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Assessment of Articles Published in Nursing Journals Between 2006 and 2010 in Turkey*

Türkiye’de 2006 ve 2010 Yılları Arasında Hemşirelik Dergilerinde Yayınlanan Makalelerin Değerlendirilmesi

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Özgün Araştırma

Abstract

Objective: The aim of the study was assessment of articles published in nursing journals between 2006 and 2010 in Turkey.

Method: The study was retrospective and descriptive. In this study, 1013 articles from the archives of 11 edited and electronically accessible nursing journals published periodically between 2006 and 2010 in Turkey were reviewed through a structured evaluation form upon a literature survey conducted by the authors. Data was evaluated by SPSS software program.

Results: In the present research, it was determined that the majority of the articles published in the nursing journals were descriptive-type research articles with two authors that mainly focused on patient care; that the questionnaires prepared by the researchers were used as data collection tools in general, and that few of those studies had funding support.

Conclusions: The study displayed that Turkish nursing was currently at the starting phase of the process of generating scientific information within the context of descriptive research, but was gaining impetus towards becoming a scientific discipline and generating its own body of nursing information. It can be concluded in light

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of the research results that nurse researchers should be engaged in experimental, methodological and qualitative researches rather than descriptive ones, and the studies on nursing should be supported financially more.

Keywords: Nursing articles, nursing journals, Turkey

Öz

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye’de 2006-2010 yılları arasında hemşirelik dergilerinde yayınlanan makalelerin çeşitli özelliklerinin değerlendirilmesidir.

Yöntem: Çalışma tanımlayıcı ve retrospektif türdedir. Çalışmaya Ulusal Tez Tarama Merkezi veri tabanları ile Türkiye’de düzenli olarak yayınlanan, editörlü ve çevrimiçi olarak ulaşılabilen 2006-2010 yılları arasında yayınlanmış 11 hemşirelik dergisinin arşivinde yer alan 1013 makale alınmıştır. Bu makaleler araştırmacılar tarafından literatür taraması yapılarak yapılandırılmış bir değerlendirme formu aracılığı ile incelenmiştir. İnceleme sonucunda elde edilen bilgiler SPSS veri tabanında, sayı ve yüzdeler yardımı ile değerlendirilmiştir.

Bulgular: Hemşirelik dergilerinde basılan makalelerin yayın türünün en fazla araştırma makalesi, tanımlayıcı türde ve iki yazarlı olduğu, veri toplama aracı olarak soru formunun kullanıldığı, çalışılan konuların çoğunlukla hasta bakımına yönelik olduğu ve çok azının maddi destek aldığı belirlenmiştir.

Sonuç: Araştırmadan elde edilen veriler doğrultusunda Türk hemşireliğinin ortaya koyduğu tanımlayıcı araştırmalar ile bilimsel bilgi üretiminin henüz başında olduğu, bununla birlikte, bilimsel bir disiplin olma ve kendi hemşirelik bilgisini üretme yolunda giderek hız kazandığı söylenebilir. Çalışmanın bulgularına dayanarak, hemşire araştırmacıların tanımlayıcı araştırmalardan ziyade deneysel, metodolojik ve niteliksel çalışmalar yapmaya yönelmesi ve hemşirelik alanında yapılan çalışmaların finansal olarak daha fazla desteklenmesi önerilebilir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Hemşirelik makaleleri, hemşirelik dergileri, Türkiye

Introduction

With significant influence in scientific communication, journals provide multidimensional contributions to the development of their respective fields. Journals play an important part in enabling scientific studies to be read, accessed and assessed by large masses, thereby providing readers with the possibility to discuss, criticize and consider such studies. Journals are indispensable in augmenting the exchange of scientific information and in facilitating such exchange in the field of nursing, as is the case in all other fields of science.¹

The greater the body of knowledge regarding an occupation, the more that occupation is considered a profession. A profession in the possession of a scientific structure must extend its load in knowledge through constant research. Nursing research is an unavoidable requirement of producing scientific evidence and bringing the science of nursing to the next level in order to add professionalism to the practices, education and management of nursing.²⁻⁵ The scientific knowledge thus created must be published for further sharing and utilization. In this respect, articles published in national and international journals are of vital importance in developing the knowledge in nursing and strengthening professional nursing. In the present age, scientific and technological advances, individual and social expectations for the protection and improvement of health, ethical and social standards, institutional policies and legal arrangements have made it compulsory to focus on the generation of knowledge and knowledge-based practices for the phenomenon of professional care in

nursing to be structured in a robust manner.^{2,3,4,6,7,8}At the same time, nursing research has continuously contributed to the scientific knowledge in nursing in the light of scientific methodology and an ever-increasing pace.

In Turkey, having contributed greatly to scientific studies in the field of nursing from the past to the present day, nursing journals exhibit improvements in both quantity and quality.¹ The initiation of graduate and postgraduate nursing education at the Faculty of Nursing under Ege University in 1955 and 1968, respectively, and the initiation of a doctorate degree in nursing at the Faculty of Nursing under Hacettepe University in 1972 led to increases in the number of research studies and nursing journals. In 2010, there are nearly 20 scientific nursing journals published by universities and (19 pieces) professional associations in Turkey.⁹ The increasing number of national and international journals and the research studies published in such journals add further strength to the scientific basis of the field of nursing day by day.¹⁰

The quality of articles published in national and international journals is quite important in generating scientific knowledge and reflecting the same onto practice. Especially well-established and qualified articles published in our country can make a serious contribution to both national and international nursing literature. Accordingly, a necessity arises to recognize and improve the qualifications and scientific value of the studies in the field of nursing. In this context, the published articles should be reviewed in terms of quality and compliance with the scientific methodology. The quality of a scientific article is reviewed from the perspective of the compliance of its methodology and content analysis, as well as the references, quotations, footnotes and bibliography used in the article. In this scope, the literature includes studies that review articles on nursing published in national journals in Turkey.¹²⁻¹⁶These studies have evaluated research articles on nursing with a focus on their subject matter, methodology, presentation and references. Aksayan and Emiroğlu¹¹ analyzed research articles published in the proceedings of symposia and congresses organized between 1990 and 1995 in Turkey in terms of their methodological dimension. In this study, certain articles were identified to have certain shortcomings in basic parameters including the location, methodology and sample selection and size. At the same time, nursing research has continuously contributed to the scientific knowledge in nursing in the light of scientific methodology and an ever-increasing pace. The results of a study carried out by Çapık¹⁷ to investigate the statistical powers of articles published in a nursing journal revealed that determination of the number of samples by use of power analysis is not a common method in nursing studies. As also reported by Bağçivan et al.¹⁸ in their study regarding the works performed in the field of oncology nursing between the years 2009-2013 in Turkey, a vast number of researches and thesis studies were performed in this field, however, these works displayed low reliability and scientificness, majority of them were carried out by nurse scholars, and study groups in these researches were mostly consisted of adult patients. Karaca and Kabadağ¹⁹ studied some of the features of the researches published in the field of nursing fundamentals in Turkey in 2011-2015 period and they reported that, insufficient number of articles have been published in this field. Daş et al¹² evaluated research studies published in peer-reviewed nursing journals between 1994 and 1999 in terms of their compliance with scientific research, practice and spelling rules. They determined methodological shortcomings in the evaluated articles. From a review of 400 articles published in a nursing journal from the perspective of the type of study and author characteristics, Ünsal and Sökmen¹⁵ determined that descriptive studies were more common in the journal (84.5%). Khorshid et al.¹⁴ reviewed all articles published between in a nursing journal between 1985 and 2010

and determined that lower number of reviews were published after the journal had become peer-reviewed. Şen et al.²⁰ carried out a work on some of the properties of the articles published between years 2007-2012 and reported that, the published studies were mostly of empirical type (80.7%), 75.6% were carried out by academicians, majority of them (96.6%) were non-thesis studies, 27.2% of the studied sample group consisted of students and 16.7% of the papers were related with mental health nursing. Ergül et al.¹³ conducted a bibliometric study, where 74 reviews and 825 research articles in 6 out of 10 nursing journals published between 1994 and 2003 in Turkey were analysed in terms of references. It was identified that the average number of references per article was 16,19 with 17,17 references for research articles and 14,50 references for reviews. The study also stated that the number of references used for articles increased in recent years and journals were used as references to a greater extent than books.

Nursing research is an unavoidable requirement of producing scientific evidence and bringing the science of nursing to the next level in order to add professionalism to the practices, education and management of nursing.²⁻⁶ The scientific knowledge thus created must be published for further sharing and utilization. In this respect, articles published in national and international journals are of vital importance in developing the knowledge in nursing and strengthening professional nursing.

Bibliometric studies in the same scope are also observed in the international literature on nursing. Pardo et al.¹⁶ aimed to describe the references used in Spanish research articles on nursing and the transformation of the past 10 years and established that the references used in the articles under review were of a less accessible nature and low scientific quality, whereas the studies showed a tendency to use more references than in previous years. In another study, O'Neill and Duffey²¹ reviewed the flow of information between nursing research and clinical practice. The authors determined that 42.5% of research articles had reflections in clinical practice. Estabrooks et al.²² also reviewed 630 articles published on the use of research in the field of nursing between 1972 and 2001 according to their bibliographic data results. This study found that a significant increase was observed in the efficiency and use of research in articles in years and references used in articles were mostly nursing research studies, whereas the number of repeated references was limited and most of these research studies were by single authors.

Most of the nursing researches carried out in our country are published in national and international nursing journals. The articles published in these journals have a key role in providing access to researches on nursing, putting their results into practice, and implementing them in education. Regular reviews and assessments on journals are beneficial in establishing both the compliance of individual journals with international principles regarding periodicals and the position thereof among other international or national journals.²³ Similarly, conclusions reached through retrospective analyses of the literature not only enable the retrospective evaluation of the body of scientific knowledge, but also provide significant data for the future. Research studies regarding the multifaceted evaluation of publications on nursing have been conducted specifically after 1995. However, the limited number of these studies gives way to the impression that the results of the present study, conducted with the aim of providing a new series of contributions to the field, will generate data to identify problematic areas and to resolve any existing issues. The aim of the present study is to shed light onto the future of nursing education through the review of scientific research and relevant data. This research was carried out with a view to address the current problems regarding publications, raise awareness among researchers regarding these issues, and make positive

contributions to them in preparing more scientific and qualified studies in the future. In this regard, the aim of this research is to evaluate the various aspects of the articles (type, subject of articles, number of authors, data collection tools, their funding status) published in nursing journals within 2006-2010 period in Turkey.

In this context, answers were sought to the following questions:

- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on their type?
- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on their subject?
- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on the research type?
- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on the number of authors?
- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on the used data collection tools?
- How is the distribution of nursing articles based on their funding status?

Material and Method

Design

The study was conducted with a descriptive and retrospective approach.

Data Sources and Literature Survey

The literature survey was carried out using the computer aided search engines of national 6.10.2011 Databases on 10.12.2011(date). The Turkish keywords “Hemşirelik makaleleri, hemşirelik dergileri, Türkiye” and English keywords “Nursing articles, nursing journals, Turkey” for the surveys in national and international databases.

Research Sample and Data Collection

All issues of the journals included in the research and full-paper version of all articles were accessed online. The articles full version of which could not be accessed as of the date of search were excluded from the research. Surveys were carried out between the dates 6.10.2011- 10.12.2011 using computer-based search engines. Initially, all peer-reviewed nursing journals (11 journals) having an editorial board and published on a regular basis in Turkey were searched online. Afterwards, webpage and online archives of each nursing journal were visited and all 2006-2010 volumes and issues of journals were thoroughly investigated. Primary focus of the research was the titles of the national and international papers searched online. 1874 research articles in total, selected on the basis of specified criteria, were evaluated based on their titles and abstracts. 861 of these works searched from the databases were excluded from the research as they were out of the scope of selection criteria, whereas 1013 research articles that fall within the scope of criteria were included in the study.

Selection Criteria for the Articles

Selection criteria for the included articles are as follows:

- Studies carried out in Turkey and published in nursing journals within 2006-2010 period.
- Studies that involve at least one nurse (academician/clinician).
- Papers written in English or Turkish.
- Papers with full-versions having online access as of the date of search.
- Researches written in summarized version are excluded.

All articles included in the investigation in accordance with data evaluation form were categorized and summarized on the bases of; (1) professional identity and year of researchers, (2) professions of authors, (3) article type, (4) the subject/objective of article/research, (6) number of authors, (7) data collection tools used in the research, (8) funding status of the research.

Each article accessed on journals' archives were evaluated on the basis of their type, subject, the type of research in cases of research articles, the number of authors, used data collection tools, and the funding status of the research, and obtained data were included in the evaluation form by the authors. The articles obtained as a result of individually performed surveys were revised in terms of relevance and accordingly a consensus was reached among the authors.

Table 1. Certain Characteristics of Nursing Journals Published in Turkey

Title	Year of first publication	# of Issues per year	# of Articles under review
Journal of Ege University Nursing Faculty	1984	2	146
Nursing Journal of Hacettepe University Faculty of Health Sciences	1994	2	59
Nursing and Health Sciences Journal of Atatürk University	1997	4	242
Health Sciences Journal of Cumhuriyet University	1997	3	64
Journal of Research and Development in Nursing	1999	3	68
Journal of Istanbul University Florence Nightingale School of Nursing	2002	3	112
Nursing and Arts Journal of Maltepe University	2008	3	119
Health Sciences Journal of Dokuz Eylül University	2008	4	76
Acıbadem Nursing Journal	2008	12	75
Journal of Nursing Sciences	2009	2	29
Journal of Psychiatric Nursing	2010	4	23
Total			1013

1. Surveying of online nursing journals in national and international databases (19 journals)
2. Evaluation of whether these nursing journals with online access are periodically published with peer-review and editorial management (11 journals)
3. In-depth investigation of all volumes and issues of each selected nursing journal published in 2006-2010 period.
4. Investigation of the titles and abstracts of all accessed articles (1874 in total)
5. Determination of which articles do not fall into the scope of selection criteria (861 articles which do not involve at least one nurse and which consists of only an abstract)
6. Inclusion of the articles meeting the selection criteria into the research (1013 articles in total)
7. Evaluation of each article included in the research in terms of their various features (article type, article subject, number of authors, research type of the article, data collection tools, funding status of the research, etc.) and completion of evaluation forms with these data.

Figure 1: Flow Diagram for Article Selection Process

Ethical Aspect of the Study

Approval was obtained from the Ethics Board of Cumhuriyet University to conduct the study (Ethics Board Decision No: 2011-06/09).

Data analysis

Research data was analyzed using SPSS 16.0 (Statistical Package For Social Studies / 16.0 for Windows) software package. Numerical and percentage calculations were used in data evaluation and results were expressed in percent values.

Results

Table 2 provides the breakdown of articles published in the nursing journals under review per type of study, type of research, number of authors and data collection tool. The majority of articles published in these journals were research articles (62.2%), followed by reviews (37.1%) and case reports (0.8%). The 63.7% of reviewed research articles were descriptive and 17.3% were analytical in terms of their types of research, whereas most of them were by two authors (48.7%). The 49.8% of the articles used question forms developed by the authors as the data collection tool.

Table 2. Certain Characteristics of Articles Published in Nursing Journals (n=1013)

Article characteristics	n	%
Type of article		
Research article	630	62.2
Review article	375	37.0
Case report	8	0.8
Type of research (n=630)		
Descriptive	401	63.7
Analytical	109	17.3
Experimental	65	10.3
Qualitative	4	0.6
Methodological	4	0.6
Scaling	47	7.5
Number of authors		
Single author	212	20.9
Two authors	493	48.7
Three authors	156	15.4
Four and more authors	152	15.0
Data collection tool		
Question form	314	49.8
Scale	316	50.2

The journals under review were observed to include articles mostly on nursing interventions and practices (41.2%), followed by articles on approaches for the protection and improvement of health (23.4%) and nursing training (11.5%) (Table 3).

Table 3. Subjects of Articles Published in Nursing Journals (n=630)*

Subject of the article	n	%
Nursing interventions and practices	417	41.2
Protection and improvement of health	237	23.4
Nursing training	117	11.5
Patient/individual training	57	5.6
Image of nursing	54	5.3
Employee health	42	4.1
Science, scientific development(s) in the field of health	29	2.9

* In the same article to more than one property is examined through a number of journals that have been examined so.

Only 4.4% of the research studies under review were identified to be supported with a source of funding/project (Table 4).

Table 4. Presence of Supportive Funding for Articles Published in Journals (n=630)

Presence of funding	n	%
Supported	28	4.4
Not Supported	602	95.6

Discussion

Most of the articles published in journals reviewed were observed to be research articles (Table 2). National and international studies conducted in this field have also reached similar conclusions. In Turkey, research articles were found by Ünsal and Sökmen¹⁵ to constitute 66.3% of 400 articles published in a nursing journal between 1998 and 2009; by Ergül et al.¹³ to constitute 52.7% of 825 publications published within 10 nursing journals in Turkey between 1994 and 2003; and by Korshid et al.¹⁴ to constitute nearly half of the publications in a journal under review (46.4%). At the international level, a study performed in Slovenia identified that 75% of articles published in a study were research articles.²⁰ All of these findings, which are in conformity with the findings of our own study, are considered to be significant in that they indicate the presence of an impetus in the field of nursing to become a discipline and to generate its own knowledge of nursing.

Even though it is encouraging to see research articles at the top rank among types of articles in Turkey, most of the articles are observed to be in descriptive type (Table 2). In this context, certain studies in the nursing literature support our findings.^{15,23} In Turkey, Karatay and Emiroğlu²³ found that 69.4% of research studies in the field of nursing were of a descriptive nature. Contrary to Turkish literature, the international dimension is exemplified by Yarcheski et al.²⁴, which identified that the number of descriptive studies gradually decreased among the studies published in four nursing journals between 1985 and 2010 and instead, an increase was observed in experimental designs and methodological studies. This difference observed between Turkey and other countries in terms of the types of research studies may be attributed to the country-specific variability in research priorities in the field of nursing and to the progress attained in the processes of scientific research. In fact, the developmental processes of nursing research also demonstrate differences in different countries. Whereas nursing research is based upon a long period of time in the USA, it only enjoys rather a short history in Europe. The development of nursing research also varies among European countries.

Nursing research is more advanced in North-Western countries than in the other countries of Europe.²¹ In this sense, Turkish nursing may be regarded as taking its first steps within the context of generating scientific knowledge through its descriptive studies, considering the historical process.

A review of the articles published in the journals addressed by our study in terms of research subjects reveals that the most researched studies include nursing interventions and practices (41.2%), followed by the protection and improvement of health and nursing training (Table 3). Özsoy and Karaaslan²⁵ reviewed 330 research articles published in all congress and symposium proceedings published between 1985 and 1992 except for reviews and reported that the most frequently researched subjects were nursing interventions and practices (15.15%), nursing training (12.12%) and infant and child health (11.21%), respectively. Reviewing the subjects of articles published in the Journal of Research and Development in Nursing, Karatay and Emiroğlu²³ found that the top rank constituted “science, research, ethics”, while the second and third ranks encompassed “quality of life of patients, patient satisfaction” and “scale/scaling”, respectively. In another study conducted by Ünsal and Sökmen¹⁵, the order of most researched subjects in a nursing journal was identified to be as follows: maternal and women’s health nursing (17.7%), principles of nursing (15.5%), public health nursing (14.2%), nursing for child health and diseases (13.0%), psychiatric nursing (12.5%) and internal diseases nursing (12.0%). When considered in terms of research subjects, articles published in international journals may be said to display similarity with the findings of our research study. In fact, Borbasi et al.²⁶ identified that the subjects of 34% of articles were training of nurses, and nursing care in a study on nursing journals published in Australia between 1005 and 2000. Yarcheski et al.²⁴ reviewed articles published in four nursing journals between 1985 and 2010 and found that research subjects emphasised gradually more every year were nursing practices. Mantzoukas⁵ reviewed articles published in ten general nursing journals and also concluded that 45% of the subjects consisted of nursing practices. In this context, all of these studies at the national and international levels may give way to the understanding that the field of nursing is currently putting forth efforts to improve the magnitude of practical knowledge.

The most frequently used data collection tool within the research articles reviewed within the scope of our study is observed to be question forms developed by the authors (49.8%) (Table 2). Research articles were also identified to use different phrases as equivalent to the question form including questionnaire, descriptive characteristics form, personal description form, interview form, demographic form or data collection form. The national and international literature also reveals that question forms developed by authors are used as the most frequent data collection tool as a strikingly similar conclusion to the finding of our research study.^{15,23,27,28,29} The findings obtained in our and other research studies may be indicated to be closely related to the type of research and to exhibit parallelisms between the research methodology and question forms.

In our study, most of the articles published were observed to have been conducted by two authors (48.7%) (Table 2). Conclusions of national^{23,13} and international^{30,31} studies also support this finding. In the past, the ability to generate research used to be addressed as an ability specific only to academics. However, our modern day witnesses an increased emphasis on the importance and necessity for nurses at every level to be actively involved in the research process with the aim of being a part of the process of developing their own practices and benefitting from research findings.^{4,6,7,8,32,33} In this respect, clinical nurses undoubtedly play an important role in the transfer of knowledge from research into practice and the transformation of scientific knowledge into skills. As an art form and

science of improvement, nursing can only maintain its presence and indispensability through its independent practices. The sole path to such maintenance can be the generation of scientific knowledge of nursing through multi-author studies involving academic and clinical nurses to both consolidate theory and practice and form a basis for independent nursing practices. In addition, the studies in nursing can be concluded to be conducted more within the nursing discipline with a few authors, as indicated by the research findings. However, an important approach to strengthening the body of knowledge in nursing may be the conduct of interdisciplinary multi-author studies.

Only a small portion of the articles encompassed by our study (4.4%) were financially supported by a private or public organization in the research process (Table 4). Similarly to our research finding, the financial support provided to nursing research in Turkey is observed to be rather limited. Nevertheless, developed countries indicate great support from various organizations to both research in general and nursing research in specific terms (14.9%-72).²⁶ Research studies are recognized and financially supported in proportion with the magnitude of the body of knowledge they create and the contribution they make to human life. In this scope, the nursing knowledge generated in Turkey may be indicated to remain more limited in contributing to practice and human life. However, the increased importance attributed to research and development activities in Turkey in recent years has pointed out to the requirement of financially supporting scientific research. Indeed, the share set aside for nursing research from research and development funds in Turkey has started to increase as is the case in other fields of science. Research and development activities implemented in Turkey are supported by TÜBİTAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey), European Union and universities.

Conclusion

The most frequent publication type among the articles reviewed within the scope of our study were identified to be descriptive, two-author research articles on patient care conducted through a question form as the data collection tool and supported by funding to a minimal extent. In light of the obtained results, it can be suggested that, nurse scholars should rather be engaged in experimental, methodological and qualitative studies instead of descriptive researches and the studies in the field of nursing should receive more financial support.

Today, the approach that will bring nursing to a scientific and professional point requires evidence-based practices. Evidence-based practices, in return, are rooted not in conventional nursing practices, but in the findings of qualified scientific research.

In this context, there is an undeniable requirement for performing more application-oriented, qualitative, experimental, methodological and well-funded researches with a multidisciplinary approach, and particular importance should be attached to inclusion of more clinician nurses in these studies for implementation of scientific-knowledge based applications and improvement of nursing quality in the field of patient care in Turkey.

Contribution of Authors

Design of Study: G N, K Ş

Data Collection or /and Analysis: G N, A-G N, G G, K S

Preparation of Manuscript: G N, K Ş, G G, K S, A-G N

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