenmesi ve yazarların ortak atıf analizi perspektifinden değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çalışma, evsiz çocuklar konusundaki araştırmalara yönelik mevcut durumu ortaya koyarak literatürdeki eğilimlerin ve araştırma boşluklarının belirlenmesine katkı sağlamayı hedeflemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Evsizlik, Evsiz Çocuklar, Bibliyometrik Analiz, Web of Science

¹ Corresponding Author: nurrozdemiir@gmail.com

² PhD Student, Selçuk University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Sociology, ORCID: 0000-0003-0285-8222.

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Type of Research: Research Article

1. INTRODUCTION

The word ‘home’, which is at the root of the concept of homelessness, is a very rich word in terms of content. It can be said that home has various meanings such as shelter, hearth, heart, privacy, root, abode. As a shelter, home refers to a structure that enables individuals to protect themselves and has at least a physical roof over their heads. In this context, the house as a shelter evokes a material form in the mind. The meanings of home as heart and home as hearth are similar. While home as hearth evokes the warmth, peace and comfort that home gives to the body, home as heart is associated with the image of a happy home based on mutual love and support relationships (Somerville, 1992: 532). In this context, homelessness, together with the lack of basic human needs, causes individuals to experience not only physical but also emotional and social deprivation.

Although the phenomenon of homelessness has changed its form in the historical process, it has continued to exist as an important problem affecting societies in every period. Homelessness is evaluated together with phenomena such as deprivation of average living standards, reduced interaction of individuals with their environment, stress, poverty, stigmatization and marginalization. Homelessness can be briefly defined as the inability of individuals to have a personal and permanent residence due to economic conditions or the inability to use such a residence on a permanent basis (Akyıldız, 2020: 31). Meeting basic needs such as shelter and security is of great importance for individuals to survive. However, individuals who cannot meet their shelter and security needs damage their ties with society. In this context, among the main causes of homelessness, the stigmatization and marginalization behaviors of the society towards homeless individuals come to the fore. Individuals who carry the stigma of homelessness move away from social relations with the effect of this stigma and become more invisible; this leads to ignoring these problems instead of developing social policies (Genç et al., 2022). When explaining the phenomenon of homelessness, not only individual factors, such as substance abuse, alcoholism and mental problems, but also the stigmatization and marginalization behaviors of society towards homeless individuals should be taken into consideration (Güler, 2023). In this context, while addressing the general causes and consequences of homelessness, it is of great importance to consider child, youth, elderly and female homelessness in separate categories. Since each individual group faces different challenges under different socio-economic and cultural conditions, analyzing these subgroups separately will enable the development of more effective and targeted strategies in the fight against homelessness.

The aim of this study is to analyze the publications on ‘homeless children’, which is an important problem both in the world and in Turkey, in the light of quantitative data and numerical measurement indicators. In this context, the study aims to present a bibliometric view of the studies on homeless children in the Web of Science database. Thus, it is aimed to provide a perspective that will help future researchers to direct their studies.

1.1. Homelessness and Definitions

Today, homelessness is one of the most important problems affecting our world and our country. In this context, it is very important to determine the definition of homelessness and the problems it includes. According to Genç (2016), homelessness includes problems such as poverty, unemployment, migration, urbanisation, disability, inability to have an active role and function in society and substance abuse. Therefore, homelessness is an important problem that affects both individuals and societies.

Even if a clear historical beginning of homelessness cannot be revealed, it can be said that it has experienced a rapid rise with urbanisation. Migration from the village to the city, followed by urbanization, housing shortages and unemployment, has led to the problem of homelessness (Şan & Küçük, 2018). Especially with industrialisation, the increase in the population rates of cities and inadequate housing facilities have been insufficient to meet the needs of both the people of the region and the migrants. In short, although there is diversity about the historical adventure of homelessness, it is obvious that homelessness is an ongoing phenomenon from the past to the present. Therefore, although homelessness is not a situation that affects societies in general, it is an important social problem that reduces the quality of life of individuals and causes stigmatisation and marginalisation (Acar et al., 2022).

According to Brendan O'Flaherty (1996, p. 9), the purpose of defining homelessness is to help other people understand the homeless. In this context, homelessness varies according to societies and cultures, as well as economic, social, political, etc. variables affect the definition of homelessness. According to Ravenhill (2008, p. 13), homelessness consists of three sub-categories: the roofless, the homeless and the precarious. Roofless people are people who do not have a roof over their heads at night and have to sleep on the streets, benches, parks or under bushes. The homeless, those living in shacks, cars, caravans or tents, are not roofless, but are still homeless in a general sense. The precariously housed include individuals living in hostels, slums, bed and breakfast hotels, temporary accommodation, flats for friends, overcrowded accommodation and those about to be evicted. According to Carol McNaughton (2008, pp 4-8), homeless people are defined as individuals who live in various public spaces such as cars, parks, bus and railway stations, abandoned buildings because they are deprived of normal living standards.

The definition of homelessness in the Homelessness, Health, and Human Needs report prepared by the Committee on Health Care for Homeless People Institute of Medicine in 1988 is as follows

1. An individual without a fixed, regular and adequate night residence.
2. An individual with a primary night residence.
 - a) A supervised or publicly operated shelter designed to provide temporary living quarters (including public shelters and temporary housing for the mentally ill)
 - b) An institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended for institutionalisation
 - c) A public or private place that is not designed or normally used as a regular sleeping place for people.

This definition refers specifically to homeless individuals, but is equally applicable to homeless families (Institute of Medicine, 1988, p. 2). Anthony Giddens (2016: 1084), defines homeless people as people who do not have a permanent home and who sleep overnight with friends or family members, receive temporary protection by the state, or sleep in public spaces. If we want to explain homelessness in physical terms, we can define individuals and families who do not have a private space of their own with permanent access as homeless. If we want to explain homelessness in special terms, if adults do not have a place of their own, if it is stated that the first obstacle is their economic situation when they want a house, these individuals and families can be defined as homeless (Jencks, 1994, p. 7).

Although the scientific literature on homelessness and especially the homeless is quite extensive, it is seen that there are no precise measurable definitions of who the homeless are. When the definitions of homelessness are examined, it is seen that descriptions are made on the living standards of the homeless rather than a general definition.

When the literature on homelessness is examined, it is seen that this phenomenon is often explained with concepts such as exclusion from society, stigmatization, lack of access to health services and poverty. In this context, Gronda, Wane and Vitis (2011, p. 36) draw attention to a number of factors that can affect both the causes and consequences of homelessness. These factors include adverse conditions in the housing and labor market, low income or insufficient ability to pay, behavioral health problems (e.g. disability, mental health problems and substance abuse), experiences of violence, abuse and institutionalization, social networks and responsibilities, and stigma and discrimination.

Although homelessness is usually addressed as a housing problem, it cannot be ignored that this situation has serious psychological effects on individuals. In addition, homelessness brings along many problems such as social exclusion, security problems, turning to crime and being a victim of crime (Türkcan & Türkcan, 1996, p. 10; Akyıldız, 2022). Therefore, a comprehensive definition of homelessness is critical in terms of developing appropriate policies for homeless individuals and taking necessary measures. In addition, it is extremely important to determine the dynamics of homelessness among different groups such as youth, women, children and the elderly and to plan special studies for these groups.

Homeless individuals are a vulnerable group facing various challenges, including health issues, psychological difficulties, criminal behavior, and victimization, and they are significantly disadvantaged compared to those with stable living conditions (Türkcan & Türkcan, 1996; Özdemir, 2010; Gürel, 2023, p. 807). Homelessness is associated with a higher prevalence of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and hepatitis, as well as chronic illnesses. Moreover, behavioral health problems, including alcohol and substance abuse, are commonly observed among homeless populations. Additionally, the issue of inadequate and insecure nutrition affects all age groups among the homeless, posing a particularly critical challenge for homeless children and youth (Culhane et al., 2001, p. 520; Dachner & Tarasuk, 2002; Haddad et al., 2005, p. 2767; Lee et al., 2010, p. 506; Szerlip & Szerlip, 2002). Due to the poverty of their parents, homeless children and

youth often face hardships, leading to problems such as academic failure, behavioral disorders, and learning difficulties, which increase their likelihood of experiencing greater challenges in social life in the future (Rafferty et al., 2004; Zima et al., 1997). In this context, homeless individuals constitute a significant risk group for both individual and public health, underscoring the critical need for comprehensive policies, the fulfillment of basic needs, and efforts to mitigate societal risks associated with homelessness.

1.2. Causes of Homelessness

The main causes of homelessness stem from the stigmatisation and marginalisation behaviours of the society towards homeless individuals (Akyıldız, 2020, s.2). Individuals who carry the stigma of homelessness avoid social interaction with the effect of this stigma and hesitate to communicate because the society excludes them. This exclusion causes the homeless to be ignored instead of developing social policies and as a result, it causes the living conditions of the homeless to worsen. In addition to this situation, variables such as substance abuse, alcoholism and unemployment are among the causes of homelessness (Akyıldız, 2017, p. 71). However, there is an important situation that should be mentioned at this point. When we separate the causes of homelessness as social and individual, a confusion occurs. Because unemployment can also be caused by social reasons. Therefore, homelessness appears as a problem that harbours many factors in its background. Studies on homelessness divide the factors causing homelessness into two as internal and external. Internal problems refer to problems such as mental health, substance abuse, developmental or mood disorders. External problems include interpersonal problems. In other words, it includes social problems, behavioural, legal or situations arising from these (Holland, 2014, p. 13).

'Systematic' and 'personal inadequacy' theories have been developed to explain the causes of homelessness. According to the systematic causes theory, inadequate mental health policies, unemployment and inadequate housing problems lead to homelessness. On the other hand, the personal inadequacy theory states that individual problems such as alcoholism, substance abuse, mental illness, failure in social relations and inability to take responsibility lead to homelessness (Özdemir, 2010, p. 80).

In general, it is very difficult to try to explain the causes of homelessness with only one variable. It would be more accurate to state that many variables leading to homelessness are linked to each other in a chain manner. Although the causes of homelessness may vary according to the cultural, political and socio-economic characteristics of societies, when the literature is examined in general, the causes of homelessness can be expressed as weakening of intra-family and interpersonal relationships, increase in divorce rates, high inflation, high housing prices and inadequate housing facilities, unemployment, insufficient and low income, alcohol and substance abuse, disability and mental illness (Akyıldız, 2017, p. 71; Aynacı, 2024, p. 46).

When the studies on mental disorders, which are among the causes of homelessness, are analysed, it is seen that serious psychological disorders are detected in these individuals.

In this context, 78 homeless individuals were interviewed in the article ‘Is homelessness a mental health problem?’ published by Ellen Bassuk et al. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the interviewees had serious untreated psychological disorders and approximately 91 per cent of them had a primary psychiatric diagnosis. More specifically, approximately 40 per cent of these individuals had psychosis, 29 per cent were chronic alcoholics and 21 per cent had personality disorders (Bassuk et al., 1984).

In the article titled "Psychiatric disorders in homeless people in Istanbul" published by Karamustafalıoğlu et al. in 2007, it was aimed to determine the 1st axis disorders and related factors in homeless people in Istanbul by interviewing 174 homeless people reached in 2005 and 2006 (Karamustafalıoğlu et al., 2007). Axis model is a 5-axis method developed in DSM-IV for the diagnosis of mental/emotional disorders. Axis 1 disorders consist of classic mental health disorders that have occupied clinical psychology and psychiatry for a long time, such as anxiety (obsessions, compulsions and phobias), mood disorders (depression and bipolar disorder), schizophrenia (alcohol and substance abuse), eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia) (Budak, 2021, p. 247; Millon et al., 2023, pp. 7-8). According to the findings of the study, it was determined that homeless individuals have a high rate of psychiatric illness, mood disorders and psychotic disorders, psychiatric disorders in their background and forensic history. In short, as a result of the study, it is seen that psychopathology is intense in homeless people. Therefore, Karamustafalıoğlu and his colleagues have demonstrated that medical and psychological assistance for homeless individuals is important.

In the studies to be carried out on why homeless individuals are homeless, it is very important to consider the living standards, social support networks and family relations of individuals together in order to make the solutions to be produced more reasonable and sustainable. In this context, when we examine homelessness separately within the framework of women, children, elderly and youth homelessness, it should not be forgotten that each of them may have different reasons. In short, making the invisible reasons behind homelessness visible will contribute to the solutions to be developed.

2. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the studies on "homeless children" in the Web of Science database were analysed by bibliometric method. Bibliometric method is a research method that allows the contents of scientific databases such as Web of Science and Scopus to be analysed with the help of bibliometric software such as Gephi, Leximancer, VOSviewer. The bibliometric method is used to process large volumes of scientific data, or in other words, bibliometric analysis is used to decipher and map large volumes of unstructured data. In this context, bibliometric analysis enables and empowers researchers to obtain a single-point overview, identify knowledge gaps, derive new ideas for research, and position their intended contribution to the field (Donthu et al., 2021, p. 285). Moreover, bibliometric analysis is a method used to digitally analyse and systematize journals, scientific and other written publications. Bibliometric analysis maps the findings, year, type of document, citations,

keywords, source of publication, country of publication, etc. of researches to make them available to other researchers (Jannah et al., 2023, p. 757). According to Wallin (2005, p. 261), bibliometric analysis has provided a tool that can be easily scaled from micro (institute) to macro (world) level.

With the development of internet technologies, it has become easier to access quality research worldwide. In this context, the Web of Science (WoS) database, which collects "high quality" journals within the framework of scientific ethics, helps researchers to access quality publications and journals to accept universal quality standards. Moreover, WoS makes an important contribution to bibliometric studies by universally collecting studies in the database regardless of the place of publication, language or discipline on an international scale.

In this study, by using quantitative data and numerical measurement indicators, it is aimed to present academic studies on homeless children, which is an important problem from past to present, to researchers from a holistic perspective. In this context, Web of Science (WoS) database was preferred as the data source of the studies analysed in the study. Web of Science was chosen as a tool that increases the reliability of the research with its wide data source and reliability. In addition, the advanced data analysis capabilities of the Web of Science database and its wide content consisting of different disciplines enrich the scope of the study and reinforce its reliability. The bibliometric analysis method was used to systematically review the academic literature on homeless children to identify the main trends, pioneering studies and research gaps.

In the study, the key concept of 'homeless children' was searched in the WEB of Science (WoS) database on 26 July 2024 and it was determined that there were 452 studies on this subject. In this context, the studies included in the scope of this study consist of the studies in the WEB of Science (WoS) database until 26 July 2024. The studies examined within the scope of the research are research article (n=340), meeting abstract (n=28), book review (n=27) review article (n=23), paper (n=16), editorial material (n=14), book chapter (n=6), note (n=5) and letter (n=4). Each of these studies was included in the study.

The network maps of the 452 studies examined in this study were created with the VOSviewer program, which is frequently used in bibliometric data analysis. Developed in 2010 by Nees Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman, VOSviewer is a programmed used to create maps based on network data. VOSviewer prepares bibliometric networks and visualizations for researchers by investigating co-authorship, co-occurrence, citation, bibliographic linkage and common links. VOSviewer can also be used to create maps of authors or journals based on co-citation data or to create maps of keywords based on co-occurrence data (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010, p. 524; Arruda, et al., 2022, p. 392). With the VOSviewer programmed, network maps of bibliometric information such as "author", "country", "citation", "year of publication", "university", "journal", "common keyword" of 452 studies were created. In addition, WoS data were also utilized in the study together with VOSviewer network maps.

3. RESULTS

In this study, the bibliometric data of 452 studies containing the key concept of "homeless children" in the WoS database were analyzed. The studies examined within the scope of the study included research articles (n=340), meeting abstracts (n=28), book reviews (n=27) review articles (n=23), proceedings (n=16), editorial material (n=14), book chapters (n=6), notes (n=5) and letters (n=4).

Table 1. Distribution of the Analyzed Studies According to Web of Science Categories

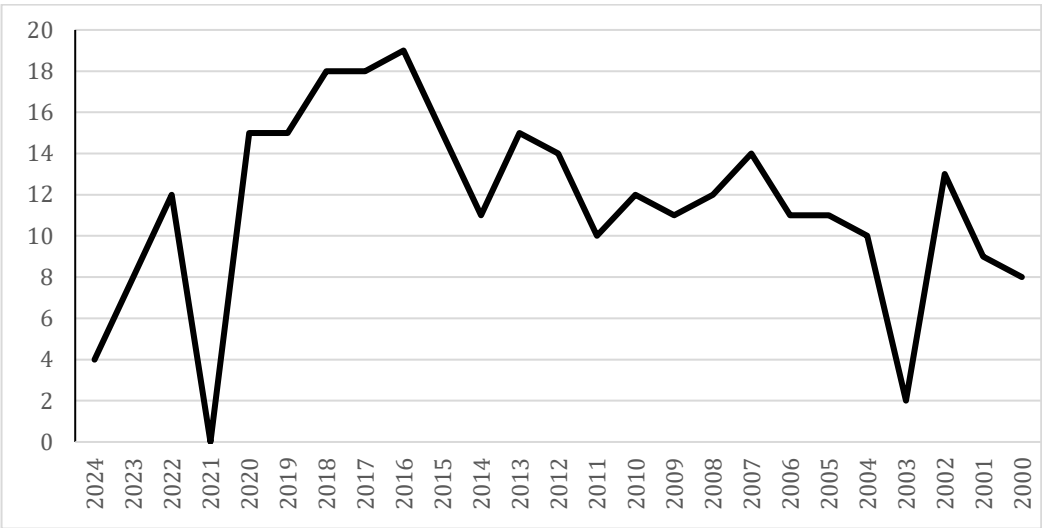
Web of Science Categories	Record Count	% of 452
Social Work	71	15.708%
Pediatrics	63	13.938%
Education Educational Research	58	12.832%
Family Studies	36	7.965%
Psychiatry	35	7.743%
Psychology Developmental	23	5.088%
Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	23	5.088%
Psychology Clinical	22	4.867%
Psychology Multidisciplinary	15	3.319%
Nursing	10	2.212%
Multidisciplinary Sciences	7	1.549%
Sociology	7	1.549%
Criminology Penology	5	1.106%

Source: Web of Science

When the distribution of studies on homeless children according to WoS categories was examined, it was determined that the studies were published in 25 different fields. The disciplines with the most and least studies on homeless children are given in Table 1. The most studies were published in the field of Social Work (n=71), followed by Pediatrics (n=63). The most striking thing in these categories is that there are fewer studies in the fields of Sociology (n=7) and Criminology Penology (n=5) compared to other categories.

In this context, it is seen that an important issue such as homeless children is studied in various fields. Therefore, as a result of this situation, it has created an opportunity to examine the perceptions and attitudes towards homeless children and to address them comparatively within the framework of different disciplines.

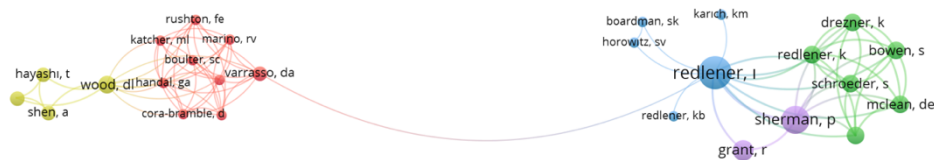
Table 2. Distribution of the Analyzed Studies According to their Years



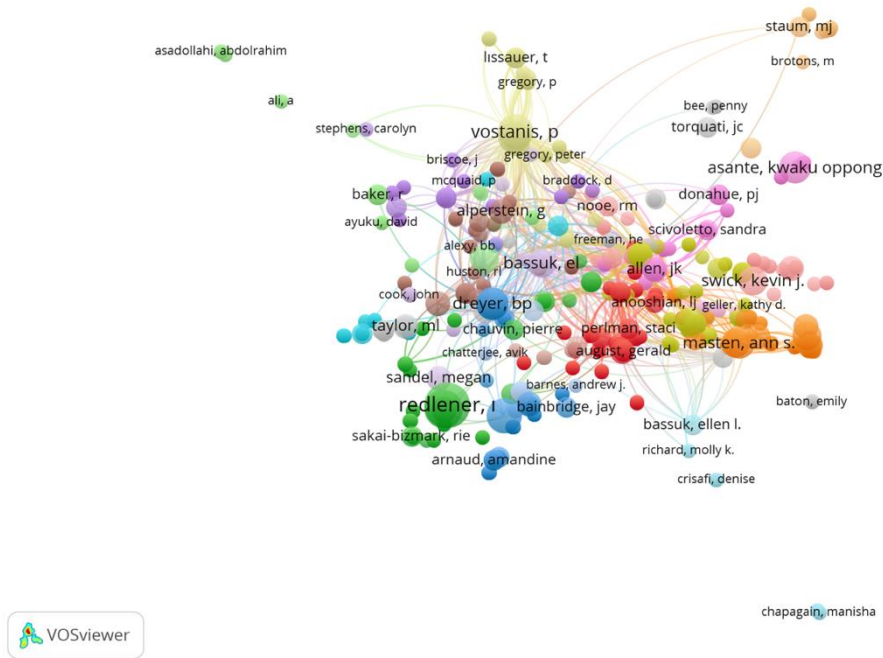
Source: Web of Science

Homeless people, whose numbers are increasing rapidly day by day, and homeless children in particular, are among the most important problems of today's societies. Table 2 shows the distribution of the studies examined within the scope of this study according to years. When the table is examined, it is seen that the studies on homeless children in the WoS database started in 2000 (n=8). While the studies increased over the years, the most (n=19) studies were published in 2016. On the other hand, a total of 4 studies on homeless children were published until July 2024. It was determined that the studies published on homeless children were published with a decrease and increase every year between 2000 and July 2024. Although events such as wars, economic crises and natural disasters in the world have caused an increase in the number of homeless people, it is quite depressing that the studies on homeless children have been very limited and this situation has been neglected for a long time. Moreover, it is very important to expand the literature on studies on homeless children caused by global crises.

Graph 1. Co-author Analysis



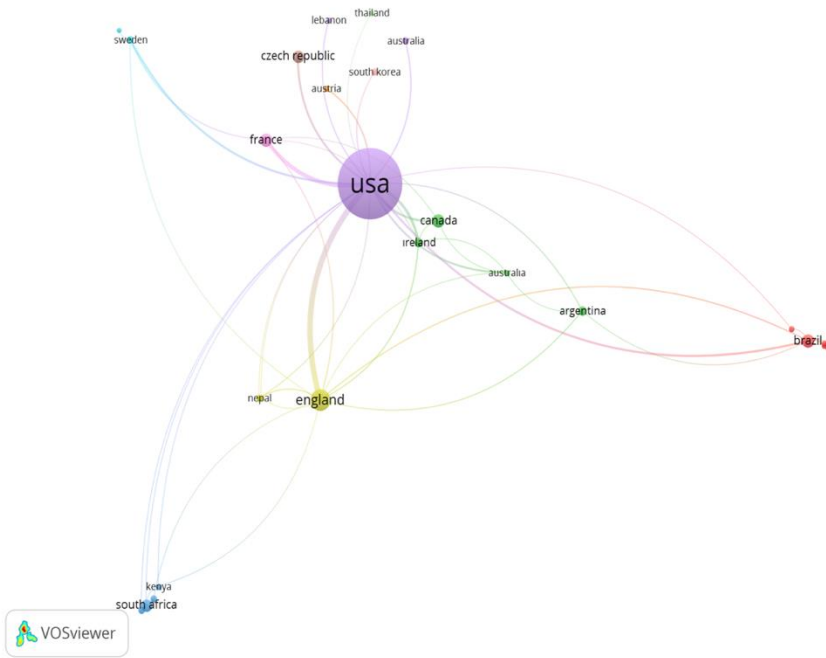
With the co-authorship analysis of the author, it was ensured to identify the authors with the most connection and cooperation. In this context, at least 1 publication and at least 1 citation criteria were determined in the analysis process and a network map was prepared. In the network map, there are 26 units, 87 connections and 156 total connection strengths within a total of 5 clusters in the analysis made over 906 units that are determined to be connected to each other. It was determined that the most cited authors were Donna L. Higgins and James Krieger with 820 citations. It is also seen that the total link strength of the most cited authors is 1 and these authors are not the most connected authors. Irwin Redlener (n=10) and P. Sherman (n=7) are among the authors with the most studies on homeless children.

Graph 2. Authors' Citation Links

In order to determine the citation networks, a citation analysis network map of the authors was created with at least 1 publication and at least 1 citation criterion. In the analysis performed with 720 units determined to be interconnected, it is seen that there are 22 clusters, 12462 connections and total connection strength 14121. Among the 452 studies, the most cited authors and studies are "Housing and health: Time again for public health action" by James Krieger and Dianne L. Higgins (2002) with 820 citations. Krieger and Higgins state that homelessness, temporary housing and substandard living can lead to behavioral problems such as social isolation as well as health problems and prevent social interaction of homeless children (Krieger & Higgins, 2002: 759). The study titled "Food insufficiency and American school-aged children's cognitive, academic, and psychosocial development" by Katherine Alaimo, Christine M. Olson and Edwaard Frongillo (2001) is the second most cited study with 552 citations. In their study, Alaimo et al. examined the associations between food insufficiency and cognitive, academic, and psychosocial outcomes in US children and youth aged 6-11 and 12-16 years (Alaimo, et al., 2001). The third most cited author was Ellen Bassuk with 4 publications and 473 citations. Ellen Bassuk's most cited work (n=224) was the study "Characteristics of Sheltered Homeless Families" co-authored with Lenore Rubin and Alison S. Lauriat (1986). Bassuk et al. interviewed 80 homeless mothers and 151 children living in 14 family shelters in

Massachusetts to describe the characteristics of homeless families. As a result of the study, it was found that about 50 percent of homeless children had developmental delays, anxiety, depression, learning difficulties and about half of them needed further psychiatric evaluations (Bassuk, et al., 1986). When the VOSviewer network analysis is analyzed, it is seen that the most cited authors mentioned above are not in the top three when the total link strength is analyzed.

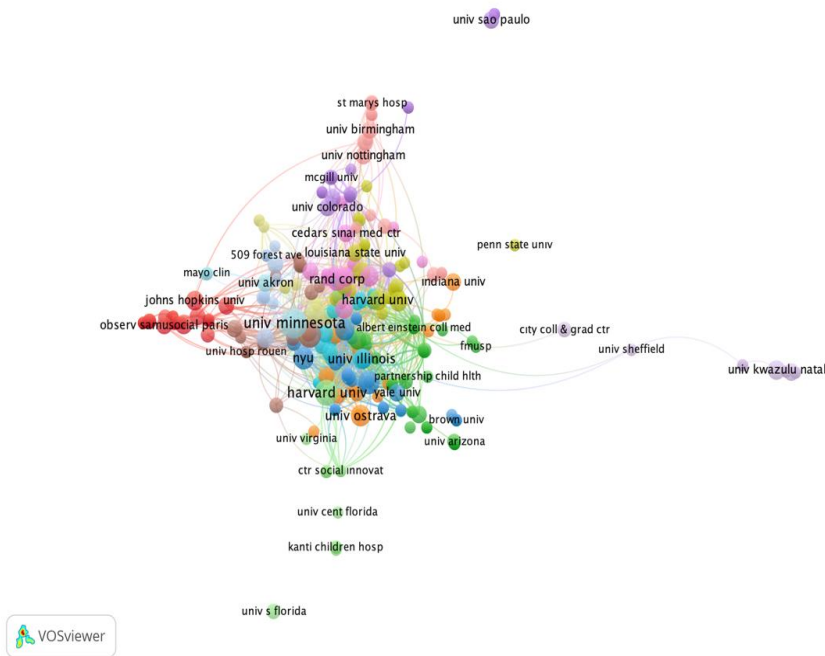
Graph 3. Citation Analysis of Countries



In order to create network maps of the citations received by the published studies according to their countries of origin, an analysis was conducted on 28 observation units, between which a relationship was determined within the scope of the criteria of publishing at least 1 work and receiving 1 citation. 11 clusters, 51 links and 233 link strengths were identified. The most cited countries were the USA (6687 citations), the UK (577 citations) and Canada (233 citations). In terms of total link strength, the USA, the UK and France are in the top three. In terms of the number of publications, the USA (236 publications), the UK (23 publications) and Russia (12 publications). Turkey is among the countries with the least number of publications on homeless children with 1 publication. "The effect of inhaling thinner and/or cigarette smoke on rat kidneys" co-authored by Bengü Çobanoğlu, İbrahim H. Özercan, Reşat M Özercan and Orhan Yalçın received 11 citations. In this study,

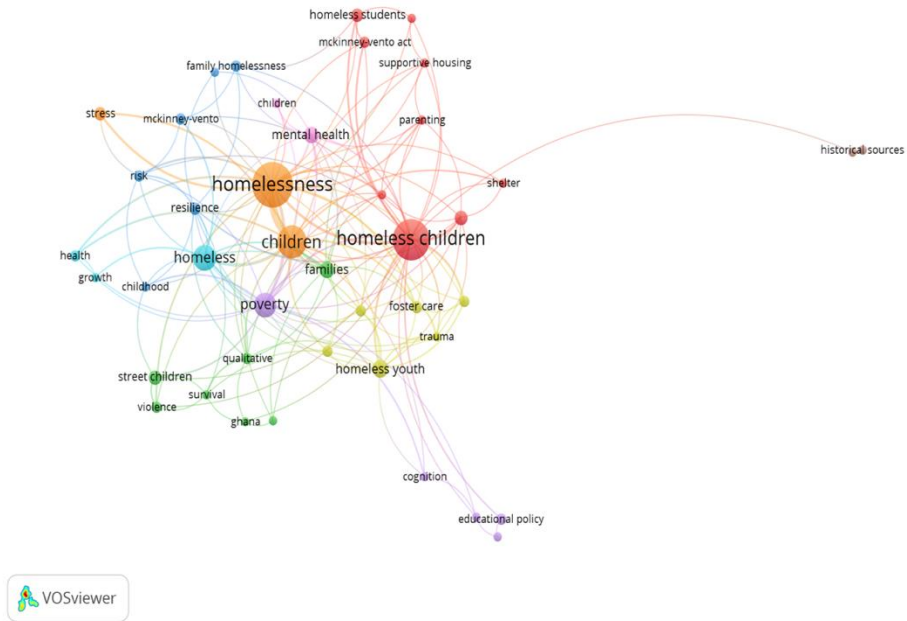
Çobanoğlu et al. conducted research on rat kidneys to investigate the effect of cigarette smoking and thinner inhalation on children's kidneys. According to the results of the study, it is stated that urgent measures should be taken to prevent the inhalation of paint thinner by homeless children and people working in industries where paint thinner is used intensively, which are among the important social problems of today (Çobanoğlu, et al., 2007: 303).

Graph 4. Distribution of Authors by Institution



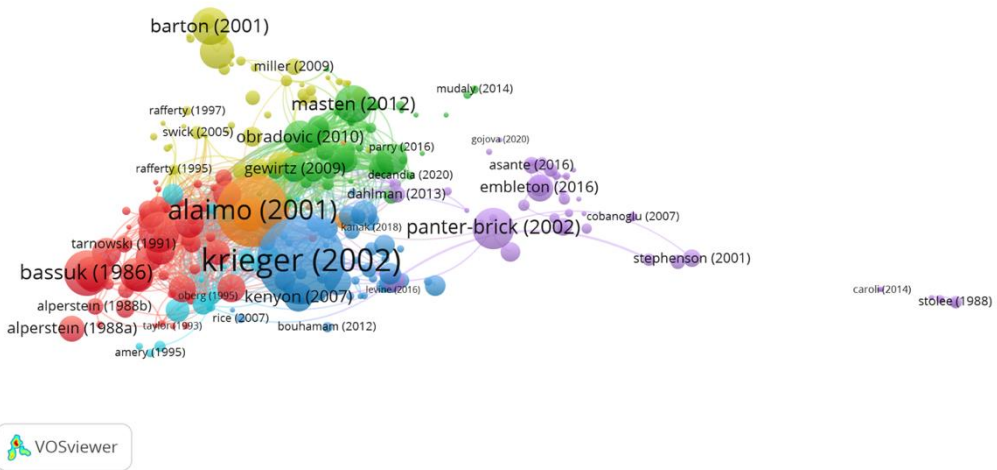
Within the scope of the study, when the network map created according to the institutions where the authors are located was examined, it was determined that there were 288 different institutions. 15 clusters, 2581 connections and 3524 total connection strength were identified. While the most studies (n=16) were conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota, these studies received 470 citations in total. The second most cited studies (n=10) were published by researchers at Harvard University, with a total of 483 citations. In the most cited studies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ranked first with 860 citations and the University of Washington ranked second with 832 citations.

Graph 5. Most Frequently Used Keyword Links



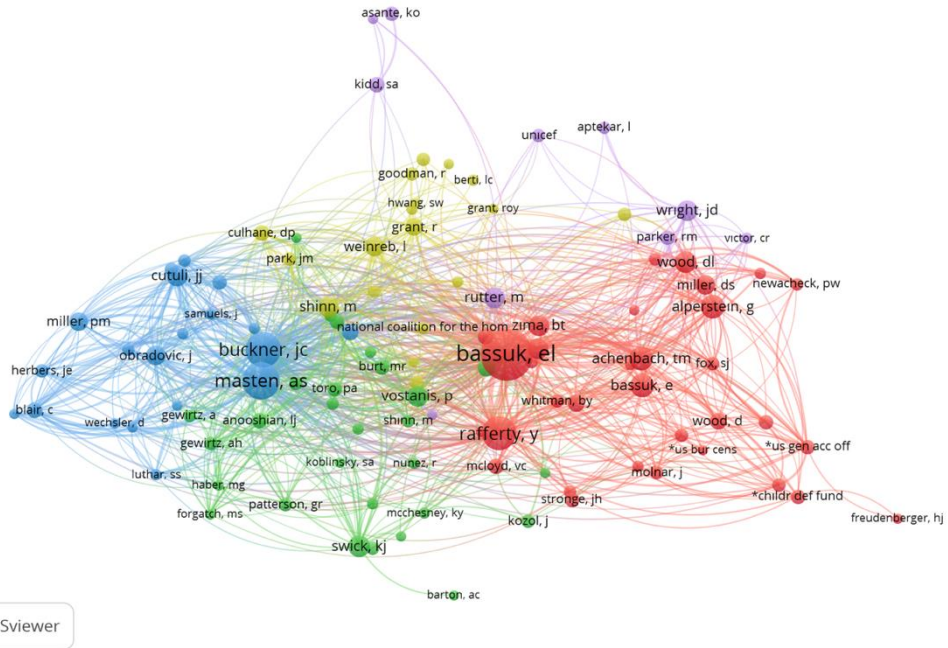
When the most frequently used keywords in publications on homeless children are examined, homelessness with 61 repetitions, homeless children with 50 repetitions, children with 33 repetitions, homeless with 20 repetitions and poverty with 18 repetitions are in the first place. In terms of total link strength, homelessness, homeless children, children, homeless and poverty were the strongest expressions. In the analysis conducted with 742 observation units that were seen at least 3 times and had a relationship between them, a total of 9 clusters, 167 links and 280 link strengths were identified.

Graph 6. Bibliographic Matching Analysis of Texts



Bibliographic matching analysis is performed to determine the citation of a common work cited by two independent sources. According to the analysis conducted with 337 unit works with at least 1 citation and a link between them, 5 clusters, 91 links and 195 link strengths were identified. The authors with the highest number of bibliographic matches were James Krieger (2002) with 820 citations, Katherine Alaimo (2001) with 552 citations and Ellen Bassuk (1986) with 224 citations. When we look at the total linking power of the works, John C. Buckner (2008), Roy Grant (2013) and Mutya San Agustin (1999) have the highest linking power.

Graph 7. Joint Citation Analysis of Authors



Different sources cited in a publication are defined as co-citation. In the co-citation analysis, a total of 5 clusters, 3181 links and 18752 link strengths were determined according to the analysis performed with 109 units by selecting at least 10 citations. The authors with the highest number of co-citations were Ellen Bassuk (n=235), Ann S. Masten (n=123) and John C. Buckner (n=110).

4. CONCLUSION

Although the phenomenon of homelessness has always existed from past to present, it has emerged as an important social issue especially since the 1980s worldwide. Homeless individuals are used to define individuals who cannot find a personal, permanent, suitable housing, who cannot find housing for permanent use due to economic problems and other social barriers (Akyıldız, 2020, p. 31). The main factors behind homelessness stem from the stigmatization and exclusion behaviors of society towards homeless individuals. Individuals who carry the stigma of homelessness stay away from social relations with the effect of this stigma and hesitate to communicate because society excludes them. This exclusion causes the homeless to be ignored and social policies are not fulfilled and their living conditions worsen. Homelessness is a process that makes it difficult for individuals to maintain interpersonal relationships by removing them from their social network (Gürel, 2023, p.11). Homelessness has both social and individual causes. While changes in the

social structure, especially migration, high inflation, changes in family structure, increase in divorce rates lead to homelessness, on the other hand, there is an increase in homeless rates due to individual conditions such as unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse, mental and mental illnesses.

Homeless individuals and homeless children constitute an important social problem on a global scale and therefore need to be analyzed comprehensively. Homeless children, who have been among the disadvantaged groups throughout history, face serious risks such as various health problems, physical and sexual abuse at a higher rate compared to other homeless individuals (Genç et al., 2022, p. 79). In particular, the inability to complete the primary and secondary socialization processes of homeless children in a healthy way, the problems experienced by these children in accessing food and health services bring along important problems in terms of public health and conscience. In this context, homelessness deeply affects not only the individuals who directly experience this situation, but also the society. However, although homeless children are a socially important issue, the lack of sufficient number of studies on this issue in the field of sociology is considered as a serious deficiency. Therefore, it is of great importance to increase the number of sociological studies on homeless children and the social dimensions of this problem.

In this study, an attempt was made to present a quantitative summary of the studies published on the subject of homeless children. Web of Science was preferred as the data source of the study and therefore other national and international databases such as Scopus, Pubmed, Dimension, YÖK Thesis Archive and Dergipark were excluded from the evaluation. The main reason for choosing Web of Science for bibliometric analysis is that it has a wide range of data from various countries and different disciplines and offers advanced search indicators. In this context, the data obtained from the bibliometric analysis of 452 studies on the subject of homeless children from the Web of Science (WoS) database were evaluated. On 26 July 2024, a data search using the keyword 'homeless children' and the 'All Fields' option yielded 452 records. These records consist of works from various disciplines published between 2000 and 26 July 2024. In total, 340 research articles, 28 meeting abstracts, 27 book reviews, 23 review articles, 14 editorial materials, 16 proceedings, 5 notes, 6 book chapters and 4 letters were found. The analyzed data show that research on homeless children started in 2000. Looking at the distribution of the works according to years, it was observed that the most intense publication periods were in 2016 (n=19), 2017 (n=18) and 2018 (n=18). Irwin Redlener (n=10) and P. Sherman (n=7) stand out among the researchers who published the most works on homeless children. In terms of research fields, the majority of these studies were conducted in social work (n=71), pediatrics (n=63), educational research (n=58), public health and environmental occupational health (n=54), family studies (n=36), psychiatry (n=35), history (n=28) and developmental psychology (n=23). The fact that the majority of the studies on homeless children are concentrated in the field of social work is an expected finding since homeless children are in serious need of social support. In this study, it was determined that the most cited authors were James Krieger and Dianne L. Higgins with 820 citations. When the

distribution of publications by country was analyzed, it was seen that the USA (236), England (23) and Russia (12) were the leading publishers. Turkey is among the countries that have conducted studies on homeless children with only one publication in the Web of Science database. Although there are some opinions that homelessness is not common in Turkey, it is clear that this situation is too important to be ignored (Bekiroğlu Doğan, 2018, 264). Although homeless children are an important issue in terms of the healthy progress of society, it is understood from the deficiencies in the literature that this issue is not given enough attention in our country.

In terms of language, it was determined that most of the publications were published in English (418), followed by Russian (13) and Spanish (7). When the studies on homeless children were analyzed in terms of institutions, it was observed that the institution with the highest number of publications was the University of Minnesota, and a total of 16 works were published by researchers affiliated with this university. In the keyword analysis, the most frequently used word 'homelessness' (61) was followed by 'homeless children' (50), 'children' (33), 'homeless' (20) and 'poverty' (18). These data show that the analyzed text or topic focuses especially on the situation of homeless children and this group is addressed through the concept of homelessness. In this context, it is clear that both the concepts of homelessness and childhood should be analyzed in depth in order to understand homeless children.

In conclusion, it is seen that there are significant gaps in the literature on homeless children both in the world and in Turkey. Therefore, the studies to be carried out in Turkey should take this situation into consideration and fill the gaps in the literature. First of all, in the studies to be carried out in the future, research can be carried out within the framework of the risks of being victims of crime and criminals, as well as addressing homeless children in the contexts of family and educational institutions. The role of family and educational institutions is very important for the socialization of homeless children. Otherwise, it should not be forgotten that children who are excluded from society and who are not successful in interpersonal communication are likely to turn to crime in the future. In this context, examining homeless children with an interdisciplinary perspective by limiting them as homeless children will contribute to understanding the causes of homelessness and producing solutions more quickly.

Statement of Research and Publication Ethics

In all processes of the article, the principles of research and publication ethics of Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Journal of Social Sciences were followed.

Contribution Rates of Authors to the Article

The entire article was written by Nur Özdemir.

Declaration of Interest

The author has no conflict of interest with any person or organisation.

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