

CHANGES IN SUBJECT MATTER AND METHODOLOGY IN THE POLITICAL FIELD: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Siyaset Alanında Konu ve Yöntemdeki Değişimler: Bibliyometrik Bir Analiz

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Abstract

This study briefly examines the historical development of political studies, emphasizing their interdisciplinary nature that is quickly influenced by social changes. In today's digitalized society, politics employs digital tools to shape public opinion and generate consent. The study aims to capture the evolving political field by examining changes in topics and methodologies in the literature. The research methodology includes a literature review and a bibliometric analysis. The American Political Science Review (APSR), Journal of Politics (JOP), and British Journal of Political Science (BJPoS) were selected from the Web of Science, and the first and last twenty-five years of their publications were analysed comparatively. The Turkish journals Uluslararası İlişkiler (International Relations), Turkish Studies, and Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences were chosen as significant sources in Turkey's political field, allowing for a comparative analysis of research topics and methods. The findings show that domestic and international literature have adopted new methodological approaches, with media content changing how data is analysed. There has been a thematic shift from theoretical to societal and individual levels. Although similar changes are seen in Turkish literature, local political events are the dominant forces influencing the field.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Political Studies, Digital Transformation, Methodological Change.

Öz

Bu çalışmada, politika çalışmalarının toplumsal değişimlerden hızla etkilenen interdisipliner doğası gereği, tarihsel gelişimine kısaca değinilmiştir. Günümüzün dijitalleşen toplumuna ayak uyduran politika hem kamuoyunu şekillendirme hem de rıza üretme aşamalarında tüm dijital araçları kullanmaktadır. Bu nedenle özellikle literatürde değişen konulara ve kullanılan metodolojilerdeki değişimlere değinilerek esasen değişen politik alanının da fotoğrafının çekilmesi hedeflenmektedir. Çalışmanın yöntemini literatür taraması ve bibliyometrik analiz oluşturmaktadır. Bu amaçla, Web of Science üzerinden American Political Science Review (APSR), Journal of Politics (JOP), ve British Journal of Political Science (BJPoS) dergileri seçilerek bibliyometrik analiz yapılmıştır. Bu dergilerin yayınlandığı ilk yirmibeş ile son yirmibeş yılları karşılaştırmalı Analiz için ayrıştırılmıştır. Ardından Türkçe literatürde bulunan Uluslararası İlişkiler (International Relations); Turkish Studies ve Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences dergileri ülkemizde politika alanında yayın üreten dergiler olarak seçilmiş ve yapılan bibliyometrik analizle çalışma konuları ve yöntem bakımından bir kıyaslamaya gidilmiştir. Çalışmanın sonucunda hem yerli hem de yabancı literatürde metodolojik olarak yeni yaklaşımların kullanılmaya başlandığı, medya içeriklerinin verileri analiz etme şeklini değiştirdiği görülmüştür. Konu olarak da yıllar içerisinde kuramsal düzeyde toplumsal ve hatta bireysel düzeye doğru bir geçiş olduğu görülmektedir. Türkiye'deki literatürde de bir değişim görülmekle birlikte, literatürün ana belirleyici gücünü yerel politik olaylardan aldığı görülmüştür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Bibliyometrik Analiz, Siyaset Çalışmaları, Dijital Dönüşüm, Metodolojik Değişim.

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INTRODUCTION

Politics functions as an ever-present, dynamic force that shapes all aspects of everyday life. Although individuals may not always perceive its presence, the domains it influences are continually evolving. Just as ideology functions as a stained-glass window that covers everything and reflects differently depending on the viewer, the political field creates ambiguities through its fluid transitions. This blurred space undoubtedly varies according to the perception of reality in the country and society where politics is produced. For a rational public seeking objective reality, all veils can be lifted. In contrast, for those who internalize realities created by themselves or society, familiarity with the veil becomes more significant. Thus, the political field that determines every aspect of daily life is not confined to parliamentary buildings but is reproduced daily in each citizen's way of living, engagement with reality, and perspective on justice. Given the intricate nature of politics, interdisciplinary approaches are essential in its study as a social science. Political studies intersect with related disciplines such as sociology, communication, economics, and history.

This study focuses on changes within the field of political studies, emphasizing how evolving societal conditions are reflected in academic literature. To achieve this, an overview of political studies is provided, followed by a bibliometric analysis of three significant academic journals: *American Political Science Review* (APSR), the *Journal of Politics* (JOP), and the *British Journal of Political Science* (BJPoS). Articles from the first and last 25 years of these journals were analysed to determine historical changes. Additionally, the Turkish journals *Uluslararası İlişkiler* (International Relations), *Turkish Studies*, and *Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences* were selected for their contributions to the field in Turkey. Given their relatively recent establishment and limited number of articles in the Web of Science, all articles from these journals were analysed.

The study identified significant shifts in both methodological approaches and thematic focuses. Political studies, due to their interdisciplinary nature and responsiveness to societal changes, are inherently linked to political shifts within each country. A methodological shift from theoretical and macro approaches to interactional and micro analyses has been observed. While the pre-2000 period focused on democratic processes and politics, the post-2000 period evolved towards more global, social, and institutional analyses, with increased methodological diversity. Post-2000, social issues and international relations have gained prominence, indicating a more inclusive discipline.

Politics, as an academic field of study, has been the subject of much debate. According to some scholars, the term 'politics' is difficult to define because it encompasses a wide range of phenomena and activities (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). Nevertheless, political science as a discipline seeks to understand the nature of power, authority, and governance in human societies (Ilonszki & Roux, 2021). The origins of political science can be traced back to ancient philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, who were concerned with questions about government, justice, and the organization of society (Bryce, 1909). Over time, the field has expanded to include the study of political institutions, political behaviour, public policy, international relations, and other related topics (Almond et al., 1962; Ilonszki & Roux, 2021).

One of the fundamental characteristics of political science is its interdisciplinary nature. As a social science, it draws on concepts and methodologies from various fields, such as economics, sociology, psychology, and history. This interdisciplinary approach allows political scientists to examine complex political phenomena from multiple perspectives, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. The study of political science typically encompasses four main subfields: political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations, each reflecting

diverse topics and analytical approaches used in research and teaching (Almond et al., 1962; March, 1955; Ilonszki & Roux, 2021). Although the precise origins of politics are debated, many scholars agree that the concept of politics emerged as human societies became more complex and organized (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). As communities grew and complexity increased, the need for mechanisms to coordinate and regulate social interactions became more important. The emergence of political systems and institutions can be seen as a response to the challenges of governing larger and more diverse populations. Consequently, political science emerges as a crucial field within the social sciences, helping us understand the mechanisms and dynamics of power, authority, and governance. By examining the structure and function of political systems, political scientists shed light on critical issues such as the distribution of resources, the protection of individual rights, and the formulation and implementation of public policies.

Furthermore, the insights and knowledge generated by political science research have real-world applications in informing decision-making processes and shaping the policies and actions of governments, international organizations, and other political actors (Bhowmick, 1975; Ilonszki & Roux, 2021; Almond et al., 1962). Politics is a complex and multifaceted field that has been studied for centuries. It encompasses various social sciences, such as communication, sociology, economics, and law, which contribute to the reproduction and maintenance of political fields (McLendon & Hearn, 2003). Despite differences in political actors, state systems, and social structures, politics has manifested in various forms throughout different periods of history. As one of the oldest and most influential disciplines in human history, politics has long been a subject of intense study and debate. The pursuit of political power and influence has taken various forms across different state systems and social structures. The maintenance and reproduction of political fields involve the complex interactions of various social sciences, from communication and sociology to economic structures and legal frameworks (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006; Ilonszki & Roux, 2021). Political sociology analyses the intertwined effects of multiple social sciences in understanding the dynamics of political systems (March, 1955). Specifically, the field of political science develops the theoretical framework and empirical analyses necessary to understand the nuances of political behaviour and the roles of various actors within the political arena (Almond et al., 1962). Political sociology is a dynamic field that explores the complex relationships between political institutions, social structures, and individual behaviours.

Traditionally, the discipline of political science is divided into specific subfields, each with its focus and methodological approach (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). However, the boundaries between these subfields are often blurred and intersect in complex ways (Ilonszki & Roux, 2021). For example, 'new institutionalism' in political science emphasizes the relative autonomy of political institutions and the importance of symbolic action in understanding political phenomena (March & Olsen, 1983). This approach challenges the traditional view of politics as merely a reflection of society and highlights the role of institutions in shaping political outcomes. Similarly, emerging fields such as biopolitical science combine findings from biology and political science, suggesting that understanding the impact of human nature on political attitudes and behaviours is crucial for advancing political processes. The institutional approach in political sociology, also known as 'sociological institutionalism,' emphasizes the role of cultural norms, rules, and cognitive features in shaping political institutions and behaviours (Scott, 1996). Unlike rational choice or historical institutionalist perspectives, sociological institutionalism focuses on the social and cognitive dimensions of political phenomena rather than the structural and constraining features of institutions. This approach has significant implications for studying world

politics, challenging the traditional view of states as unitary actors pursuing self-interest. Instead, it posits that political institutions and behaviours are shaped by the cultural and cognitive frameworks that underlie them. According to Martha Finnemore, the institutional approach in sociology emphasizes 'the social and cognitive properties of institutions rather than their structural and constraining features' (Scott, 1996). This shift in focus has opened new avenues for research and theorizing in political sociology, as scholars explore how cultural norms, values, and cognitive frames influence the dynamics of political life.

The study of politics and political institutions has long relied on the theoretical and methodological approaches of various social sciences. As noted in 'The Handbook of Political Sociology,' political sociologists are now often regarded as 'institutionalists,' acknowledging the central role of states and political institutions in shaping social and political dynamics (Janoski et al., 2020). This interdisciplinary approach has led to the emergence of new research questions and agendas in political sociology. Scholars from different fields collaborate to explore the complex interactions between political institutions, social structures, and individual behaviours. While the methods of political sociology can illuminate how cultural norms, rules, and cognitive frames influence the dynamics of political life, the findings of biopolitical science can help us better understand the role of human nature in shaping political attitudes and behaviours. By bridging the gaps between these diverse fields, we can gain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the complex and ever-changing nature of political fields. The relationship between politics and sociology is a critical area of study for understanding the dynamics of political power and the reproduction of political institutions in the modern world (March & Olsen, 1983; Janoski et al., 2003; Fowler & Schreiber, 2008; Longo et al., 2021). It is especially important to observe how changing social conditions and shifting public opinion have transformed the political field. At the same time, it is clear that the political field also influences society. The changes resulting from digital social structures and the social demands produced by virtual public spaces (Çelik, 2020) are valuable for understanding contemporary topics in political sociology.

The field of political sociology has undergone significant transformations in recent years, influenced by new theoretical frameworks and methodological innovations (Kim and Fallon, 2020). As societies grapple with the complexities of globalization, postmodern discourses, and the dynamics of identity politics, the study of political structures, processes, and the associated social forces has become increasingly important. Political sociology essentially captures a snapshot of the political structures, processes, and related social forces of societies at a given time. The changes observed in political sociology, which has been enriched with important theoretical developments and methodological innovations, are intertwined with social transformations. Therefore, contemporary approaches and evolving theories in political sociology reveal that globalization, postmodern theory, and identity politics are key theoretical frameworks. These topics are clearly transformative forces that change societies worldwide.

Globalization has become one of the most debated topics in both sociology and political sociology and has evolved into a tool for understanding the digitalized society. Topics such as global capitalism, the transformation of the nation-state's role, and the impact of transnational actors (e.g., multinational corporations and international NGOs) are influencing research topics and leading to the development of new theoretical frameworks. Global cities and cross-border networks play a significant role in this transformation (Sassen, 2007). Individuals who can communicate instantly can observe political debates in different countries and witness the outcomes of various regimes firsthand. Critical theory can be

considered another influential approach following globalization. Critical theory, as a legacy of the Frankfurt School, continues to impact political sociology today, particularly through Habermas's analysis of the conditions for democratic participation and communication processes in his theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1984). Meanwhile, postmodern approaches draw from distrust of grand narratives and argue for examining social power relations at a more micro level (Lyotard, 1984), thus influencing political sociology methodologically. This allows the research focus to be redesigned with an emphasis on actor-oriented analysis.

In more recent times, studies on identity politics and multiculturalism have increased. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis within social sciences on studies focused on identity politics and multiculturalism (Paasi, 2003; Sharaby, 2022). This increased focus reflects the changing dynamics of modern societies, where traditional identity markers like nationality, class, and profession have become less prominent, giving way to greater emphasis on other categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, and religion (Cerulo, 1997; Paasi, 2003; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). Multiculturalism has emerged as a normative framework for understanding and managing diversity in liberal societies, influenced by the works of scholars like Will Kymlicka, who envisioned how cultural pluralism could be accommodated within the context of liberal democracy (Elias et al., 2020). This represents a shift away from earlier assimilationist models toward the recognition and inclusion of minority cultural rights. Additionally, an increasing number of studies have examined the political mobilization and social impacts of various identity-based movements, such as those centred on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. Similarly, digital political sociology examines topics like online political participation, social media, and political communication, including digital activism (Castells, 2012). Environmental justice, climate change policies, and ecological sustainability are focal points within environmental sociology and political ecology, while global justice and inequality address issues like global governance, humanitarian interventions, and development policies (Roberts & Parks, 2007; Pogge, 2008).

Methodologically, innovations in political sociology largely mirror the broader methodological shifts seen across social sciences. One of the most prominent is social network analysis, which has become an important methodological tool for understanding power dynamics by examining relationships between individuals and groups. This method is particularly used in analysing political movements, organizational forms, and especially the data generated by social media tools like X (formerly Twitter) (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Similarly, the use of big data and quantitative methods for analysing such data has gained significant interest in political sociology. Analyses conducted on large datasets, such as election results, social media data, and public opinion polls, enable a deeper examination of political behaviours and social trends (Lazer et al., 2009). Mixed methods are also employed in analysing election processes and public opinion, and these methods are frequently used in areas such as political participation, social movements, and electoral behaviour (Creswell, 2013). This state of the literature will be compared with the data provided by a bibliometric analysis of three major journals in the selected field.

METHODOLOGY

Adapting to today's digitalized society, politics utilizes all digital tools in the processes of shaping public opinion and generating consent. Therefore, this study aims to capture a picture of the evolving political field by focusing on shifting topics and methodologies in the literature. The methodology of this study consists of a literature review and a bibliometric analysis. For this purpose, the American Political Science Review (APSR), Journal of Politics (JOP), and British Journal of Political Science

(BJPoIS) were selected through the Web of Science for bibliometric analysis. A total of 3,000 articles from these journals were analysed. To provide a comparative perspective, a bibliometric analysis was also conducted on the literature and political science journals published in Turkey.

Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative assessment of the literature in a specific field, offering valuable insights into the trends, topics, and methodologies that have shaped the field over time (Friedrich & Trackett, 1937). The analysis examined the frequency of keywords, topics in abstracts, methodologies, titles, and authors to identify significant shifts in the research agenda of political science by focusing on the three mentioned journals. The changes in topics and methods used in articles were then observed over the years. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the development of political sociology as a field, revealing the evolution of its core concerns, theoretical frameworks, and methodological approaches.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

American Political Science Review (Apsr)

The American Political Science Review (APSR), established in 1906, is considered one of the most prestigious academic journals in the field of political science today. Published by the American Political Science Association, this peer-reviewed journal encompasses all subfields of political science and reflects the most important theoretical, empirical, and methodological developments within the discipline. The journal significantly contributes to the advancement of the field by facilitating the international impact of political science research (Johnson, 2020). According to the Web of Science, the journal has published 11,757 articles (including book reviews, editor's notes, etc.), with the distribution over the years as shown below:

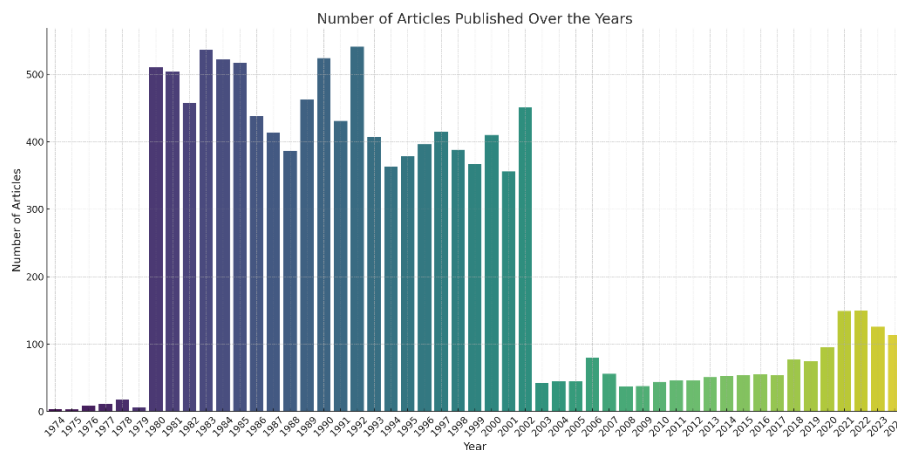
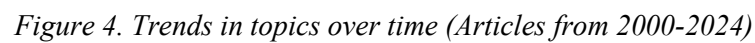


Figure 1. Number of Articles Published Over the Years

To observe the changes, the analysis was conducted over approximately twenty-five-year intervals. The period from 2000 to 2024 was considered as the last 25 years, during which 1,523 articles published by the journal were examined. For comparison, 800 articles from the first twenty-five years between 1974 and 1997 were included in the analysis. It was observed that the 1974-1997 period contained a significant number of book reviews, notes, letters, corrections, and additions, which were excluded from the analysis.



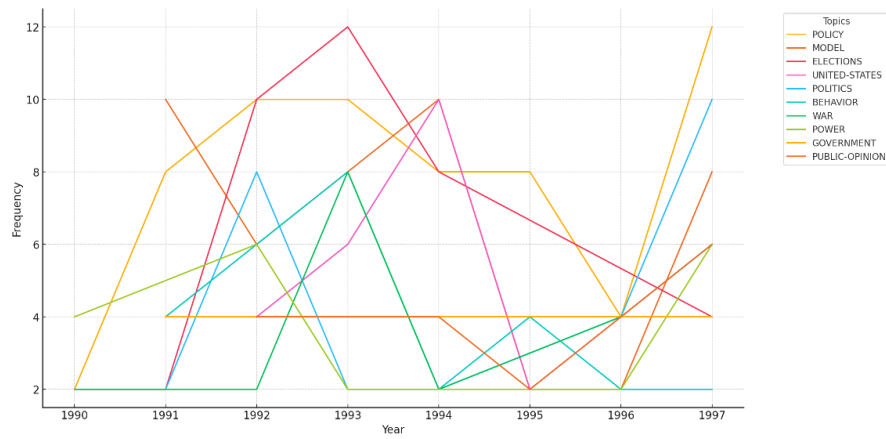


Figure 5. Trends in topics over time (Articles from 1974-1997)

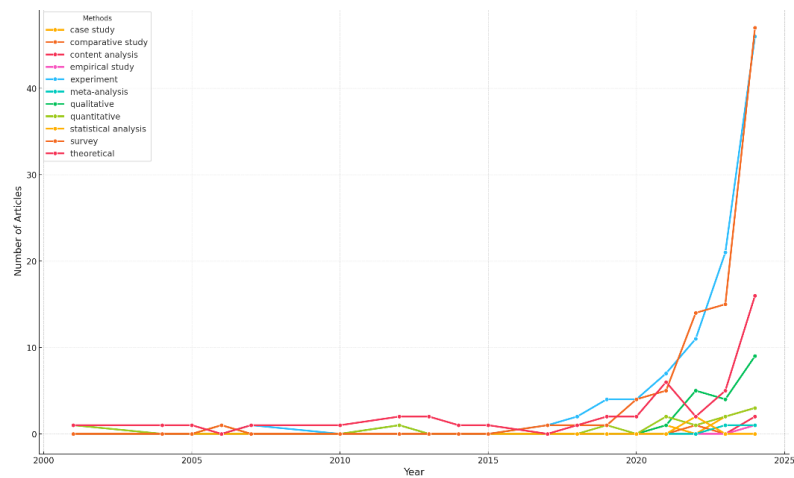


Figure 6. Trends in methods over time (Articles from 2000-2024)

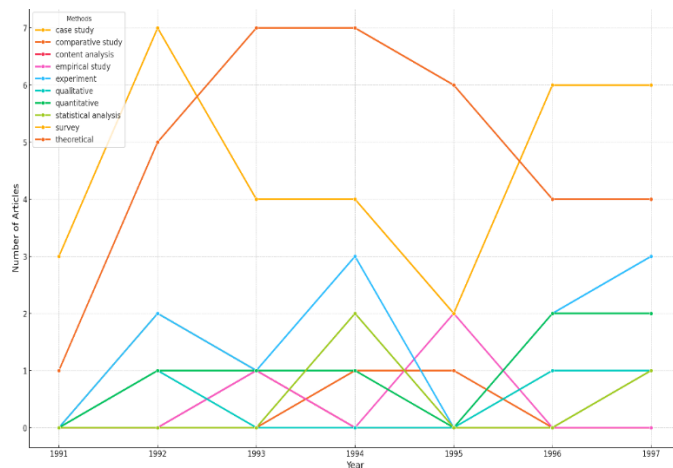


Figure 7. Trends in methods over time (Articles from 1974-1997)

When examining the changes in keywords and topics together, a shift in dominant themes can be observed. In the 1974-1997 period, keywords such as model, equilibrium, coalition, and policy stand out. The research focus appears to be centred on institutional stability, political theory, and structural

analysis, with a more analytical and theoretical approach used to understand prevalent political phenomena. Unlike the more recent period, there was relatively less focus on social issues such as race and gender, and more emphasis was placed on the structural aspects of political systems rather than directly engaging with emerging social themes such as language, race, gender, or public sentiment. The frequent mention of terms such as government, elections, and policy suggest a more traditional analysis of political structures and behaviours. In contrast, during the 2000-2024 period, strong emphasis is placed on politics, democracy, conflict, governance, public opinion, and political dynamics. The emergence of terms like women, race, representation, and social in this period's social focus indicates greater attention to identity politics and social issues. Keywords related to policy, such as support, impact, and government, reflect a pragmatic approach aimed at understanding the practical effects of political decisions. Especially in the context of recent social movements, there is a clear interest in the growing discourse on social justice, gender equality, and racial issues. A sharp increase in terms like 'politics' and 'democracy' is evident after 2015, reflecting the academic response to significant global events such as elections, democratic backsliding, and geopolitical conflicts.

Methodologically, qualitative methods are generally aligned with studies examining social behaviours, perceptions, or case studies. Quantitative methods are prevalent in studies involving statistical analysis, surveys, and experiments. Theoretical studies and literature reviews appear to be the most used methods in political studies, which is inherent to the nature of the field. Additionally, theoretical research tends to dominate in years characterized by developments toward new frameworks or models. Content analysis and historical comparison are also frequently used, particularly in periods focusing on analysing textual data, media, or historical contexts. However, it should be noted that the rise of content analysis is driven by studies in media, communication, and policy analysis. Meta-analysis, systematic reviews, and the changing theoretical dominance related to contemporary issues have also become increasingly prevalent in recent years. When comparing methodological trends, it is evident that relatively newer methods, such as experiments, have gained prominence in recent articles, replacing classic methods like case studies, content analysis, and comparative analysis. In recent years, there has been a growing trend toward the use of experimental methodologies in the field of political science (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). This shift stems from a desire to move beyond traditional observational approaches and gain a more rigorous understanding of causal relationships in political phenomena. The use of experiments in political science has allowed researchers to isolate the effects of specific variables and test hypotheses in controlled settings, providing insights that were previously difficult to obtain through observational data alone.

The increased adoption of experimental methods in political science can be attributed to several factors. First, the end of the Cold War and the corresponding shift in research focus on domestic politics and international institutions created new opportunities for experimental research. Scholars became increasingly interested in understanding the role of these factors in shaping political outcomes, and experiments proved to be valuable tools for exploring these complex relationships. Additionally, the overall rise of statistical approaches in the field has contributed to the growing popularity of experimental methods. A notable example of the use of experimental methods in political science is the examination of the impact of domestic politics on international outcomes. Researchers use this approach to study how factors such as public opinion, political institutions, and interest group dynamics influence or analyse voting behaviour and electoral processes.

Overall, there has been a clear shift from theory-heavy, structural analyses toward a more socially conscious and policy-focused discourse that reflects broader societal changes and new research priorities. In the more recent period, there has been a marked increase in topics related to social justice, diversity, and public opinion, demonstrating that contemporary research increasingly engages with the human dimensions of political phenomena. The earlier focus on theoretical modelling paved the way for more detailed, inclusive studies that address a broader range of variables, including social identities and real-world impacts. This comparative analysis is valuable in highlighting the dynamic nature of political research influenced by changing social contexts and emerging global challenges, as well as in demonstrating the interaction between social sciences and societal changes.

Journal of Politics (Jop)

The Journal of Politics (JOP), established in 1939 and published by the University of Chicago, is one of the most esteemed academic journals in the field of political science. Serving as the official publication of the Southern Political Science Association, the journal features innovative and comprehensive research across all sub-disciplines of political science. JOP supports studies employing both quantitative and qualitative methods, making significant contributions to areas such as political theory, American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and public policy (Smith, 2018). The journal has 6,888 articles accessible via the Web of Science (including book reviews, editor's notes, etc.). The changes in publications over the years are as follows:

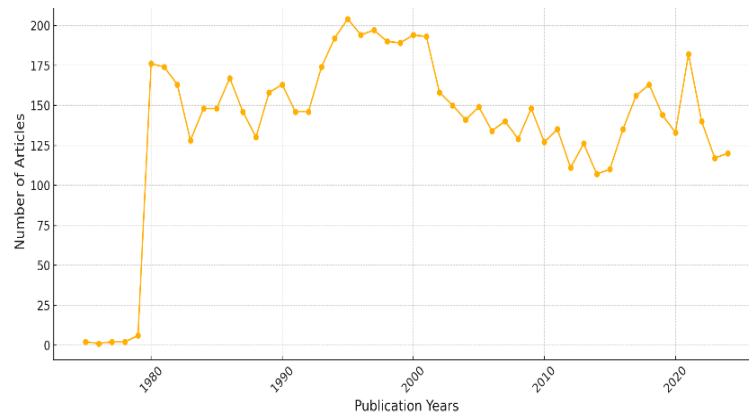


Figure 8. Number of Articles Published Over the Years

To observe the changes, the analysis was conducted over approximately twenty-five-year intervals. The period from 2000 to 2024 was taken as the last 25 years, during which 2,234 articles published by the journal were examined. For comparison, 789 articles from the previous twenty-five years, between 1976 and 1999, were included in the analysis, excluding types such as book reviews, notes, letters, corrections, and additions.

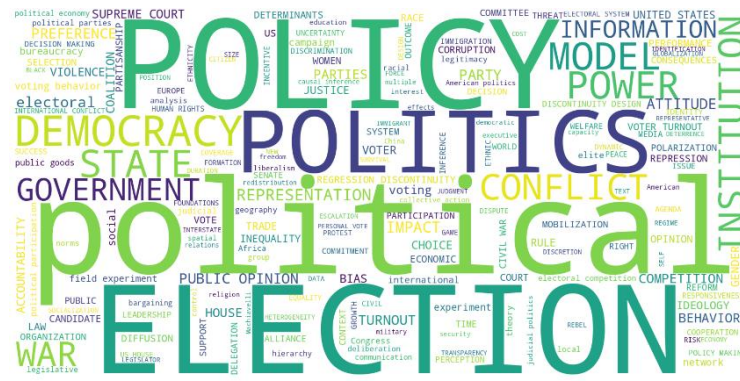


Figure 9. Keywords (Articles from 2000-2024)

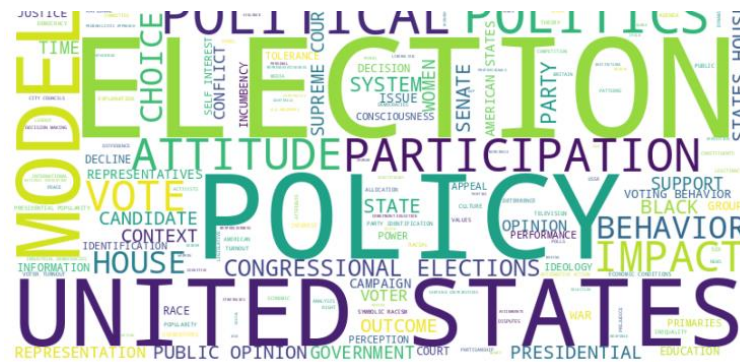


Figure 10. Keywords (Articles from 1976-1999)

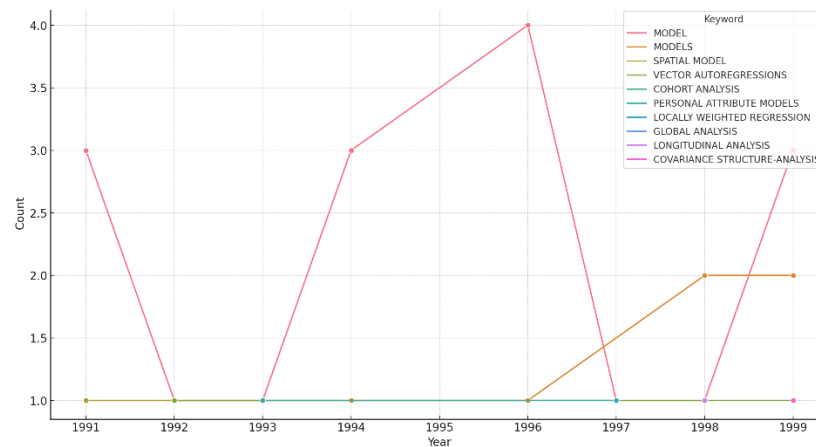


Figure 11. Trend Methods Over Time (Articles from 1976-1999)

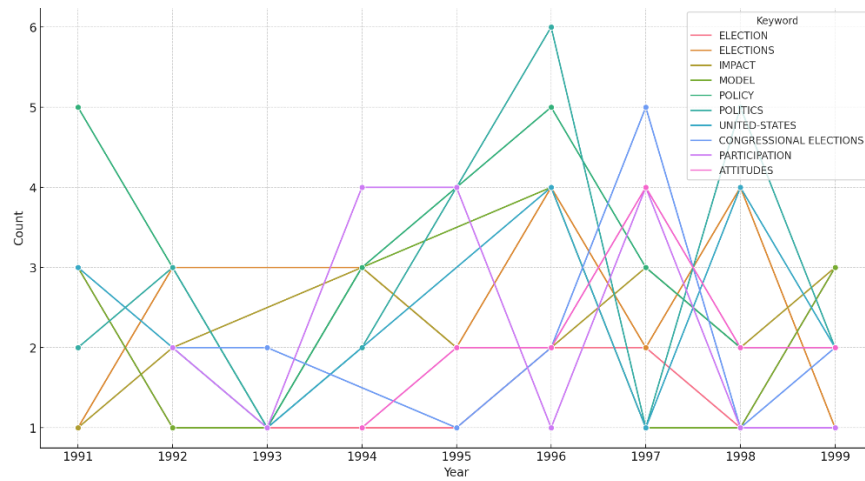


Figure 12. Trends in Topics Over Time (Articles from 1976-1999)

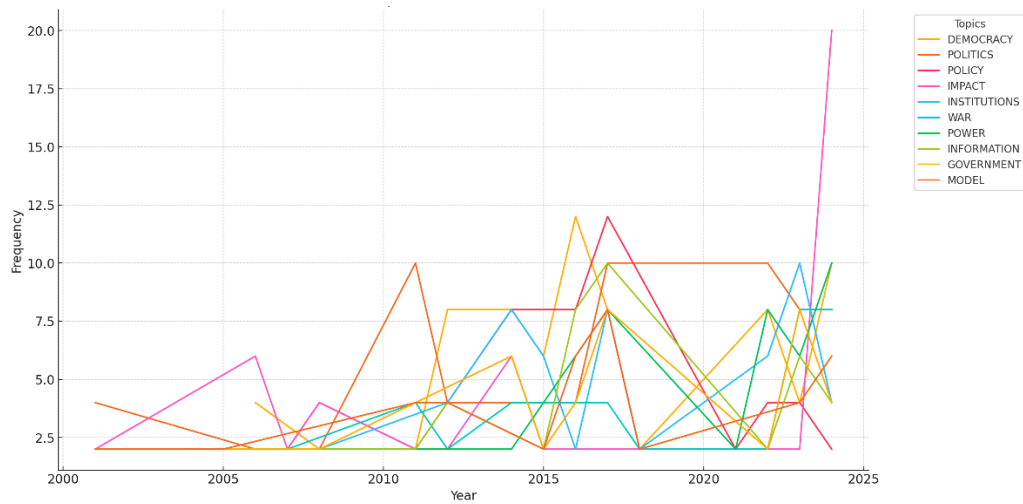


Figure 13. Trends in Topics Over Time (Articles from 2000-2024)

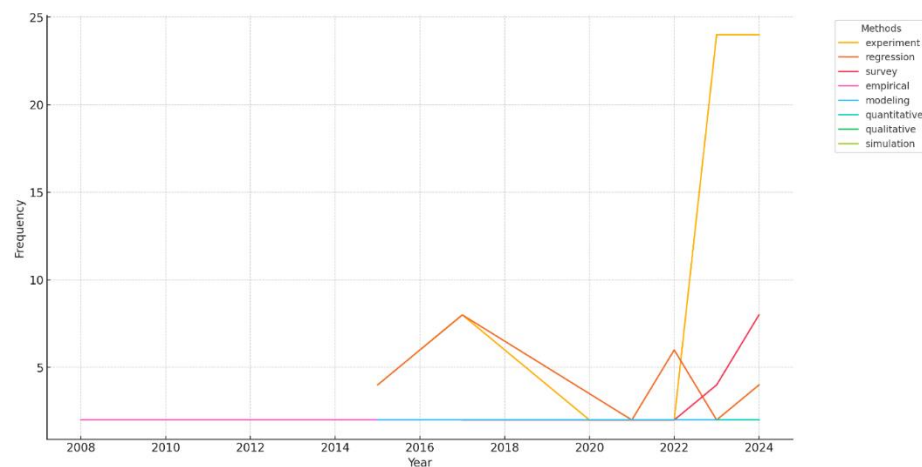


Figure 14. Trend Methods Over Time (Articles from 2000-2024)

An analysis of the data reveals that, in studies conducted before 2000, there was a greater focus on themes such as 'policy,' 'elections,' 'participation,' and 'representation,' highlighting topics related to democracy, government structures, and political participation. Country-specific terms like 'United States' frequently appear, with a strong emphasis on participation and representation. Post-2000, however, more diverse and global themes emerge, with keywords such as 'democracy,' 'war,' 'power,' and 'institutions' highlighting international relations, institutional analysis, and power dynamics. Notably, concepts like globalization, violence, and conflict also show a significant increase. Consequently, while the pre-2000 period emphasized democratic representation, citizen participation, and political behaviour, the rise of terms such as 'war' and 'violence' after 2000 indicates a shift in political science toward a more critical focus on social crises.

Methodologically, the pre-2000 period was dominated by 'modelling' and 'analysis.' Regression analyses, surveys, and various modelling techniques were widely used to explain political behaviour, with a clear dominance of quantitative analyses. After 2000, methodologies became more varied and complex, with experimental methods, simulations, and qualitative analyses gaining prominence. There has been an increased interest in qualitative research alongside experimental designs and quantitative models, indicating a shift in political science toward a broader and more diverse methodological spectrum.

Overall, the pre-2000 period focused more narrowly on democratic processes and participation, whereas the post-2000 period saw an expansion in topics, diversification of methodologies, and a shift toward more global themes. This transformation reflects the evolution of the topics and methods addressed by political science, revealing a broader perspective within the discipline. In summary, the pre-2000 period saw political science focusing more on local and specific issues, particularly analyses related to U.S. politics and democratic processes. In contrast, the post-2000 period reflects a shift toward international, societal, and crisis-oriented topics, with more diverse and complex subjects such as violence, power, and institutional analysis coming to the forefront.

British Journal of Political Science (BjpolS)

The third journal to be analysed, the British Journal of Political Science (BJPolS), was first published in 1971 and is one of the leading international academic journals in political science, published by Cambridge University Press. The journal features original and innovative articles covering all subfields of political science, with a particular focus on comparative politics, international relations, political theory, and public policy. By publishing the latest political analyses and debates from scholars worldwide, the journal contributes to the advancement of the discipline (Goodin, 2017). According to the Web of Science, the journal has published 1,841 articles (including book reviews, editor's notes, etc.), with the distribution over the years as follows:

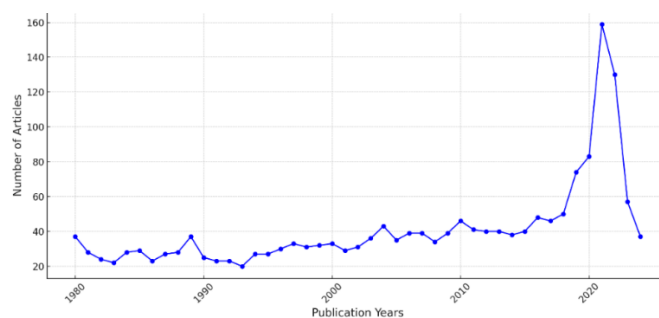


Figure 15. Number of articles published over the years

To observe the changes, the analysis was conducted over approximately twenty-five-year intervals. The period from 2000 to 2024 was considered as the last 25 years, during which 1,195 articles published by the journal were examined. For comparison, 388 articles from the previous twenty years, between 1980 and 1999, were included in the analysis, excluding types such as book reviews, notes, letters, corrections, and additions.



Figure 16. Keywords (Articles from 2000-2024)

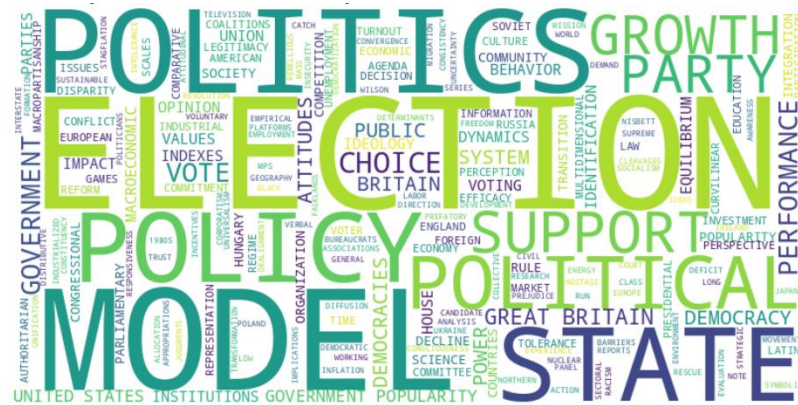


Figure 17. Keywords (Articles from 1980-1999)

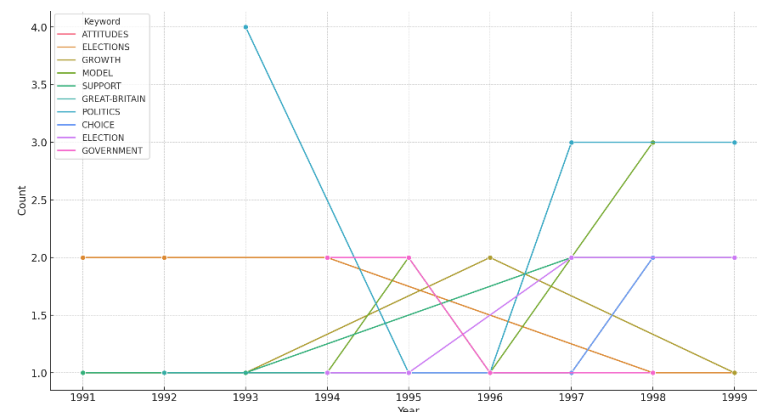


Figure 18. Trends in Topics Over Time (Articles from 1980-1999)

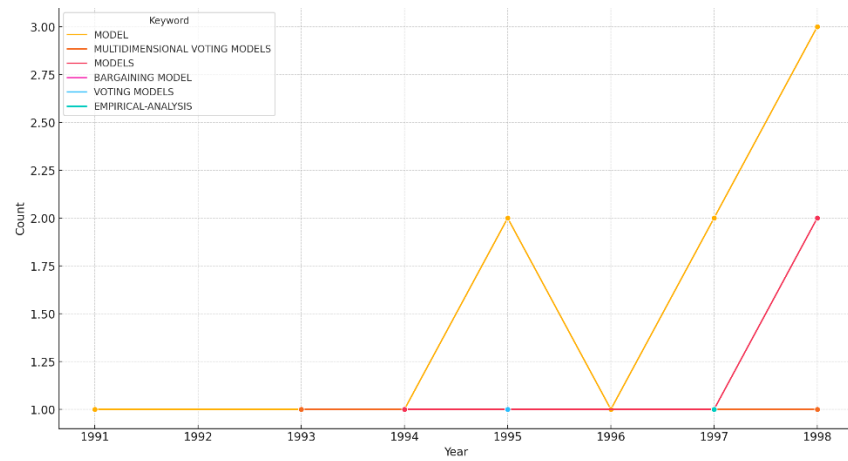


Figure 19. Trends in Methods Over Time (Articles from 1980-1999)

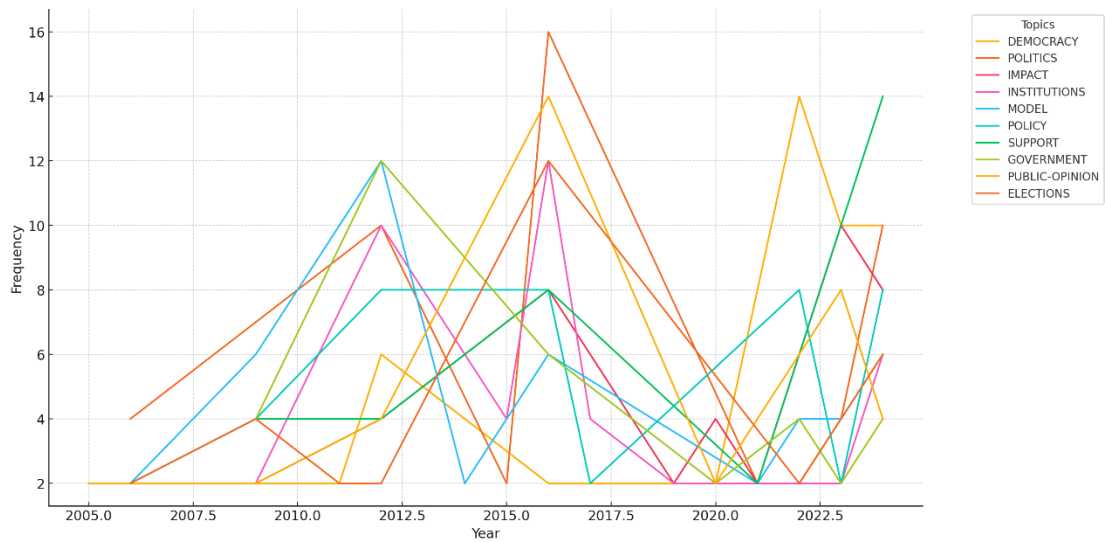


Figure 20. Trends in Topics Over Time (Articles from 2000-2024)

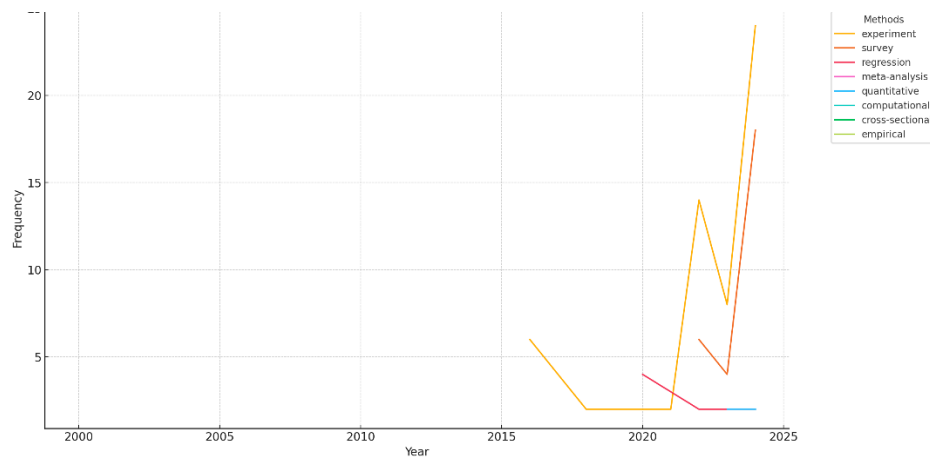


Figure 21. Trends in Methods Over Time (Articles from 2000-2024)

Upon examining the data, pre-2000 keywords such as 'policy,' 'election,' 'government,' and 'political' stand out, indicating that the studies predominantly focused on policy, electoral processes, and government structures. Notably, democratic processes and political participation were particularly prominent. In contrast, post-2000, terms like 'democracy,' 'public opinion,' 'institutions,' and 'conflict' gained more prominence. The topics broadened towards international relations, public opinion, and institutional analyses, with an observed increase in themes related to violence, conflict, and war. Methodologically, pre-2000 saw the use of 'model,' 'regression,' and 'analysis,' highlighting a preference for more structured approaches such as quantitative analysis, regression, and modelling. Post-2000, methodological approaches diversified, incorporating more sophisticated and innovative methods such as experimental designs, simulations, and complex analyses. The use of experimental designs and the combined application of qualitative and quantitative analyses have increased, reflecting a growth in the methodological diversity of political science.

Overall, the pre-2000 period concentrated on democratic processes and policy, while the post-2000 period expanded to include more global, social, and institutional analyses. The post-2000 era has also seen increased methodological diversity. Social issues and international relations have become more prominent, indicating a more inclusive direction for the discipline.

Examining the network maps of the universities contributing to these three journals reveals that academic collaborations and the influence of universities in political science are largely tied to the journal's host country. American universities are highly active in both national and international political science journals, while contributions from UK-based institutions are more significant in the British Journal of Political Science, establishing it as an international hub. The universities contributing most to the British Journal of Political Science include Harvard University, the University of Essex, and the University of Oxford, whereas the Journal of Politics sees a dominance of American universities, with the University of North Carolina, Princeton University, and Harvard University standing out. The American Political Science Review is also predominantly supported by American universities, with institutions such as the University of California, Harvard University, and Yale University being prominent contributors.

The bibliometric analysis indicates an overall shift in the field. To obtain a comprehensive view, we will also include an analysis of political publications originating from Turkey.

A Bibliometric Analysis of Political Sociology in Turkey

The discipline of political sociology in Turkey has developed and continues to progress as an important field examining the relationships between social change, modernization, and political structures within a historical context. The historical development of political sociology in Turkey, the main topics addressed, and the methods used have been influenced by social changes experienced in Turkey, as in other countries. Since the 1950s, modernization theory has constituted the main axis of political sociology in Turkey. During this period, the processes of Westernization, urbanization, and industrialization were examined concerning their effects on social structure. Notably, Kemal Karpat (1973) and Şerif Mardin (1971) conducted significant studies on the impact of modernization and secularization processes on Turkish society. These studies were generally based on historical and descriptive analyses, with a predominant use of qualitative methods.

In the 1980s, political sociology began to focus on state-society relations, civil-military relations, and political participation. During this period, issues such as the centralist structure of the state, the

power of bureaucratic elites, and military tutelage were highlighted. Şerif Mardin's (1989) 'centre-periphery' approach provided an important theoretical framework for analysing social forces against the state during this time. Methodologically, historical-sociological analyses and qualitative research methods were prominent.

In the 2000s, debates around identity politics, political Islam, the Kurdish issue, and the secularism-religiosity axis deepened in Turkey. During this period, topics such as the relationship between religion and politics, conservatism, and social polarization came to the forefront (Yavuz, 2003). Alongside quantitative and qualitative research, methods such as discourse analysis and in-depth interviews began to be utilized. According to data from the literature review, the scope of topics in political sociology in Turkey has expanded in recent years, with contemporary political phenomena such as populism, authoritarianism, digitalization, and migration gaining prominence. The rise of populism, and the impact of social media and digital activism on political participation, are among current research topics (Özbudun, 2014). Additionally, with the influx of Syrian refugees, migration and integration policies have become significant areas of study within political sociology (İçduygu & Yüksek, 2012).

Today, mixed methods are becoming widespread in political sociology. The combined use of qualitative and quantitative research techniques allows for a more comprehensive analysis of political phenomena. Moreover, the analysis of large datasets, such as social media data and public opinion surveys, constitutes a significant part of contemporary studies (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu, 2020). Based on this information from the literature, the Turkish journals *Uluslararası İlişkiler* (442 articles) (International Relations), *Türk Studies* (586 articles), and *Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences* (134 articles) were selected as key publications in the political field in Turkey for analysis. A total of 1,162 articles were analysed, and after excluding book reviews, editor's notes, etc., all remaining articles were included in the study. The data from these journals are as follows:

International Relations Journal

The Journal of International Relations is one of Turkey's most prestigious academic journals in the fields of international relations and political science. Publishing articles in both Turkish and English, the journal hosts contributions from national and international scholars. Indexed in the SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index) and recognized internationally, the journal is particularly prominent in areas such as foreign policy analysis, security studies, and regional studies.

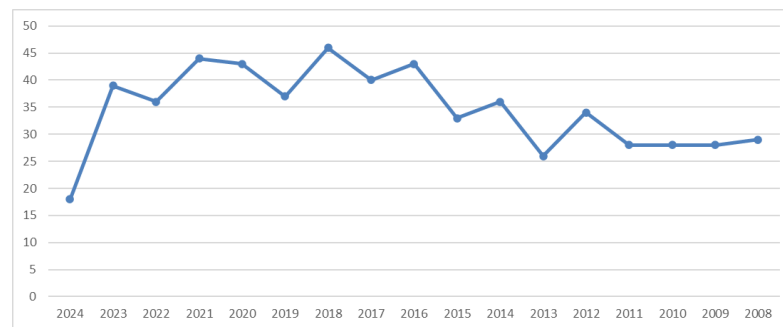


Figure 22. Number of Articles Published by Year (WOS)



Figure 23. Keywords Word Cloud

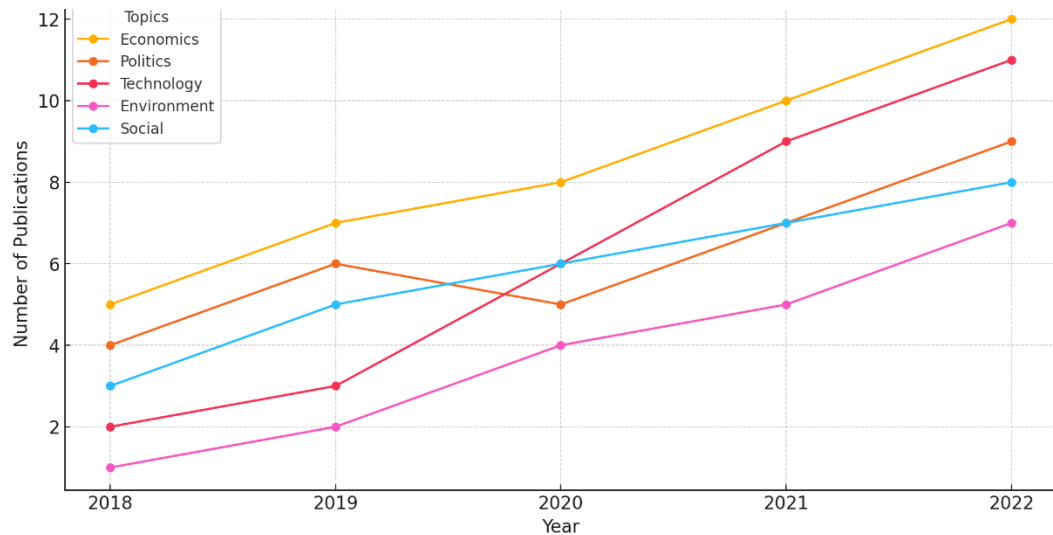


Figure 24. Topic Trends Over the Years

Turkish Studies

Turkish Studies is an internationally recognized journal that publishes original articles examining the political, economic, and social dynamics of Turkey and its surrounding region. Published by Routledge, the journal features high-quality academic work and serves as a significant resource for international researchers. Its inclusion in the SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index) enhances its scientific impact and credibility.

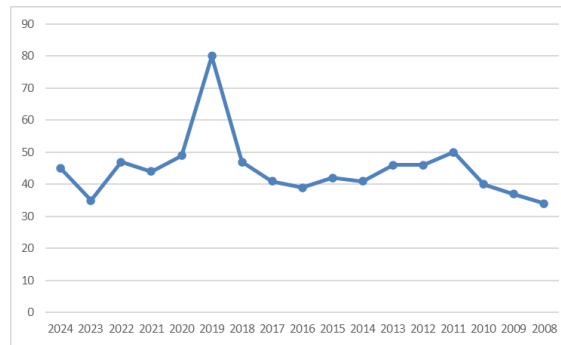


Figure 25. Number of Articles Published by Year (WOS)



Figure 26. Keywords Word Cloud

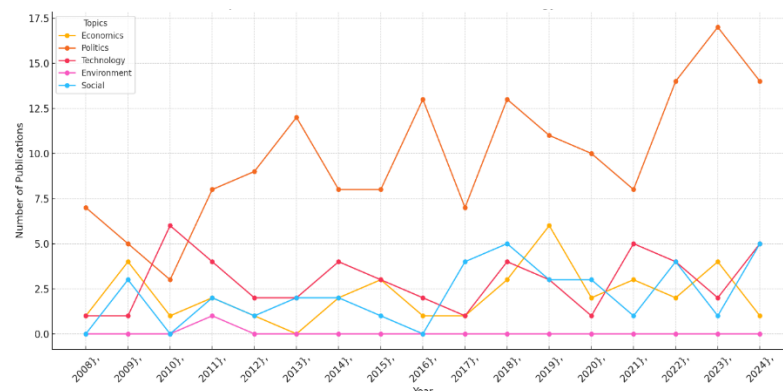


Figure 27. Topic Trends Over the Years

Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences

Published by Ankara University's Faculty of Political Science, this journal is one of Turkey's most established academic publications in the fields of political science and public administration. First launched in 1983, the journal is currently indexed in international databases (ESCI - Emerging Sources Citation Index) and holds a prestigious position in both national and international academic circles. It offers an interdisciplinary approach by publishing articles in Turkish and English across various fields, including political science, international relations, public administration, political theory, and sociology. *Siyasal* is notable for its original research as well as theoretical and methodological studies that

contribute to the literature, and as a peer-reviewed journal with high academic standards, it makes significant contributions to academic writing (Kalaycıoğlu, 2020).

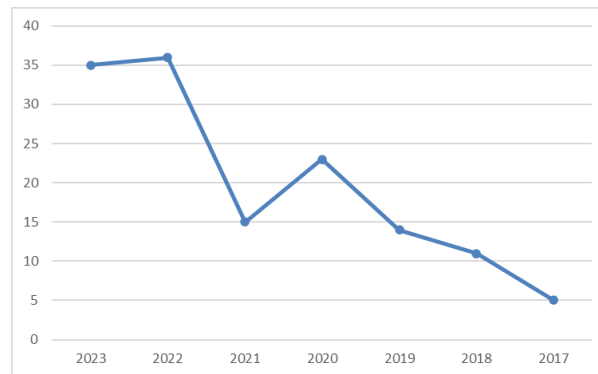


Figure 28. Number of Articles Published by Year (WOS)

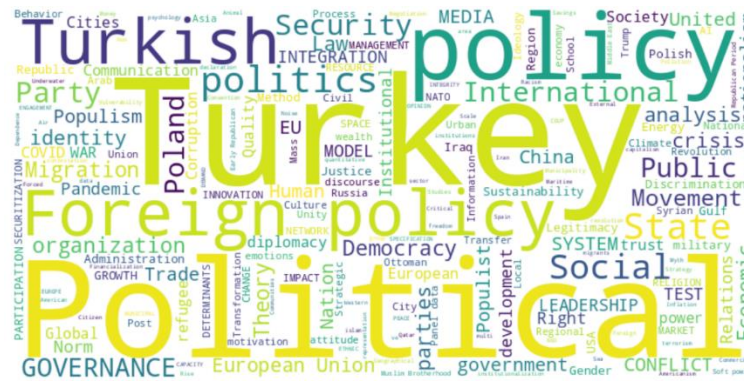


Figure 29. Keywords Word Cloud

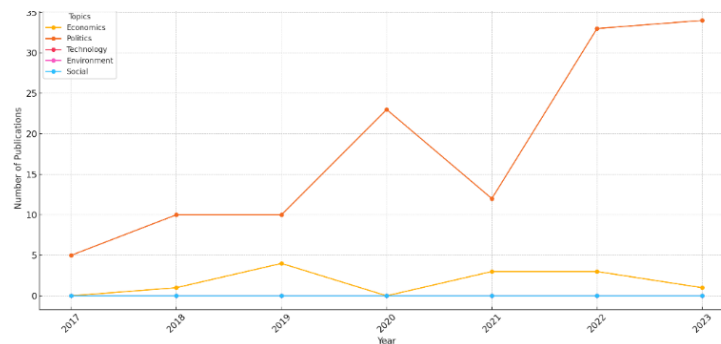


Figure 30. Topic Trends Over the Years

The methodological approaches of these three journals are illustrated in the following visual:

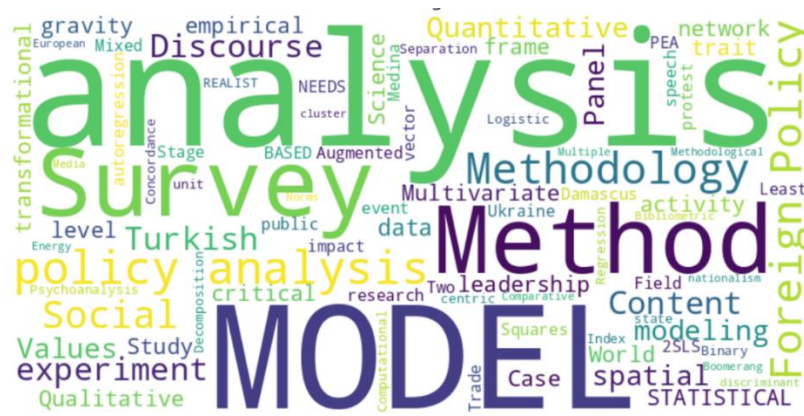


Figure 31. Word Cloud of Methods

It has been observed that modelling and analytical methods have particularly increased in recent years. Additionally, qualitative methods such as surveys and discourse analyses have seen a rise in certain years, indicating growing interest in both quantitative and qualitative methods within political science. Similarly, there has been a notable increase in the use of multivariate analysis and content analysis methods, especially post-2020.

Examining the keywords, it is evident that in the journal *International Relations*, concepts such as 'foreign policy,' 'security,' 'state,' and 'international' are prominent. The focus is particularly on international relations, security policies, and state-centric topics, with frequent discussions on Turkey's foreign policy and regional security issues. In *Turkish Studies*, keywords such as 'Turkey,' 'foreign policy,' 'politics,' and 'identity' stand out, highlighting the political structure of Turkey, identity debates, and orientations in foreign policy. Additionally, terms like 'gender,' 'nationalism,' and 'AKP' point to significant areas of debate regarding Turkey's internal political dynamics and social structure. In the journal *Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences*, there is a high frequency of terms such as 'policy,' 'political,' 'Turkey,' and 'foreign,' generally discussing Turkey's political processes and foreign policy decisions. Keywords such as 'populism,' 'democracy,' and 'governance' emphasize processes of democratization and governance styles.

The distribution of topics is illustrated in the following visual:

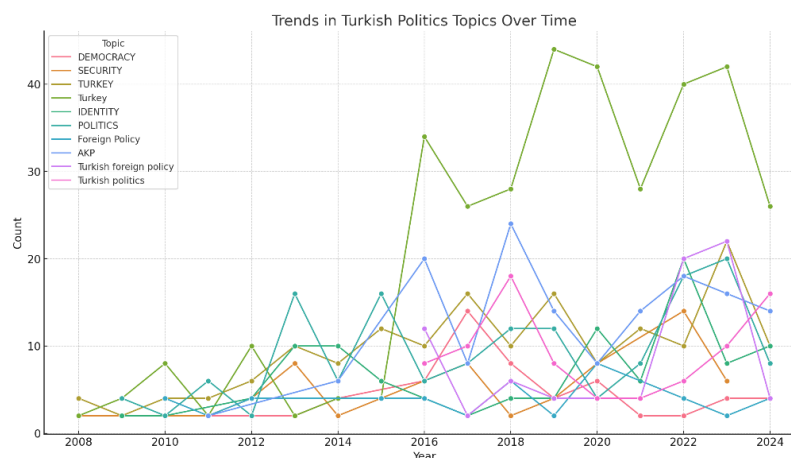


Figure 32. Trends in Turkish Politics Topics Over Time

"The topics 'Turkey' and 'Turkish politics' showed a significant increase, particularly during the 2015-2018 period, reflecting a time of intense debates on Turkey's political scene, especially concerning both domestic and foreign policy. Regarding 'Foreign Policy' and 'Security,' it was observed that Turkey's foreign policy and security issues notably surged in 2016 and 2020. These periods correspond to years when Turkey played an active role in foreign policy and when regional security issues were frequently discussed, highlighting the academic literature's response to an analysis of these events, which underscores the social dimension of the discipline. The concepts of 'Democracy' and 'Identity' display a trend of periodic rises and falls, indicating that democratization processes and discussions of social identity in Turkey periodically gain prominence and are reflected in academic fields, particularly when mentioned in political debates. The terms 'AKP' and 'Politics' highlight the role of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in politics, particularly as a significant topic post-2010, reflecting the party's influence on Turkey's political landscape.

Overall, the pre-2000 period was more focused on foreign policy, security, and state structures, whereas the post-2000 period saw a shift towards domestic politics, social dynamics, and identity debates. In recent years, topics such as 'energy,' 'gender,' and 'populism' have gained traction, expanding areas of discussion in both national and international contexts. This trend aligns with the broader international literature. However, the prominence of Turkey-related themes in the keywords of Turkish journals reveals that local debates hold considerable weight.

The visual below shows the universities that academically support these three journals, indicating that their publication sources are predominantly universities in Turkey.

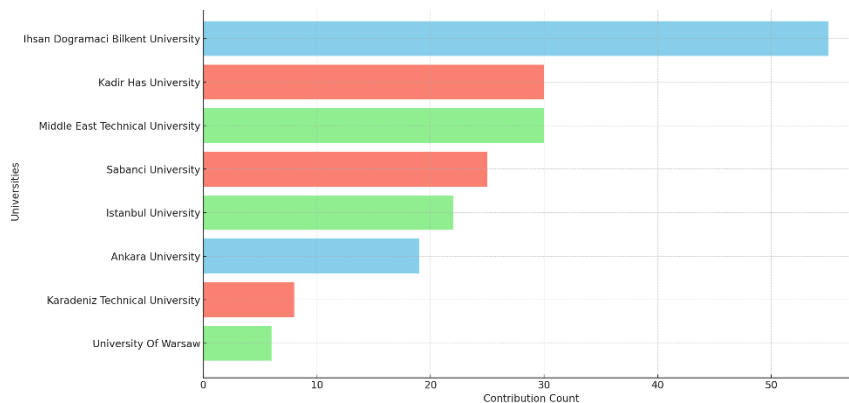


Figure 33. Top Contributing Universities from All Three Journals

Discussion: A Comparative Analysis of International and Turkish Literature

This section provides a comparative assessment of the thematic and methodological trends identified in the international and Turkish literature analysed above. By systematically juxtaposing findings from selected leading political science journals—specifically APSR, JOP, and BJPoS—with prominent Turkish journals (Uluslararası İlişkiler, Turkish Studies, and Siyasal), this section aims to highlight both convergences and divergences in political science scholarship. Comparative analyses are visually presented through tables and graphs, followed by interpretative discussions examining the underlying reasons for these similarities and differences, ultimately contextualizing these trends within broader sociopolitical and academic environments.

Keywords/Topics	International Literature (APSR, JOP, BJPols) (2000-2024)	Turkish Literature (Uluslararası İlişkiler, Turkish Studies, Siyasal) (2000-2024)	Comparative Observations
Democracy	High frequency, especially post-2015	Medium-high frequency, fluctuates according to domestic political events	Continuous global interest versus periodic local significance
Identity Politics	Prominent increase, highlighting diversity and inclusion	Increased interest, specifically related to national identity debates	Local context dominates identity discussions in Turkey
Conflict/War	Frequent; strongly linked to global issues and conflicts	Moderate frequency, peaks around regional conflicts and crises	More consistent focus internationally, event-driven locally
Populism	Moderate-high frequency, increasing over time	High frequency, closely associated with domestic politics (particularly post-2010)	Strongly driven by national political dynamics in Turkey
Foreign Policy	Medium frequency, broad thematic coverage	High frequency, significant increase during geopolitical tensions (2016-2020)	Turkish literature driven by regional geopolitical position
Gender	High frequency, steadily increasing	Moderate frequency, increasing attention but remains limited	Global literature more proactive in addressing gender issues

Figure 34. Comparative Analysis of Research Topics in International and Turkish Political Science Literature

Figure 34 illustrates significant thematic differences and similarities between international and Turkish political science literature. The concept of "Democracy" emerges as a highly prominent topic internationally, particularly intensifying post-2015 due to significant global democratic challenges. In contrast, in Turkish literature, interest in democracy fluctuates significantly, closely tied to specific domestic political developments rather than sustained scholarly interest. Regarding the theme of populism, Turkish literature demonstrates notably higher and more concentrated attention, particularly post-2010, reflecting Turkey's distinct political landscape and the significant impact of populist governance styles on the country's recent political history. In contrast, the international literature treats populism as an increasingly important, yet comparatively less central theme, analysed within broader global and theoretical contexts rather than solely specific domestic developments. The frequency and scope of discussions surrounding identity politics also differ. Turkish political science frequently addresses identity-related issues, emphasizing ethnicity, nationalism, and cultural identity, directly shaped by domestic socio-political debates. Conversely, international literature addresses identity politics within broader global and theoretical contexts, highlighting intersectionality, race, gender, and multiculturalism in diverse societies.

Themes related to conflict and war show distinct patterns as well. In international journals, discussions on conflict and war remain persistently prominent, reflecting consistent scholarly interest driven by global crises, wars, and international relations. In Turkish political science, however, these themes emerge more episodically, intensifying predominantly during specific periods of geopolitical tension or regional crises involving Turkey.

Finally, the topic of foreign policy has sustained prominence in Turkish journals, particularly influenced by regional geopolitical concerns, Turkey's active international engagement, and foreign relations dynamics. In contrast, international literature adopts a more balanced approach, contextualizing foreign policy within broader theoretical and global frameworks. In summary, Table 1 reveals that Turkish political science literature is more directly responsive to domestic political events,

whereas international literature consistently engages with broader theoretical, methodological, and global thematic contexts. This comparative difference underscores how local socio-political dynamics significantly influence academic priorities and research agendas within Turkey, whereas international scholarship maintains a broader, globally informed perspective.

Methodological Approaches	APSR, JOP, BJPoIS (International Literature, 2000-2024)	Uluslararası İlişkiler, Turkish Studies, Siyasal (Turkish Literature, 2000-2024)	Comparative Observations
Experimental Methods	High frequency, significant increase over recent years	Low frequency, limited application	Slow adaptation to innovative methods in Turkish literature
Content Analysis	High frequency, particularly in social media analyses	Medium frequency, gradually increasing	Gaining interest in Turkey, especially in media studies
Qualitative Methods (Discourse analysis, interviews, etc.)	Increasing use, moderate-high frequency	High frequency, widely utilized	Commonly adopted in both, with consistent popularity
Quantitative Modelling	Consistently high frequency	Medium-high frequency, increasing use	Increasing methodological convergence, international literature leads in complexity and frequency
Experimental Designs	Significant rise, high popularity post-2000	Limited adoption, relatively low frequency	Turkish literature shows slower integration of experimental approaches

Figure 35. Comparative Analysis of Methodological Trends in International and Turkish Literature

The comparative analysis of methodological trends reveals significant variations and convergences between international and Turkish political science literatures. Firstly, there is a clear divergence in the adoption of experimental methods; international literature has increasingly embraced experimental designs, particularly post-2000, reflecting an intensified focus on causal inference and methodological rigor. Conversely, Turkish literature demonstrates a relatively lower utilization of experimental approaches, indicating either a slower adoption rate or structural limitations such as resource constraints, methodological training, or institutional factors.

Regarding content analysis, both international and Turkish literatures show an upward trajectory, reflecting broader global methodological shifts influenced by the rise of digital media. However, international journals utilize content analysis more extensively, likely due to stronger integration of computational techniques and data science applications. Turkish scholarship appears to be gradually aligning with this global trend, albeit with moderate intensity and narrower scope, primarily within communication and media-focused studies. The application of qualitative methods—particularly discourse analysis and in-depth interviews—is prevalent in both international and Turkish literatures. This methodological convergence indicates a common academic recognition of the importance of qualitative approaches in understanding nuanced political and social dynamics, especially within identity politics, social movements, and public opinion studies. The use of quantitative modelling remains consistently high in international journals, reflecting longstanding traditions of rigorous empirical analysis and methodological standardization. Turkish political science literature, while initially less reliant on sophisticated quantitative modelling, has increasingly adopted these methods

over recent years. This growing interest suggests a positive alignment with global academic standards and an attempt by Turkish academia to strengthen empirical rigor and methodological sophistication.

In summary, methodological trends illustrated in Figure 35 highlight both convergences and divergences between international and Turkish literatures. While Turkish political science has increasingly embraced mixed methodologies and content analysis in line with international trends, significant methodological gaps—particularly the limited use of experimental designs—underscore structural and educational differences that warrant further development in the Turkish academic environment.

CONCLUSION

Political science is a multifaceted and interdisciplinary field of study that explores the complex dynamics of power, authority, and governance in human societies. From its ancient roots to its modern significance, political science remains a vital discipline within the social sciences, helping us better understand and navigate the political world around us (March, 1955; Almond et al., 1962; Ilonszki & Roux, 2021; Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). The evolution of political science as a discipline highlights the dynamic and multifaceted nature of political fields. Drawing on insights from various social sciences, political research has adapted to changing technological and social environments, leading to the development of new methodologies and research areas.

Bibliometric analysis reveals that the field of political science has undergone numerous major changes and transformations over the last century. The early years of the discipline focused on establishing political science as an independent field of study, with researchers facing the challenge of defining the scope and methodology of the field (Kaufman-Osborn, 2006). This was followed by the 'behavioural revolution' in the mid-20th century, which emphasized empirical analysis and quantitative methods (Wilson, 2017). Recently, the field has entered a period referred to as the 'second scientific revolution,' characterized by a heightened focus on empiricism and methodological rigour. This shift is reflected in the growing importance of comparative politics as a subfield (Wilson, 2017). Researchers in this area have employed computational and data-driven approaches to address long-standing questions about human behaviour and the dynamics of political systems (Edelmann et al., 2020). Despite these advancements, the study also highlights ongoing challenges within the field. It is suggested that greater attention should be given to the deeper integration of sociological theories and computational social science techniques into the mainstream of political science (Wilson, 2017) (Hull, 1999).

This study emphasizes the evolving nature of political sociology, reflecting changes in social dynamics and the increasing impact of digital tools on political processes, paralleling data from the literature. Bibliometric analysis conducted in leading international and Turkish journals reveals a shift from traditional theoretical frameworks to more contemporary and diverse approaches that integrate the digital society, new media, and fields of power. The findings indicate that both international and Turkish literature have embraced methodological innovations such as social network analysis and big data usage, highlighting the growing role of digitalization in shaping public opinion and political decision-making. The increased focus on identity politics, multiculturalism, and emerging social issues reflects a broader trend toward addressing the complex and intersecting challenges of modern societies.

In the Turkish context, the analysis shows that local political events continue to play a significant role in shaping research topics, emphasizing national identity, populism, and regional political dynamics. This indicates a departure from global trends, where the influence of international social

movements and transnational issues is more pronounced. Overall, the study underscores the need for interdisciplinary approaches in political sociology by integrating insights from sociology, communication studies, and other related fields. As political landscapes continue to evolve, the ongoing adaptation of methodologies and theoretical frameworks will be critical in capturing the complexities of contemporary political life.

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