

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ARTICLES IN TURKISH EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION CONTEXT

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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ABSTRACT

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ARTICLES IN TURKISH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CONTEXT

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This study was contrived to examine articles in the field of early childhood education published in Turkish academic journals. Under the scope of the study, descriptive and methodological characteristics of the articles were scrutinized while simultaneously conducting an investigation and categorization of their research topics. 822 articles from 62 Turkish academic journals, indexed under SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM on early childhood education, published within the past decade were examined via content analysis. Results of the study showed that almost half the articles were designed (n=407) as quantitative studies. In complement with that, three most prevalent research methods were identified to be survey, (n=123), experimental (n=102), and correlational, (n=96). Accordingly, the widespread choice of sample group in the articles was children (35.6%). Findings of the study further demonstrated that 43.5% of the articles did not clarify their sampling methods. Among the articles, the most studied topics of research included educational subjects (n=424). Out of the sub-categories of educational research topics, special education/inclusion was the most prevalent by a

rate of 10.1%. Given that, it is overall hoped the results of this study can contribute to research in the field of early childhood education from the standpoint of expatiating a detailed examination of the current status in the field.

Keywords: Early childhood education, articles, content analysis, Turkish academic journals



ÖZ

TÜRK AKADEMİK DERGİLERDE YAYINLANAN OKUL ÖNCESİ EĞİTİMİ İLE İLGİLİ MAKALELERİN İÇERİK ANALİZİ

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Bu çalışmanın amacı okul öncesi eğitimi alanında Türk akademik dergilerde yayınlanmış makaleleri incelemektir. Çalışmanın kapsamında makalelerin tanımlayıcı özellikleri, araştırma konuları ve yöntemsel özellikleri incelenmiştir. ULAKBİM'in Eğitim Bilimleri kategorisinde, SSCI ve ESCI'de endeksli Türk akademik dergilerinde (n=62) okul öncesi eğitimi alanında geçtiğimiz on yılda yayınlanmış 822 makale, içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın bulguları, incelenen makalelerin neredeyse yarısının (n=407) nicel çalışma olarak tasarlandığını göstermiştir. Bu bağlamda, makaleler arasında en çok kullanılan ilk üç araştırma yönteminin tarama (n=123), deneysel (n=102) ve korelasyon (n=96) olduğu görülmüştür. Ayrıca, incelenen makalelerin %43.5'nin örneklem seçim yöntemleri ile ilgili herhangi bir bilgi vermedikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, makaleler arasında en çok çalışılan konuların eğitim başlığı altında toplananlar olduğu görülmüştür (n=424). Bu başlık altında en çok yayın yapılan konu ise özel eğitim ve kaynaştırma (%10.1). Genel olarak bakıldığında, bu çalışmanın

okul öncesi eğitimi alanındaki mevcut durumun ayrıntılı bir incelemesini sunarak, alana katkısı olacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul öncesi eğitimi, makale, içerik analizi, Türk akademik dergiler





To my Parents with love and gratitude

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“Without publication, science is dead.”

-Gerard Piel

Knowledge, as simply described by the Cambridge dictionary, is “awareness, understanding, or information that has been obtained by experience or study”. When it comes to scientific knowledge, the description becomes even intricate. According to Thyer (2008); observability, objectivity, and repeatability are the three main criteria that an information has to meet in order to be labelled as scientific knowledge. Furthermore, only the information acquired by scientific research can be recognized as scientific knowledge. The predominant reason for enforcing such criteria in scientific knowledge as well as in scientific research is to keep the newly acquired information in line with the definite functions on science (Hart, 1998); for instance, understanding, control, and explanation. In other words, criteria are required for scientific research to have precise definitions about what procedures have to be followed, guiding the researcher to where and how they should start (Sargut, 2006). A set of phases are also included in scientific research, such as collection, ordering, definition, classification, and analysis of data related to the object being studied (Silverman, 1987). The classification of the data acquired by scientific studies is performed in accordance with the characteristics of the field, which in turn results in the collective formation of fields of study.

Among the many characteristics that make humans stand out compared to other forms of life on the Earth; the most prominent might be the ability to pass down the information acquired by previous generations and the authentic willingness of

passing down what they contribute to what they had acquired (Polanyi, 1998). Such information, be it about individual knowledge, scientific information, or even social life, will nonetheless be stored in a way that has always influenced and shaped the world as well as in the variety of ways it may forge the world for generations to come (Kuhn, 1962). Characteristics of knowledge can be summarized as objectivity, probability, order, and ability (Polanyi, 1998). It can be stated that scientific articles combine all of these aspects; as with an article to be scientific, objectivity must be internalized and analyzed, every possible outcome must be measured and taken into consideration. Unless created in a definite order, a scientific article is not expected to bring desirable or provable outcomes. In the very end, one's abilities play a fundamental role in the production of a scientific article (Sargut, 2006). Further, it is hard to separate scientific articles from "knowledge" as a notion, since writing of a scientific article, just like reading it, is directly connected to one's knowledge (Silverman, 1987) and they serve the human instinct of moving on the knowledge they once acquired.

When an article is published in a journal, it is most likely that a majority of its readers will be analyzing or examining it for possible errors, the kind of such that may occur as omission, where the author might have failed in citing correctly; and as commission, where data analysis and interpretation may have been applied incorrectly. Though seldom, authors may recognize a mistake in their own works after publication. This being the case, a majority of journals accordingly provide authors the opportunity to republish their articles when they are revised. Allowing errors to be corrected as soon as they are spotted prevents miscalculations from going unnoticed for decades. Such convenience, namely facilitating the author to correct their own blunder, is truly hard to perform in other forms of scholarship; as in the rewriting of a chapter in a book or having to hold another conference to reinstate the corrected results, thus making scientific articles more favorable to work with while at the same time to assure objectivity (Thyer, 2008).

In addition, one of the fundamental purposes of scientific articles is that they provide the means for scientists to keep up with what the most up-to-date developments are in their fields (Silverman, 1987). An interaction and a healthy intercommunication among scientists in the same scientific framework would result in an efficient collective that would lead to an accumulated mass of knowledge, which then would let issues and discussions to take place with ease, helping in the creation of a productive scientific environment (Sargut, 2006). Particularly, scientific articles provide an opportunity for scientists to obtain knowledge on current scientific events in their fields, which leads to a rapid thrive for any scientific branch.

As Kuhn (1962) indicates, in science, it is futile to bring benefit without possessing the previously accumulated experience, and even if this accumulation is slow, the means of furthering the collection of knowledge is through scientists benefitting from one another while simultaneously following new developments in their areas that contribute to the advancement of science. Regardless of the path of science they would like to pursue, scientists are obligated with keeping in touch, following each other's accomplishments, and discussing about their findings (Azar, 2006). In this perspective, articles can be identified as elements that facilitate such an environment. Compiling scientific studies are beneficial in three key points; first, to disclose the studied aspects of that particular field, second; clarifying which techniques and methods were used in these studies, and third, to provide information on what is not yet been investigated in the field (Hart, 1998). In other words, scientific studies that yield quantitative and qualitative information about studies already conducted in a field furthers the possibility of understanding the current state of the field (Yıldız, 2004).

Science, as a whole, has many distinct fields and these fields are, just like they have been in the past, divided into separate branches and sub-fields called specializations (Bryman, 2012). Based on this, early childhood education is one of these specializations. While the institutionalization of a branch of science would require

many criteria such as establishing new departments, conducting scientific meetings with the participation of scientific corporations and institutions, and regimentation of scientific research, scientific studies still stand out as the most vital and at the same time common feature of scientific advancement (Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2012). This can be justified with the existence of scientific studies resulting in the acquisition of valuable knowledge in each of their respective areas. As argued earlier in the chapter, scientific articles constitute the most beneficial tools for sharing this knowledge. Taking the significance of scientific articles into consideration and compiling these articles authored by varied researchers; this current study aims to investigate the descriptive and methodological characteristics of scientific articles regarding early childhood education in Turkey, in addition to examine their research topics.

1.1. Significance of the Study

Researchers are free to choose how their research will or will not develop; which methods are suitable for acquiring the best among the many eventual outcomes, the data required for the research as well as how they will be collected, the selection of samples, and the calculation of statistical analyses. However, it is important to point out that all of the tendencies adopted today in scientific studies are inevitably connected to the findings of preceding researchers as well as to what their studies result in, depending upon their choices (Keskin, 2016). Specifically, tendencies of researchers on most of the aspects of their studies are inherited from preceding researchers, duly discovering what others experienced and already gathered during the respective literature review. Likewise, it is also crucial to keep track of trends by delving into, collecting, and organizing academic studies at certain intervals in order to shed light on scientists who want to carry out studies in any relevant field (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011). Therefore, findings of this current study will help junior researchers by providing a starting point. Additionally, exploring the recent tendencies in scientific research on early childhood education will further enlighten researchers, educators, and teacher candidates in scientific discussions and inquiries.

Under the scope of this study, methodological characteristics of articles will be examined in detail. The reason is that methodological characteristics of a study can tell a lot to its reader; including but not limited to the quality and quantity of information given about its method, repeatability, and subsequently the credibility of a scientific publication (Gaster & Day, 2016). This can indeed be interpreted as an approach that the methodology of a scientific study is capable to provide information about its quality. By implementing a comprehensive examination of the methodological characteristics of articles, the current study will present detailed information regarding methodology of the articles. Showcasing this information, this study creates an opportunity for other researchers to make reliable assumptions about the quality of the studies within academic journals from Turkey with regard to early childhood education, in addition to perceiving the existing trends in the world of researchers.

In higher education, analyzing articles from scientific journals is beneficial in the sense that they provide significant observations about fluctuations in the field (Thyer, 2008). Results of the current study will describe the current state of early childhood education research. In this way, the study will contribute to the community of early childhood education research by clarifying the areas of the abovementioned field which has drawn comparably less attention within the last decade, therefore aiding in the identification of certain disregarded aspects as well as other aspects that remain trendy. Moreover, findings of this study will enable making comparisons between the studies on early childhood education conducted in Turkey and those in other countries. This would help researchers to observe where Turkish literature stands in the field compared to the rest of the world. Besides, it would demonstrate the areas lacking in the number of studies. These will be beneficial for researchers to see on which areas they should focus, and subsequently, the study will contribute to the literature of early childhood education in Turkey, helping it grow in a swifter manner.

Dressel and Mayhew (1974) put forward that scientific articles and graduate theses are used the most as primary sources of knowledge, spreading the knowledge among researchers. Findings of the current study will provide an opportunity for bridging the gap between the two bodies of literature in the field, specifically, graduate thesis and scientific articles, by comparing the results of the current study to the results of similar studies conducted previously in the field, which center on theses and dissertation as their subjects of research. Connecting and comparing these two sources of major scientific knowledge will benefit researchers as an indication and comprehensive image for them about the current state of the field of early childhood education.

Studies investigating the depth and the amount of scientific research in a given field in a given period of time formulate the framework and the context of these studies in the given area. The aim of this study is to investigate descriptive and methodological characteristics of articles published in the past ten years on early childhood education in Turkish academic as well as educational journals which are indexed in Social Sciences Citation Index, Emerging Sources Citation Index, and educational sciences category of the National Academic Network and Information Center. There are similar studies on the national scale, investigating the research field of early childhood education. However, such studies either focus only on theses and dissertations (Altun, Öneren Şendil, & Şahin, 2011; Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Kaytez & Durualp, 2014; Can Yaşar & Aral, 2011; Durukan, Şen, & Atalay, 2015; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017) or only on scientific articles, but both have relatively limited contents and scopes (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012; Olgan & Öztürk Yılmaztekin, 2013; Şentürk, Yılmaz, & Gönener, 2015; Gülay Ogelman & Güngör, 2015; Oğuz & Erbil Kaya, 2017; Sarı & Altun, 2018). One common feature of all of the studies on this subject is that they suggest future studies to conduct a more comprehensive research. By implementing the process on a broader sample and with a comprehensive method of analysis, the current study may play a key role in filling the aforementioned gap in the literature.

1.2. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine descriptive and methodological characteristics of articles published in the time frame between 2008 and 2018 on early childhood education in Turkish academic journals which are indexed in Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), and educational sciences category of the National Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBIM). A total of 822 articles were processed through full examination. One of the aimed results of this study was to give inclusive information about the current literature of early childhood education in Turkey. The study further aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the descriptive characteristics of articles published between 2008 and 2018 on early childhood education in Turkish academic journals indexed under SSCI, ESCI, or the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM?

1a: How is the distribution of articles based on publication year?

1b: How is the distribution of articles based on language?

1c: How is the distribution of articles based on journals and databases?

1d: What is the number of authors and departments of the authors?

1e: How many of the articles are based on theses?

2. What is the distribution of articles published between 2008 and 2018 on early childhood education in Turkish academic journals indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM based on research topics?

3. What are the methodological characteristics of articles published between 2008 and 2018 on early childhood education in Turkish academic journals indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM?

3a: What are the research types of the articles?

3b: What are the research methods of the articles?

3c: What are the research settings of the articles?

3d: What are the sampling methods and sample sizes of the articles?

3e: What are the demographics of samples in the articles?

3f: What are the data collection instruments and data collection instruments' originality of the articles?

3g: What are the data analysis methods of the articles?

1.3. Definitions of Terms

Early childhood education: "Education of children from birth to eight years of age" (NAEYC, 2009).

Scientific article: Scientific articles are publications that showcase original research results obtained by experts and scholars (Thyer, 2008).

Academic journal: Academic journal is the very link that binds the chains of science together; it is an irreplaceable institution in the way it creates an accessible ground for scholars to share their ideas with the world (Thyer, 2008).

ULAKBIM: The National Academic Network and Information Center of Turkey

ESCI: Emerging Sources Citation Index

SSCI: Social Sciences Citation Index

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Examining how early childhood education progresses in Turkey, one would trace it back to the Ottoman Empire era, only to see small number of institutions that are occupied with how younger children are being educated (Çelik & Gündoğdu, 2007). In the following period of time, or more specifically after the decline of the Ottoman Empire, within the boundaries of the Republic of Turkey founded in 1923, a reformation took place that abolished the Ottoman language as the official one, and replaced it with the modern Turkish language that utilized from the Latin alphabet instead of Arabic letters in 1928 (Tongul, 2004). As a natural result of this change, those who were new to literacy, namely the children of primary education age, became the focal point in education, leading to the negligence of early childhood education and cutting the budget that would normally be used in that area (Ergin, 1977 as cited in Oktay, 1983). Some of the institutions taking care of preschool children, however, were left open in order to provide a ‘breathing room’ for working mothers of low income families (Oktay, 1983).

It follows that the National Education Boards had set the prominent principles behind how the early childhood education institutions were to develop in Turkey. Their primary exertion had been not only to determine a nation-wide program to set goals and assign objectives for the institutions that would in effect undertake the responsibility of handling the early childhood education but also to properly train the personnel that would work in the field or at these institutions (Tekışık, 1995). As these educational boards started to come into existence, it was not possible to talk about a proper early childhood education. Particularly after the third board, the fourth meeting of National Education Board in 1949, “developing family education”, was

among the discussed subjects (Çelik & Gündoğdu, 2007). Early childhood education appeared in the 4th board among the noteworthy matters, in addition to that, early childhood education was disclosed in “Five-Year Development Plan of Turkey” (1968-1972) for the first time. Accordingly, early childhood education became a recurrent element in almost all of the following plans, despite the fact that different models had been applied, the intended motives were not achieved (Çelik & Gündoğdu, 2007).

In a similar fashion, following the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1927, the first preschool education institution, named “Ana Öğretmen Anaokulu”, was established in Ankara (Taner Derman & Başal, 2010). Nevertheless, with primary education becoming the centerpiece of education, the school was shut down in 1930, resulting in the training of teachers for early childhood education to rise again as an issue, only to be solved in 1960 with the Primary and Education Legislation that remedied the need for preschools, which arose due to the increase in urbanization and the percentage of women taking an active role in the workforce (Çelik & Gündoğdu, 2007).

In accordance with previous legislations, the 1963 “Child Development and Care” branch for vocational high schools was introduced for only female students (Oktay, 1983). Furthermore, the responsibility of training personnel in the early childhood education was given to, with the approval of the basic law of national education, higher education institutions (Taner Derman & Başal, 2010). For that matter, in 1979, an associate degree program for preschool teacher education was arranged and immediately legislated for the academic year of 1980 - 1981 (Oktay, 1983). The 4-year undergraduate program was implemented a decade later in the academic year of 1991-1992 (Taner Derman & Başal, 2010). With only a splinter group of students enrolling in “Early Childhood Education Programs”, the department acted underneath the roof of “Child Development and Education” departments as there was no unit specifically reserved for the training of educators and teachers (Çelik &

Gündoğdu, 2007). Only after the 1998 edict of the “Council of Higher Education”, the number of departments that provided proper training for teachers was increased. With this restructure, the department that trained teachers for preschool ages was called ‘Early Childhood Education’ in 1998, and operated with the guidance of Elementary Education departments (Taner Derman & Başal, 2010). Since 2017, there have been an approximate total of 87 early childhood education departments within 66 universities that offer undergraduate programs in addition to 19 M.S. and 5 PhD graduate programs in Turkey.

2.1. Similar Studies in the Field

There have been number of studies from different disciplines, which investigated scientific studies in their own fields, on both national and international scales. Researchers use different types of scientific studies as their samples, some of whom only work on theses and dissertations, whereas some only examine scientific articles; and there are the ones which examine all scientific studies in the area by setting a specific limitation of topic or year. In the following section, a number of the related studies in the literature are examined.

2.1.1. International Studies

Examining the international literature of early childhood education, publications utilizing scientific studies in their fields as their subjects can rather be seen in abundance. One of the earlier studies regarding early childhood education was conducted by Hanson in 1973. Hanson reviewed 8 qualitative and 19 empirical studies handling the comparison of early childhood education models under an instructional framework. Studies in which the researcher examined other aspects were on a wide range of early childhood education models. Montessori, The Bank Street Program, Kamii’s Piagetian Schools, and Britain’s primary schools were mentioned mainly in qualitative studies. In empirical studies, Montessori and Head Start programs constituted the main research settings. Findings of the review

demonstrated that the studies were not objective when it came to evaluating their results. More importantly, Hanson states that there was a tendency toward competition in early childhood education models among the articles.

On the other hand, a separate study which focuses on early childhood education research was performed by Lee in 2012. In this, Lee focused on early childhood music education. Within the framework of the study, 32 articles published in between 1985 and 2010 regarding early childhood music education in the journal of “Young Children” were investigated. Both the quantity and the quality of the articles and the way the views of early childhood education professionals changed over time were analyzed by the researcher. Results of the study put forward that all authors except for one were from the fields of music education or early childhood education. Hence, most of the articles were about the benefits of incorporating music in early childhood education. Among these articles, the ones that were about utilizing from music in education to facilitate nonmusical development had the highest percentage. Further, Lee points at the lack of coverage of all the areas in early childhood music education throughout the articles.

In particular, Pendergast and Twigg conducted a thematic content analysis in 2015, focusing on the themes and contexts of the seven issues of the “International Research in Early Childhood Education” journal. Subjects of the studies were categorized under five themes. These themes included children, childhood, learning, parents, and teachers, and were investigated thoroughly by the researchers. They used tag clouds and heat maps in complement with producing frequency tables to display the most frequently-appearing concepts, most frequently seen words, and the context of the studies. Pursuant to the analysis, results of showed that even though there were studies from various geographies, countries such as Australia, United States, and certain western states were the dominantly-represented ones. Meanwhile, the words children and teacher were the most commonly-seen among the studies examined. In 2015, Zhang also conducted a systematic review on studies regarding

early childhood education research. Within the scope of the study, Zhang reviewed articles from the past 10 years, which focus on early childhood education research in Australia and New Zealand in terms of child-related data. 381 articles examined were collected from 25 Australian and 18 New Zealander academic journals. Above all, the review showed that out of the studies which the researcher examined, when subject of the articles did not affect children directly, researchers tend to use adult participants. Zhang, in fact, interprets this as articles not letting voice of the child in all matters regarding early childhood education. Additionally, the quality of the “voice of child” in studies including child participants were discussed, as well.

Another example is that in 2016, Keskin published a content analysis of 124 articles published in between 2010 and 2014 from open access early childhood journals. The author examined articles from two journals: *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, and *International Research in Early Childhood Education*. Focus of the research was the coverage of the major early childhood education approaches in the articles solely engaging in early childhood education research. Results of the study unearthed the most frequent approach that appeared in journals was Head Start, followed by Reggio Emilia, and Project approach. Some of the other early childhood education approaches hardly existed in any of the journals. According to Keskin, the reason for Head Start being the most frequently seen approach among articles might be that it is a federally-funded program. This would be a solid advantage in terms of being more accessible and being approved for grants for the research. Pursuant to this, the author interprets the reason for not being able to find enough research on the other popular approaches with the help of the Internet information gatekeepers’ theory as the fact that editors of open access journals can be the controllers of the information flow, deliberately or not. Besides, another content analysis from 2015 was conducted by Green on the studies from early childhood environmental education. The authors reviewed methodologies of the studies which involved children as participants. In line with the results of the study, it was discovered that studies examined provided

very limited chance for children to actively participate in the study, let alone not informing them about the study they were conducting. Green suggested the inclusion of children's initiatives to research progress and referred to the benefits of doing so.

Given the circumstances, Jung and Won reviewed research trends in robotics education for young learners in 2018. Under the scope of the study, 47 articles related to robotics education were analyzed. They explored each article based on four key characteristics: theoretical framework, types of robots, features of the sample, and research topic and methodology. Based on the findings of this detailed examination, Jung and Won suggest robotics education researchers to adopt new perspectives coupled with the addition of switching attention to the interaction between robots and young learners rather than the physical features of the very robots.

2.1.2. National Studies

In Turkey, there is a copious amount of studies scrutinizing on scientific articles in their fields from an array of education disciplines such as music education (Zahal, 2010), science education (Aydođdu, 2015; Taş, Şener, & Yalçın, 2013), physics education (Kaltakçı Gürel, et al., 2017), Turkish education (Dönmez & Gündođdu, 2016), educational sciences (Arık & Türkmen, 2009; Özen, Gülaçtı, & Kandemir, 2006), educational technologies (Göktaş, et al., 2012a) educational administration (Aydın, Erdağ, & Sarier, 2010; Aypay, et al., 2010; Turan, Karadağ, Bektaş, & Yalçın, 2014; Yavuz & Gülmez, 2016), computer education and instructional technology (Alper & Gülbahar, 2009), educational sciences (Göktaş, et al., 2012b), mathematics education (Yılmaz N., 2011; Çiltaş, Güler, & Sözbilir, 2012), foreign language education (Solak, 2014), and adult education (Yıldız, 2004).

Similarly, in early childhood education literature, there is a broad collection of researches concentrating on the scientific studies in their fields. These studies can be classified into two categories such as studies which centralize graduate theses and those on scientific articles. The amount of studies utilizing from M.S. theses and

doctoral dissertations as their sample groups is relatively high in the field of early childhood education. There stand fairly few studies delving into theses and dissertations without imposing any restriction on their specialized research subject (Altun, Öneren Şendil, & Şahin, 2011; Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017); however, most of the studies probe theses and dissertations written on a specific subject in the field of early childhood education (Gül & Diken, 2009; Durukan, Şen, & Atalay, 2015; Gülay Ogelman, 2014; Kaytez & Durualp, 2014; Can Yaşar & Aral, 2011).

That being the case, in 2011 Altun, Öneren Şendil, and Şahin published an article in which they investigated Turkey's national dissertation and theses database in the field of early childhood education. In doing so, the sample of their research was composed of 349 M.S. theses, 48 doctoral dissertations, 12 medical specialties, and one proficiency in art studies written in between the years of 1978 and 2010. They employed the document analysis method to analyze studies according to year of publication, university, department, and subject. In line with that, Ahi and Kıldan (2013) reviewed 77 graduate theses written in the field of early childhood education in between the years of 2002 and 2011; meanwhile, İlhan Demirtaş conducted a study in 2017 parsing 931 M.S. theses and 171 doctoral dissertations written on the subject of early childhood education in between years of 1978 and 2016. The document analysis method was employed for this study, as well. Eventually in all three studies, results were clear that the most frequently-seen research topic among theses and dissertations were education, more specifically, special education and science education. Indeed, all three studies indicated that fathers were the least frequent subject group when compared to mothers, in-service teachers, and pre-service teachers. Coming to research methods of the theses and dissertations, results exposed that M.S. theses tended to be designed in the qualitative way, whereas PhD dissertations were designed more frequently in the quantitative way.

Through another perspective, Gül and Diken conducted a research in 2009 during which they weighed on 24 M.S. theses and doctoral dissertations regarding special education in early childhood in Turkey. They categorized the theses under seven groups according to subject, and compared each group with one another. These groups included skill instruction, inclusive education in early childhood, educating parents on how to teach their children, comparing children with development delays or disabilities and also without disabilities, examining mothers' profile of emotional state, available services for children with disabilities, and lastly the portrayal of children who need special education. Based on the findings of the study, authors suggested that it is necessary to continue the research in this field, and indicated that there is especially a dramatic need for studies with varying sample groups. Once more in 2011, Can Yaşar and Aral published an article which they examined the thematic distributions among 40 postgraduate theses regarding drama at early childhood education, written in between the years of 1990 and 2010 in Turkey. They adopted the document analysis method for the data analysis process. Findings of the study showed that theses published early in this period of 20 years were mostly focused on the usage of drama in early childhood education and theses later focused on language and communication skills, social-emotional development, perspective-taking skills; music, science, and math teaching, creativity, nutrition, and role-playing together with teachers' points of view on drama activities.

In 2014, Durukan, Şen, and Atalay; Gülay Ogelman; Kaytez and Durualp each examined graduate theses in the field of early childhood education. Kaytez and Durualp pinpointed theses on playing in early childhood, whereas Gülay Ogelman focused on theses about social skills in early childhood, while Durukan, Şen and Atalay on M.S. theses published between the years of 2000 and 2014. All three studies employed the document analysis method as their data analysis techniques. On the same line with that, in 2016, Taştepe, Öztürk Serter, Yurdakul, Taygur Altıntaş, and Bütün Ayhan conducted studies concentrating on M.S. theses regarding

early childhood education. They, too, utilized from the document analysis methodology to find out descriptive statistics of the theses.

There are several studies which examine scientific articles regarding early childhood education in Turkey (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012; Olgan & Öztürk Yılmaztekin, 2013; Şentürk, Yılmaz, & Gönener, 2015; Gülay Ogelman & Güngör, 2015; Sarı & Altun, 2018). Although there are certain studies scanning scientific articles regarding early childhood education while not focusing on a particular subject, most of these studies undertake a specific topic in early childhood education.

In 2012, Yılmaz and Altinkurt published an article in which their goal was to examine articles regarding preschool education in Turkey. The sample of their study composed of 86 articles from 17 Turkish academic journals. They evaluated the quality of the articles by enforcing a set of criteria they developed. They established five categories for classifying the subject of articles. These included “Teaching in Preschool Education Grade”, “Students or Kids”, “Teachers”, “Preschool Education Institutions”, and “Teacher Education”. They found that most of the articles they examined were in the category of “Teaching in Preschool Education Grade”. Simultaneously, they also examined research methods of the articles. According to their result, the most problematic aspect of those articles was lacking sufficient information about validity issues and implementing unsuitable data analysis methods.

Granted that, in 2013, Olgan and Öztürk Yılmaztekin conducted a study in which they reviewed articles regarding use of technology in early childhood education. They searched through seven journals in the field of early childhood education and examined 30 articles published from 2003 to 2009. They analyzed the articles using content analysis method and by creating a codebook. It was found out that the main focus of the articles they examined were on divergent types of technology usage in early childhood classrooms. At the same time, the studies they examined maintained

that young children are influenced by technology more positively than negatively. Equally, another research pitching into publications about a specific area in early childhood education studies was conducted by Şentürk, Yılmaz, and Gönener in 2015. They examined 21 M.S. theses, 6 doctoral dissertations, and 5 scientific articles regarding movement education and play studies on motor development in preschool by using a content analysis method. It was discovered that in the studies they examined, there were not play-based programs for children with low motor development levels due to social-environmental issues to increase their levels of motor development. In fact, they suggest that studies on improving basic movement skills of children should be increased. In the same year, Gülay Ogelman and Güngör investigated 5 M.S. theses, 1 doctoral dissertation, 3 national and 7 international articles regarding environmental education in early childhood education published in between 2000 and 2014. They benefitted from epistemological document analysis as a data analysis method. They concluded that there is not a sufficient amount of studies on the subject of environmental education in early childhood education, suggesting researchers to rather focus on this neglected subject.

Along with that, in 2017, Oğuz and Erbil Kaya examined 25 articles and 27 M.S. theses and doctoral dissertations on music education in early childhood education for the period between 2000 and 2016. They implemented document analysis method for data analysis, as well. They decided that studies on music education in early childhood education period were performed by departments such as music education, music teaching, Turkish music, home economics, and art. They recommend that the number of studies from early childhood education departments should be increased. Another finding of the research was that the studies on this area are mainly quantitative. Authors advocate that in order to be able to improve the course of research in this field, the extent and the number of quantitative- and mixed-typed studies should be expanded.

In 2018, Sari and Altun conducted a study in which they reviewed 99 theses and 112 articles regarding early literacy skills. They embraced the thematic review approach to examine the studies, examining the studies from the aspects of descriptive, methodological, and content features. According to the results of the research, it appeared that in the last decade the number of early literacy studies has actually increased. Additionally, it should be noted that more than half the studies utilized from survey research method while most of the studies did not specify their sampling methods.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

In this chapter, the utilization of methodological procedures of the present study is detailed. First, the description of study design and the research method is presented comprehensively. Second, the population and sample characteristics are explained with additional information on the sampling method, followed by the clarification of the process of designing the instrument, including the pilot study. Consequently, the credibility of the study is explained under two headings, namely Reliability and Validity. Explaining the methodology of the current study is finalized by providing information about the procedures of data analysis and limitations of the study.

3.1. Design of the Study

The current study aims to examine the articles published in Turkish academic journals which are indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM regarding early childhood education in the past ten years. More specifically, this study focuses on descriptive and methodological characteristics of the articles in addition to performing an examination and categorization of their research topics. For the purpose of achieving this goal, content analysis was chosen as the research method for the current study. As noted earlier, the sample of the study was collected via document analysis.

Content analysis, applied as the main design of this study, is described by Bryman (2012) as a method by which a researcher analyzes documents based on the preset categories in a systematic and replicable way. On another note, according to Schreier (2012), the method of content analysis is used in order to explain the meaning of data in a systematic way. In addition to that, Krippendorff (2004) defines content analysis

as a research method which is used for creating replicable and valid conclusions from verbal or visual materials.

Articles forming the sample of this study were collected through document analysis. According to Rapley's description (2007), document analysis is an approach for investigating or examining electronic materials or printed documents. Besides, according to Bowen (2009), document analysis is a research design in which documents are examined and interpreted by a researcher to give meaning to documents that fall under the scope of a topic of evaluation. Coupled with this, it is also recommended that for a more valid and reliable study, a wide array of documents should be included in the sample (Bowen, 2009). Another important factor that should be taken in the consideration is the credibility of the documents (Rapley, 2007). In order to ensure the credibility of the documents, sample articles were chosen from peer-reviewed journals which are indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and ULAKBIM. Further elaborations on this procedure is presented in the following section.

3.2. Population and Sampling

The population of the current study is constituted by all articles published in the past ten years regarding early childhood education in Turkish academic journals. Nonetheless, there are certain disadvantages of working with such a population as in the current study. The main problem is that the population is very large. As of 2018, there are 1563 Turkish academic journals that are indexed solely under ULAKBIM. Working with the population of this size would be impractical, time consuming, and it is not possible to examine each and every article in a timely manner without scaling down the quality of the study. For these reasons, a sample involving 822 articles was chosen to work with, followed by the implementation of purposive sampling method to reach the population.

Purposive sampling method is utilized when researchers use specific criteria which are based on specific purposes of the study while choosing a sample (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Both Neuendorf (2002) and Krippendorff (2004) state that there is not a certain rule for determining the sample size when conducting a content analysis. For that matter, all the articles in compliance with the following three criteria were chosen as the sample of this study:

1. Written on a subject regarding early childhood education,
2. Published in a Turkish academic journal indexed under SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM,
3. Published in the time frame between 2008 and 2018.

Data collection was completed in September 2018. In effect, journal issues published in the last quarter of 2018 were not included in the said sample.

Data collection of the study was performed in the period between April 26th, 2018 and September 1st, 2018. This process was commenced with collecting journal lists from the websites of Clarivate Analytics and ULAKBIM. As of September 2018, 2 academic journals from Turkey in the field of education are listed in SSCI, 15 in ESCI, whereas 53 journals are listed in the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM (one of the journals in ULAKBIM is also listed in SSCI and seven of them are likewise listed in ESCI). The exact list of 62 journals can be found in Appendix A. Subsequent to assembling titles of the journals, next step was to collect articles. Due to the fact that not all of the journals were accessible, the author opted to look through each journal's own archive rather than using well-known search engines.

At first, only the articles which contained the selected keywords regarding early childhood education (both in English and Turkish) in their abstracts, titles, or keywords were attempted in inquiries. Regrettably, certain websites of the journals

do not offer detailed search options for researchers. As might be expected, this led the researcher to go through each volume of the journals one by one not to mention using the search options offered by each journal's website. Except for articles in two journals, all articles were collected via this methodology.

Simultaneous to the data collection procedure, the Mediterranean Journal of Educational Research and the Journal of Education for Life offered limited access to their archives. Researcher contacted editors of both journals by e-mail for permission to access their archives besides searching other printed as well as online resources. None of the attempts to gain access to previous issues of the journals were successful. As a result, only 7 issues from the Journal of Education for Life and 23 issues from the Mediterranean Journal of Educational Research could be examined for purposes of the current study.

3.3. Instrumentation

For the current study, instrumentation procedure involved three phases. Primarily, a coding instrument was created by the researcher based on the relevant literature to examine the sample. Secondly, in order to achieve the possibility for an evaluation, the instrument was sent to experts who are members of a faculty at a state university's department of Early Childhood Education. After improving the coding instrument based on expert advice and contribution, a pilot study was conducted to finalize the coding instrument. In the following section, these phases will be explained in detail.

3.3.1. Coding and Categorization

Regardless of their characteristics, all content analysis studies have something in common: converting descriptive information into categories (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). Sarantakos (2005) and Mayring (2014) define features that the categories should have such as that (i) categories should clearly be defined by the researcher, (ii) categories should be able to cover every aspect of the research topic,

(iii) each category should focus on a specific area and the lines should be clear, and
(iv) categories should be comprehensive and accurate.

According to Fraenkel et. al. (2012), there are two different strategies for creating categories in a content analysis. The first strategy is to determine the categories before starting to analyze any data. In line with this strategy, researchers define categories by implementing theory, previous experience, and knowledge. The second strategy is to create categories during the analysis process. According to the second strategy, researcher gets familiar with descriptive characteristics of the data while ensuring the continuity of category formation as the analysis procedure progresses. Indeed, Neuendorf (2002) draws attention to importance of categorization before starting to analyze the data. In the light of these, categories of the coding instrument were defined before commencing the analysis procedures. Under the current study, categories were determined based upon related literature review, research questions, and through the examination of a sub-sample from the main sample of articles.

In the aftermath of defining the main categories, sub-categories for each were identified. Three different methods were utilized while identifying the sub-categories. At the very beginning, sub-categories of methodological characteristics were mainly obtained from books of scientific research (Fraenkel et. al., 2012; Newby, 2010; Kelly, Lesh & Baek, 2008; Büyüköztürk, Aygün, Kılıç, Çakmak & Karadeniz, 2016; Merriam, 2009; Wortham, 2001). Then, descriptive sub-categories of the characteristics were determined based on the research questions. Finally, the sub-categories of research topics were predisposed by screening similar content analyses conducted in a variety of fields under education while at the same time thoroughly examining the sub-sample obtained from the main sample.

Table 3.1.

Categories of the Codebook

Descriptive Characteristics	Research Topic	Methodological Characteristics
Title of the Journal		Research Type
Database of the Journal		Research Method
Publication Year		Research Setting
Number of the Author(s)		Sample Size
Department of the Author(s)		Sample Demographic
Language of the Article		Sampling Method
Basis (Thesis or Dissertation)		Instrument Development of the Instrument Data Analysis Method

Prasad (2008) chronicles unit of analysis as the core part of the content, and states that any data can be used as a unit of analysis. In the current study, each of the articles is designated as the unit of analysis. Following the determination of categories for the content analysis and defining the unit of analysis, a tentative codebook was designed. Codebook was sent to two experts of the field and reconfigurations were performed based on the expert feedback. Subsequent to the reconfigurations, the codebook was sent back to one of the experts for a second revision. Hence, a pilot study was conducted.

3.3.2. Pilot Study

Pilot studies are small scale studies designed to test the instrument of the research (Bryman, 2012). A pilot study was conducted to test the coding instrument of the current study. By conducting a pilot study, a researcher is able to discover whether or not an instrument will work as planned in addition to the reliability of the instrument (Krippendorff, 2004). Pilot study was conducted on a subsample of 85

articles. This subsample constitutes approximately 10% of the main sample (Neuendorf, 2002; Schreier, 2012) and it was collected via random sampling from the main study. Thankfully, a second coder who was a PhD student and research assistant in the field of early childhood along with another coder at elementary education department at a state university contributed to the pilot study.

Inter-coder agreement for the pilot study was ensured by calculating Krippendorff's alpha. According Hayes and Krippendorff (2007), and to Cho (2008), when two coders evaluate the same set of data, Krippendorff's alpha is the most appropriate option regardless of the amount of coders, sample size, different levels of measurement, or anything related to missing data. Results of Krippendorff's alpha range stand in between 0 and 1 (Swert, 2012). Results below .67 demonstrate very low reliability and are generally not acceptable, while results between .67 and .8 display low reliability based upon which usability would depend on the context, whereas results above .8 are characterized with strong reliability. Krippendorff's alpha for the current study was calculated via SPSS 24.0 and macro computations obtained from the study of Hayes and Krippendorff (2007). Result of the calculation was .88, which demonstrates strong reliability. Results of the pilot study were not included in the main study. Rather, the subsample was included in the study after being examined once again by the researcher with a finalized version of the data collection instrument.

3.4. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical procedures were performed for the data analysis of the current study. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), results from content analysis studies are presented by using frequencies and proportion of specific data to whole. In concordance with this, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 was utilized in the data analysis. The entire pack of data which was compiled through content analysis was registered into the SPSS program by the

researcher, while the findings of the current study were acquired by using frequencies and proportions.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

According to Bryman (2012), validity and reliability are the major criteria in defining the quality of a scientific research. The following two chapters will describe the strategies adopted in order to ensure validity and reliability.

3.5.1. Validity

Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012) define validity as the credibility, correctness, believability, and practicality of a researcher's conclusions. In essence, Krippendorff (2004) describes validity as the quality of results from a research which leads the researcher to recognize as correct. Validity of the current study was further enriched by controlling the face validity, content validity, and external validity.

To begin with, the face validity of the study was checked by the researcher. Face validity refers to whether an instrument appears to measure what it aims to (Krippendorff, 2004). In accordance, the instrument of the current study was developed by the researcher based on a broad literature review on the subject of evaluating scientific studies in social sciences and similar studies from the field of early childhood education. In order to ensure the face validity of the current study, the coding instrument was shared with experts in the field after the form of coding was exhaustively examined several times. Consequent to the evaluation from the experts, a revised version of the coding instrument was checked by conducting a pilot study. Lastly, a finalized version of the instrument was created based on the pilot study results.

Content validity is described by Krippendorff (2004) as the extent of an instrument meeting all the requirements that characterize the concept which the instrument aims to measure. In the attempt to ensure the content validity, the instrument was

examined by experts from the field of early childhood education and an expert from the same field who also conducted content analyses.

External validity is defined by Fraenkel et. al. (2012) as “the extent to which the results of a study can be generalized” (p.103). The population of the study is every article published in Turkish academic journals in the last ten years regarding early childhood education. Given that, purposive sampling was used in settling on a sample which would represent the population. Subsequently, all articles published in Turkish academic journals which are indexed in SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM in the last ten years regarding early childhood education were chosen as the sample.

3.5.2. Reliability

Fraenkel et. al. (2012) describe reliability as consistency and accuracy of data collected through an instrument. As a matter of fact, Bryman (2012) identifies reliability as whether results of a research are repeatable or not. Reliability of the current study was ensured by having another coder independently contribute to the pilot study. Creswell (2009) refers to this procedure as the inter-coder agreement. Researcher and a second coder who was a PhD student in early childhood education program analyzed the subsample of articles independently from each other. Results of this coding procedure were reviewed by using Krippendorff’s alpha.

3.6. Limitations

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, due to practical constraints, the researcher was unable to work with the entire population. Thus, 822 articles which were collected through purposive sampling from two international databases and one national database were examined. One of the criteria for choosing articles was that it had to be written on a subject regarding early childhood education. Owing to the fact that not every article had keywords or keywords that are generally used for “early childhood education”, the researcher had to read though the abstracts of each article

in every journal for the anticipation of failing to spot articles which might not show up in the results of search engines.

Throughout the data collection process, it was assumed that authors defined their methodologies correctly on their articles. Without embracing any personal judgment, the researcher collected the data based on how authors described their methodologies.

To amplify, there are different databases which contain Turkish academic journals such as ERIC, Scopus, EBSCO, etc., while early childhood education articles are not only published in journals solely focusing on education. Yet, data of the study is limited to educational journals indexed in SSCI, ESCI, ULAKBIM.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, findings of the current study are explained in detail. In line with the research questions of the study, a set of articles were examined in terms of their descriptive characteristics, methodological characteristics, and research topics. Results of this examination is presented according to research questions with visual support from frequency tables and graphs.

4.1. Descriptive Characteristics of the Articles

Under the scope of this study, articles complying with the following three criteria were chosen to constitute the sample: Written on a subject regarding early childhood education, published in a Turkish academic journal indexed under SSCI, ESCI, and the educational sciences category of ULAKBIM, while at the same time being published in the period between 2008 and the first three quarters of 2018. In total, 822 articles were collected and examined by the researcher. The first aspect to examine was the publication years of the articles.

4.1.1. Distribution of Articles Based on Publication Year

Aims of the study included the examination of articles from the past ten years. Table 4.1. provides details on the distribution of articles based on their publication years. Data collection process of the study was completed in the summer of 2018, and consequently, only articles published in the first three quarters of 2018 were listed for examination within the framework of this study. On that account, excluding 2018, 2017 was the year which had the most number of publications (n=151).

Table 4.1.

Distribution of Articles According to Publication Year

Publication Years	Frequency	Percent
2008	17	2.1
2009	30	3.6
2010	47	5.7
2011	47	5.7
2012	73	8.9
2013	64	7.8
2014	86	10.5
2015	97	11.8
2016	128	15.6
2017	151	18.4
2018	82	10.0
Total	822	100.0

Note. Articles published in the last quarter of 2018 are not included.

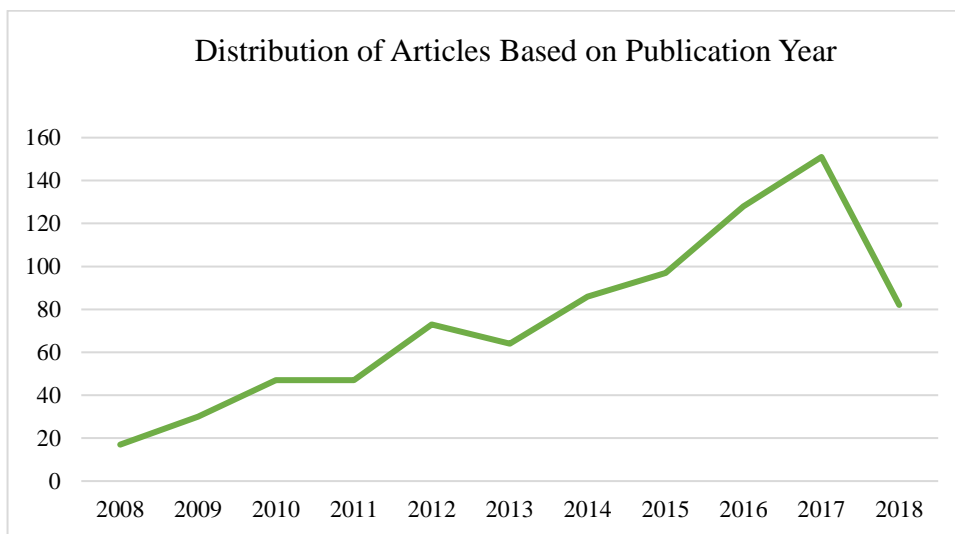


Figure 4.1. Distribution of Articles According to Publication Year

4.1.2. Distribution of Articles Based on Language

Table 4.2. demonstrates that there were articles published in four different languages. In addition, most of the articles (n=561) were in Turkish, followed by English (n=188). It can also be seen that the articles in German and French were less than 1% (n=4).

Table 4.2.

Languages of the Articles

Language	Frequency	Percent
Turkish	561	68.2
English	188	22.9
Both in Turkish and English	69	8.4
French	3	.4
German	1	.1
Total	822	100.0

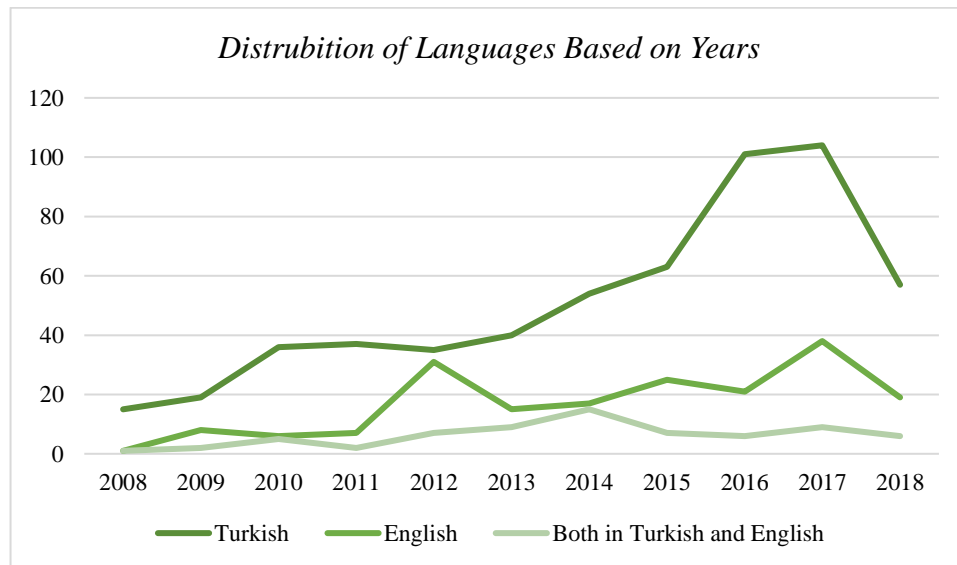


Figure 4.2. Distribution of Articles' Languages According to Publication Years

4.1.3. Distribution of Articles Based on Journals and Databases

Names of the journals in which the articles were published are listed in Table 4.3. As presented in the table, Kastamonu Education Journal has the highest percentage (10.7%) out of all 62 journals. 88 articles were published in this journal as indexed in ULAKBIM. Second highest-ranking journal in terms of the distribution of articles was the journal of Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice as indexed in SSCI (n=67). Furthermore, 26 journals had less than 5 publications each, including the 6 journals which had zero publications in the last ten years regarding early childhood education.

Table 4.3.

Distribution of Articles Based on Journals

Journal Name	Database	Frequency	Percent
Kastamonu Education Journal	ULAKBIM	88	10.7
Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice	SSCI	67	8.2
Elementary Education Online	ULAKBIM	59	7.2
Education and Science	SSCI & ULAKBIM	58	7.1
Mehmet Akif Ersoy University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM	40	4.9
Hacettepe University Journal of Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM	34	4.1
Journal of Theoretical Educational Science	ULAKBIM	31	3.8
Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM	30	3.6
Eurasian Journal of Educational Research	ESCI	27	3.3

Table 4.3. (cont'd)

National Education-Journal of Education and Social Science	ULAKBIM	26	3.2
International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM	24	2.9
Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences	ULAKBIM	19	2.3
Cumhuriyet International Journal of Education	ULAKBIM	18	2.2
Journal of Education and Future	ESCI	18	2.2
Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction	ESCI & ULAKBIM	17	2.1
Pamukkale University Journal of Education	ESCI	17	2.1
Inonu University Journal of the Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM	16	1.9
Creative Drama Journal	ULAKBIM	15	1.8
Bartın University Journal of Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM	14	1.7
Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences Journal of Special Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM	13	1.6
Başkent University Journal of Education	ULAKBIM	13	1.6
Journal of Bayburt Education Faculty	ULAKBIM	12	1.5
Trakya Journal of Education	ULAKBIM	12	1.5
Journal of Uludag University Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM	12	1.5
Gazi University Journal of Gazi Educational Faculty	ULAKBIM	11	1.3
Yüzüncü Yıl University Journal Of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM	11	1.3
Erzincan University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM	10	1.2

Table 4.3. (cont'd)

Çukurova University Faculty of Education Journal	ESCI & ULAKBIM	9	1.1
Ege Journal of Education	ULAKBIM	8	1.0
International Journal of Instruction	ESCI	8	1.0
Journal of Qualitative Research in Education	ULAKBIM	7	.9
Necatibey Faculty of Education - Electronic Journal of Science and Mathematics Education	ULAKBIM	7	.9
Sakarya University Journal of Education	ULAKBIM	7	.9
Mediterranean Journal of Educational Research	ULAKBIM	6	.7
Ondokuz Mayıs University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM	6	.7
International Journal of Curriculum and Instructional Studies	ULAKBIM	5	.6
Adyaman University Journal of Educational Sciences	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Journal of Education and Humanities: Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Hitit University Journal of Social Sciences Institute	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Hacettepe Journal of Sport Sciences	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Turkish Journal of Sport and Exercise	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Journal of Education for Life	ULAKBIM	4	.5
Anadolu Journal of Educational Sciences International	ULAKBIM	3	.4
Journal of Inquiry Based Activities	ULAKBIM	2	.2
International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM	2	.2

Table 4.3. (cont'd)

International Online Journal of Education and Teaching	ULAKBIM	2	.2
Educational Administration – Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM	2	.2
Novitas-Research on Youth and Language	ULAKBIM	2	.2
International Journal of Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology	ESCI	2	.2
Turkish Journal of Education	ESCI	2	.2
KALEM International Journal of Educational and Human Sciences	ULAKBIM	1	.1
Review of International Geographical Education Online	ULAKBIM	1	.1
SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences	ULAKBIM	1	.1
The Journal of Higher Education and Science	ULAKBIM	1	.1
Journal of Language Teaching and Learning	ESCI	1	.1
Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education	ESCI	1	.1
Educational Technology Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM	0	0
Journal of Sports and Performance Researches	ULAKBIM	0	0
SPORMETRE Journal of Physical Education and Sport Sciences	ULAKBIM	0	0
Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education	ULAKBIM	0	0
Turkish History Education Journal	ULAKBIM	0	0
Journal of Higher Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM	0	0
Total		822	100.0

On the other hand, Table 4.4. represents the distribution of articles based on databases. More than half the articles were from journals that were only indexed in ULAKBIM (63.5%). These are followed by articles published in journals which were indexed in both ESCI and ULAKBIM (12%).

Table 4.4.

<i>Distribution of Articles Based on Databases</i>		
Database	Frequency	Percent
ULAKBIM	522	63.5
ESCI and ULAKBIM	99	12.0
ESCI	76	9.2
SSCI	67	8.2
SSCI and ULAKBIM	58	7.1
Total	822	100.0

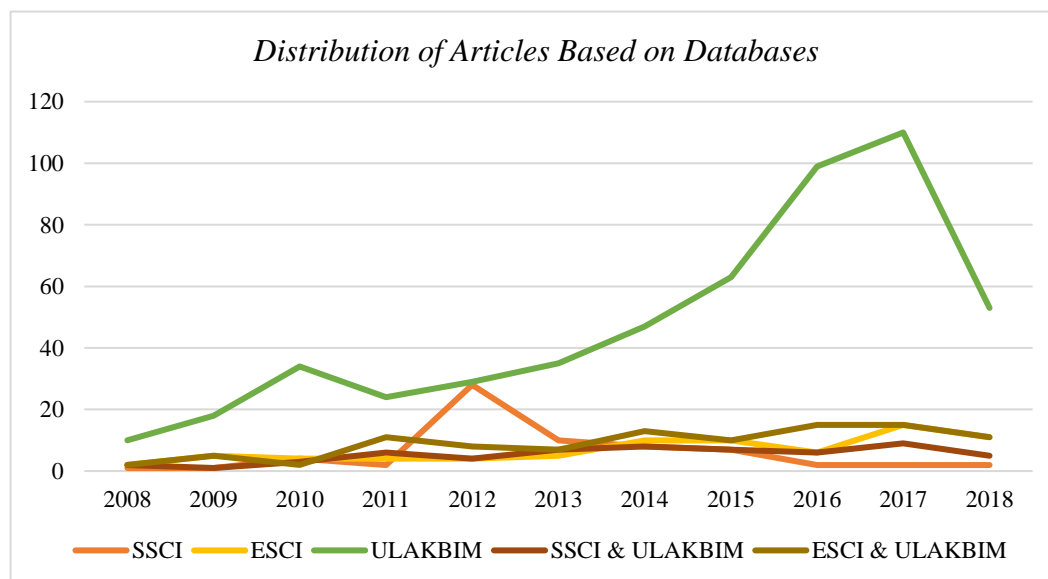


Figure 4.3. Distribution of Articles' Databases According to Publication Years

4.1.4. Number of Authors per Article and Departments of the Authors

Number of the authors per article and their departments were reviewed by the researcher. Table 4.5. showcases the results of this examination. It can be observed that approximately half the articles (51.3%) were published by 2 authors.

Table 4.5.

Number of the Author(s) of the Articles

Number of the Author(s)	Frequency	Percent
2	422	51.3
1	194	23.6
3	122	14.8
4	50	6.1
5	23	2.8
6	5	.6
7+	6	.7
Total	822	100.0

Deeper on this matter, as presented in the Table 4.6., most of the authors were from early childhood education departments (47.9%). As can be expected, the early childhood education department was followed by the department of child development (12.2%) as the second most active field among authors of the articles. By the same approach, it can be understood from the table that the rest of the authors were mostly from the departments at education faculties.

Further research revealed that 51.4% of the articles (n=423) had at least one author from the department of early childhood education. It was also found that 90.6% of the authors, outside the early childhood education departments, published their articles with at least one other co-author.

Table 4.6.

Departments of the Authors

Departments	Frequency	Percent
Early Childhood Education	866	47.9
Child Development	221	12.2
Educational Sciences	156	8.6
Special Education	119	6.6
MoNE	113	6.2
Psychological Counseling and Guidance	43	2.4
Primary Education	41	2.3
Elementary Science Education	38	2.1
Computer Education and Instructional Technology	23	1.3
Sport Sciences	21	1.2
Elementary Mathematics Education	17	.9
Medicine	13	.7
Social Studies Education	12	.7
Foreign Languages	11	.6
Pedagogy	11	.6
Psychology	10	.5
Music Education	9	.5
Other	82	4.5
Total	1806	100.0

4.1.5. Amount of Articles That are Based on Theses

The final descriptive analysis was to calculate the ratio of articles which were works of theses compared to the rest. Results of the review brought that 126 articles out of 822 (15.3%) were works of M.S. theses or PhD dissertations.

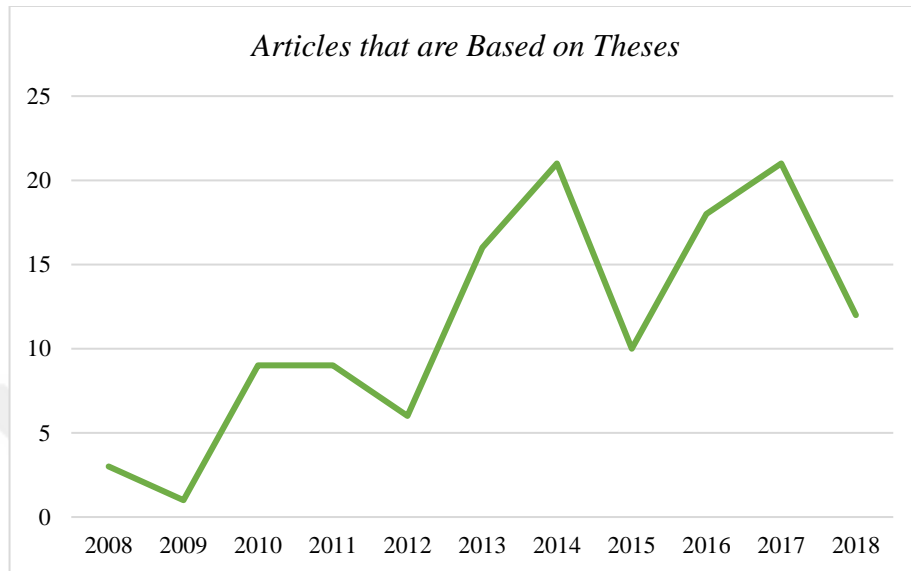


Figure 4.4. Distribution of Articles that are Based on Theses

4.2. Research Topics of the Articles

Research subjects of the articles were divided into ten main categories to ensure clear and informative explanation. As indicated in Table 4.7., these categories include education, development, teachers, school, parents, children literature, children’s rights and immigrant children, media, health, and scale development. First and foremost, the frequencies of the main categories are presented after which a detailed examination of the sub-categories are given through tables and graphs.

Table 4.7.

Distribution of Articles Based on Research Topics

Research Topics	Frequency	Percent
Education	424	38.8
Development	257	23.5
Teachers	186	17.0
Parents	81	7.4
Scale development	43	3.9

Table 4.7. (cont'd)

Health	30	2.7
Children literature	29	2.6
School	19	1.7
Media	14	1.2
Children's rights / Immigrant children	9	0.8
Total	1092	100.0

According to the data shown in Table 4.7., education was the most common topic choice among authors (38.8%). It is followed by developmental topics (23.5%) and topics regarding teachers (17.0%). The least frequently chose topic was children’s right and immigrant children (0.8%). In the following, the four most popular topics that are shown in Table 4.7. are extensively explained.

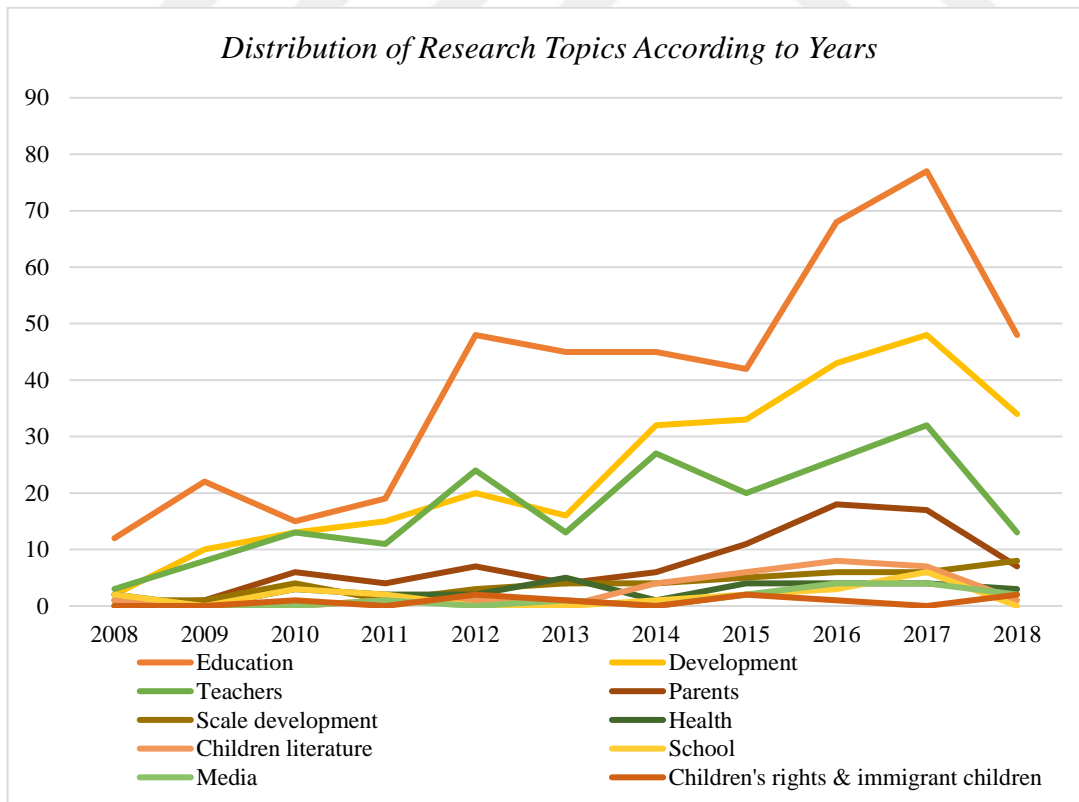


Figure 4.5. Distribution of Articles' Research Topics According to Publication Years

Table 4.8.

Sub-categories of Educational Research Topics

Education	Frequency	Percent
Special education / inclusion	43	10.1
Science education	30	7.1
Drama / Creative drama	23	5.4
Math education	21	4.9
Play	21	4.9
Early childhood education approaches	19	4.5
<i>Montessori</i>	10	
<i>Reggio Emilia</i>	3	
<i>Head Start</i>	2	
<i>High Scope</i>	2	
<i>Bank Street</i>	1	
<i>Waldorf</i>	1	
Moral / Religion education	18	4.2
School readiness	18	4.2
Environmental education / Sustainability	16	3.8
Curriculum	15	3.5
Storytelling / Interactive reading	15	3.5
Music education	11	2.6
Foreign language education	10	2.3
Literacy education	10	2.3
Intervention program	10	2.3
Art education	9	2.1
Materials	8	1.9
Assessment	8	1.9
Educational technologies	8	1.9

Table 4.8. (cont'd)

Computer assisted instruction	7	1.6
Museum education	7	1.6
Effects of early childhood education	6	1.4
Creativity education	6	1.4
Project based learning approach	6	1.4
Constructivism	5	1.2
Concept education	5	1.2
Education policies	5	1.2
Guidance and psychological counseling	5	1.2
School adjustment / Classroom adaptation	5	1.2
Lesson plans	5	1.2
International curriculums	5	1.2
Educational settings / Learning centers	5	1.2
Active participation	4	.9
Differentiated instruction	3	.7
Vygotsky	3	.7
Multi-cultural education	3	.7
Movement education	3	.7
Quality of early childhood education	2	.5
Digital games	2	.5
Pedagogical documentation	2	.5
Other	17	4.0
Total	424	100.0

Table 4.8 presents the sub-categories of educational topics. It can be seen that special education (n=43) and science education (n=30) were the most common two subjects under the category of education. They are followed by drama (n=23), math education (n=21) and play (n=21).

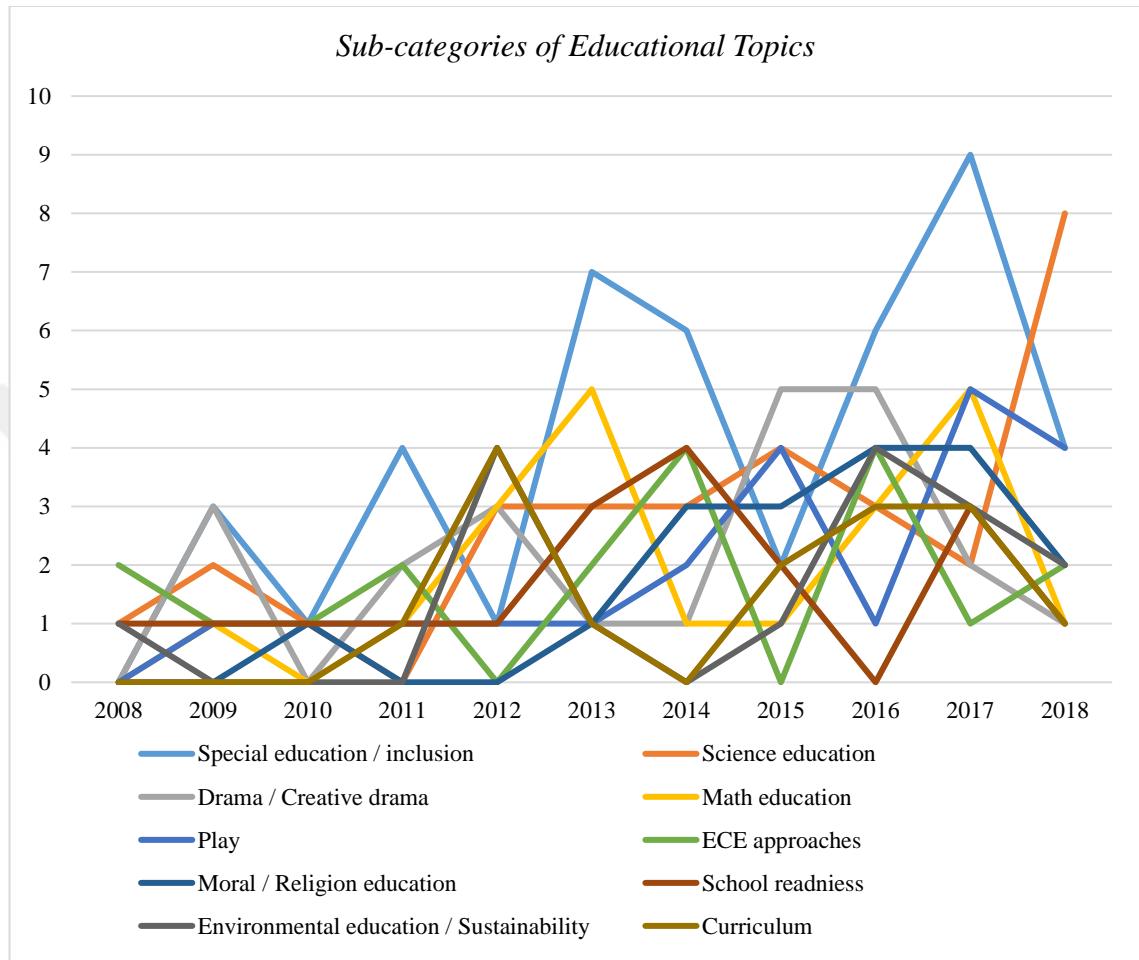


Figure 4.6. Distribution of Sub-categories of Educational Topics Based on Publication Year

In this study, developmental topics were divided into four categories: Social-emotional development, cognitive development, language and literacy development, and physical development. Percentages of each category can be observed from Table 4.9. In fact, social-emotional development was the most popular one by 52.9%, whereas the least popular developmental topic across the articles was physical development (5.1%).

Table 4.9.

Sub-categories of Developmental Research Topics

Development	Frequency	Percent
Social-emotional development	136	52.9
Cognitive development	61	23.7
Language & Literacy development	47	18.3
Physical development	13	5.1
Total	257	100.0

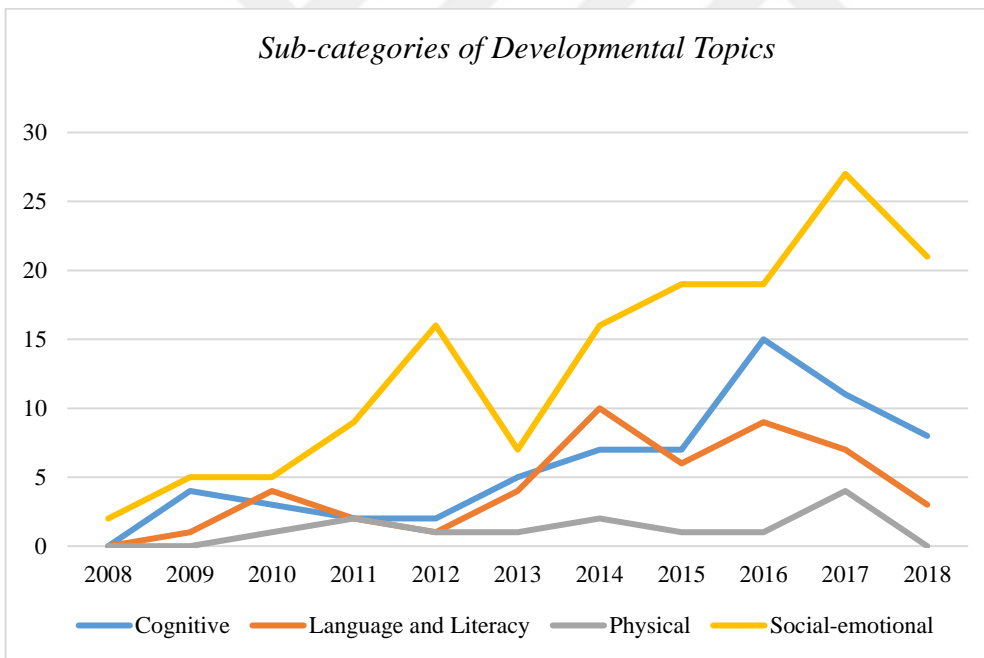


Figure 4.7. Distribution of Sub-categories of Developmental Topics Based on Publication Year

Table 4.10.

Research Topics of Cognitive Development

Cognitive Development	Frequency	Percent
Cognitive process skills / Thinking skills	11	18.0
Math skills	10	16.4
Problem solving	8	13.1
Visual perception	7	11.5
Concept development	6	9.8
Early learning skills	4	6.5
Cognitive/Learning styles	3	4.9
Memory	3	4.9
Attention	2	3.3
Other	7	11.5
Total	61	100.0

To begin with, among cognitive development topics (Table 4.10.), cognitive process skills / thinking skills were the most common topics by 18%. Thereafter, the second most common one was math skills by 16.4%. Problem solving was the third most frequently-chosen cognitive development topic by 13.1%.

After that, topics of social-emotional development were analyzed. Social skills/ social competence were the most popularly-studied topics (22%). In that, they were followed by peer relationships, behavioral problems, and social problem solving, each by 11% (Table 4.11).

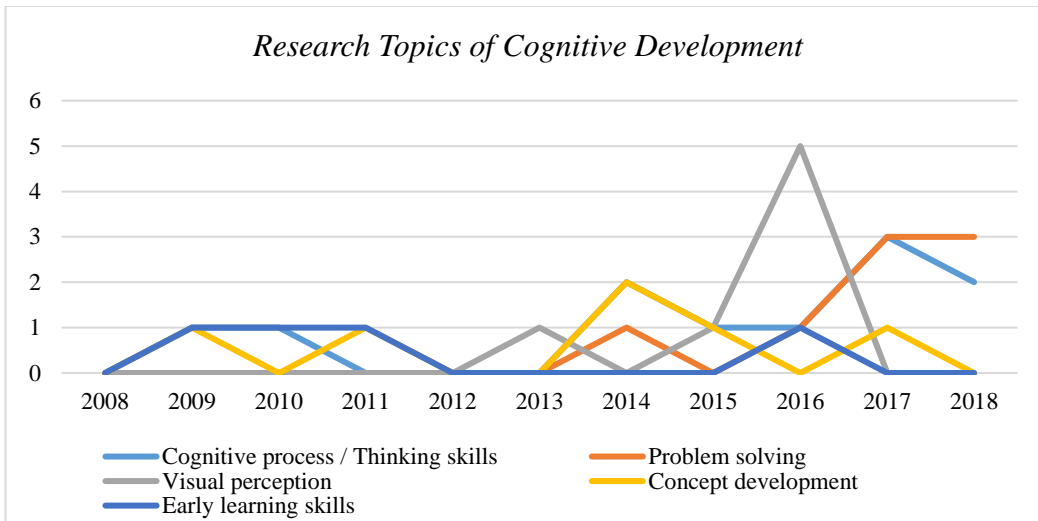


Figure 4.8. Distribution of Cognitive Development Research Topics Based on Publication Year

Table 4.11.

Research Topics of Social-Emotional Development

Social-Emotional Development	Frequency	Percent
Social skills / competence	30	22.0
Peer relationships / Bullying / Aggression	15	11.0
Behavioral problems	15	11.0
Social problem solving	15	11.0
Creativity	10	7.3
Self-regulation	7	5.1
Emotional skills	7	5.1
Moral development	5	3.7
Gender	4	2.9
Prosocial behaviors	4	2.9
Communication skills	3	2.2
Empathy	3	2.2
Self-concept	3	2.2

Table 4.11. (cont'd)

Self-efficacy	3	2.2
Social development stages	2	1.5
Other	10	7.3
Total	136	100.0

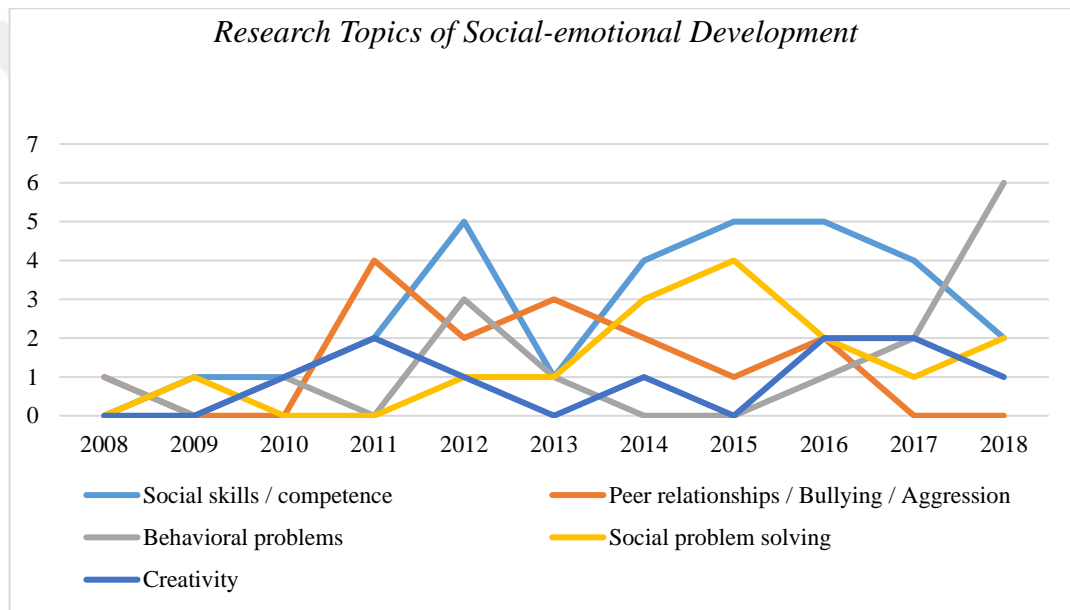


Figure 4.9. Distribution of Social-emotional Development Research Topics Based on Publication Year

Detailed analysis of topics regarding teachers are detailed in Table 4.12.. The results prove that topics about early childhood education undergraduate program (18.8%) happened to be the most popular under the category of topics regarding teachers. Consequently, the second most popular one was classroom management (10.7%), followed by professional perception (10.7%).

Table 4.9.

Sub-categories of Research Topics regarding Teachers

Teachers	Frequency	Percent
Undergraduate program	35	18.8
Classroom management	20	10.7
Professional perception	20	10.7
Attitude	18	9.7
Personal characteristics	17	9.1
Self-efficacy	12	6.4
Job satisfaction / Burnout	10	5.4
Professional competence	10	5.4
In-service training	6	3.2
Communication skills	5	2.7
Social skills	5	2.7
Teacher-administrator relationships	5	2.7
Teacher concept from child's viewpoint	3	1.6
Teacher-child interaction	3	1.6
Gender	3	1.6
Discipline	3	1.6
Critical thinking	3	1.6
Other	8	4.3
Total	186	100.0

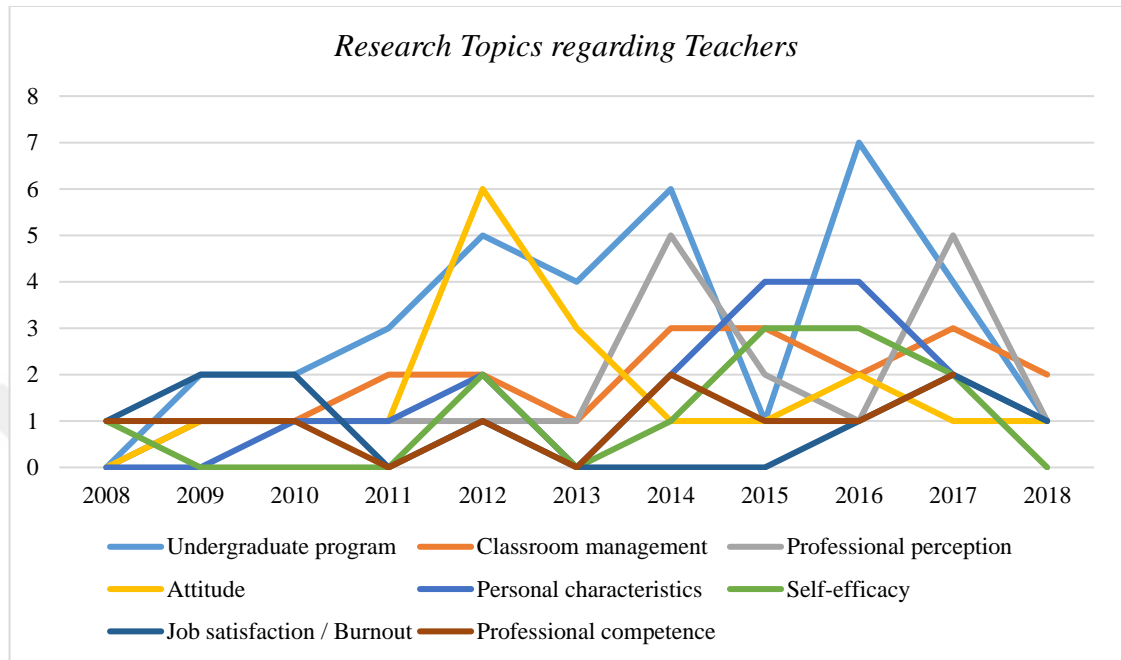


Figure 4.10. Distribution of Research Topics regarding Teachers Based on Publication Years

Table 4.10.

Sub-categories of Research Topics regarding Parents

Parents	Frequency	Percent
Parent involvement	15	18.7
Parent education	9	11.2
Parent-child relationship	9	11.2
Mother involvement / level of knowledge / attitude	8	10.0
Parenting styles	8	10.0
Family perception	7	8.7
Parent's expectations	5	6.2
Parent's level of knowledge / attitude	4	5.0
Parent-school relationship	2	2.5
Father involvement / level of knowledge / attitude	2	2.5

Table 4.13 (cont'd)

Parent's media literacy	2	2.5
Other	9	11.2
Total	80	100.0

Distribution of article topics regarding parents can be seen from Table 4.13.. The most popular choice of topic regarding parents was parent involvement (18.7%) which was followed by parent education and parent-child relationship, both constituting 11.2% each. It is also noteworthy to state that articles regarding father involvement (2.5%) equaled one fourth of the articles regarding mother involvement (10%).

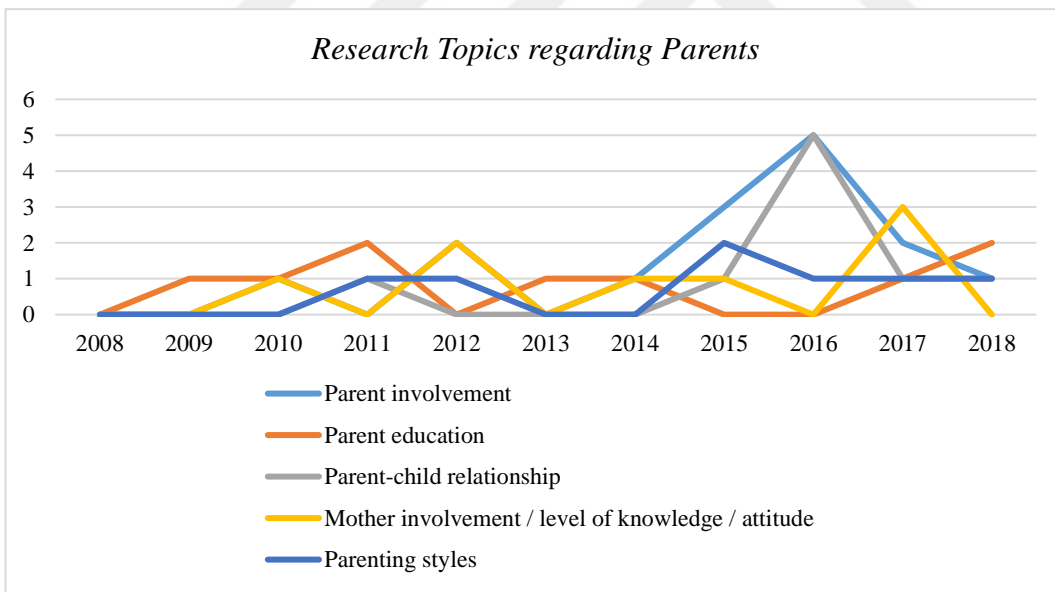


Figure 4.11. Distribution of Research Topics regarding Parents Based on Publication Years

4.3. Methodological Characteristics of the Articles

Methodological characteristics were investigated under the seven categories of research types, research methods, data collection instruments and their development, sample demographics and sampling methods, sample sizes, research settings, and methods of data analysis. These categories, as mentioned in the previous chapter, were obtained from a review of literature based on Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012; Newby, 2010; Kelly, Lesh & Baek, 2008; Büyüköztürk, Aygün, Kılıç Çakmak & Karadeniz, 2016; and Merriam 2009. Not all categories were applicable to every article. For example, investigating the originality of the instrument in a study that uses a method of document analysis can be considered pointless. Such special occasions are input as footnotes under each table.

4.3.1. Research Types of the Articles

Table 4.14.

Research Types of the Articles

Research Type	Frequency	Percent
Quantitative	407	49.5
Qualitative	280	34.1
Review studies	70	8.5
Mixed	62	7.5
Other	3	.4
Total	822	100.0

The first methodological characteristic examined by the researcher was research types of the articles. As shown in Table 4.14., articles designed in the quantitative type of research were preferred more frequently than articles designed in other research types (49.5%). Quantitative studies are chased in rank by qualitative studies, meaning approximately 34% of the articles were conducted as a qualitative study.

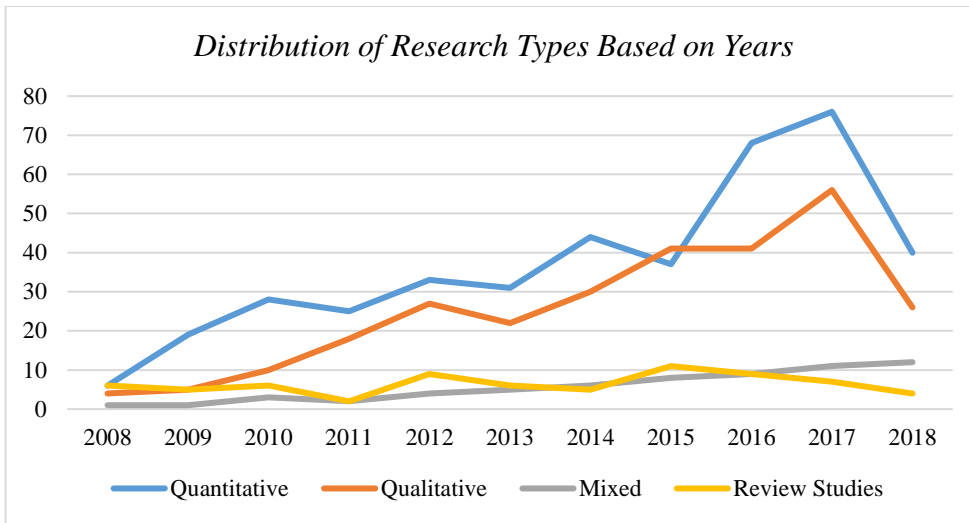


Figure 4.12. Distribution of Research Types According to Publication Years

4.3.2. Research Methods of the Articles

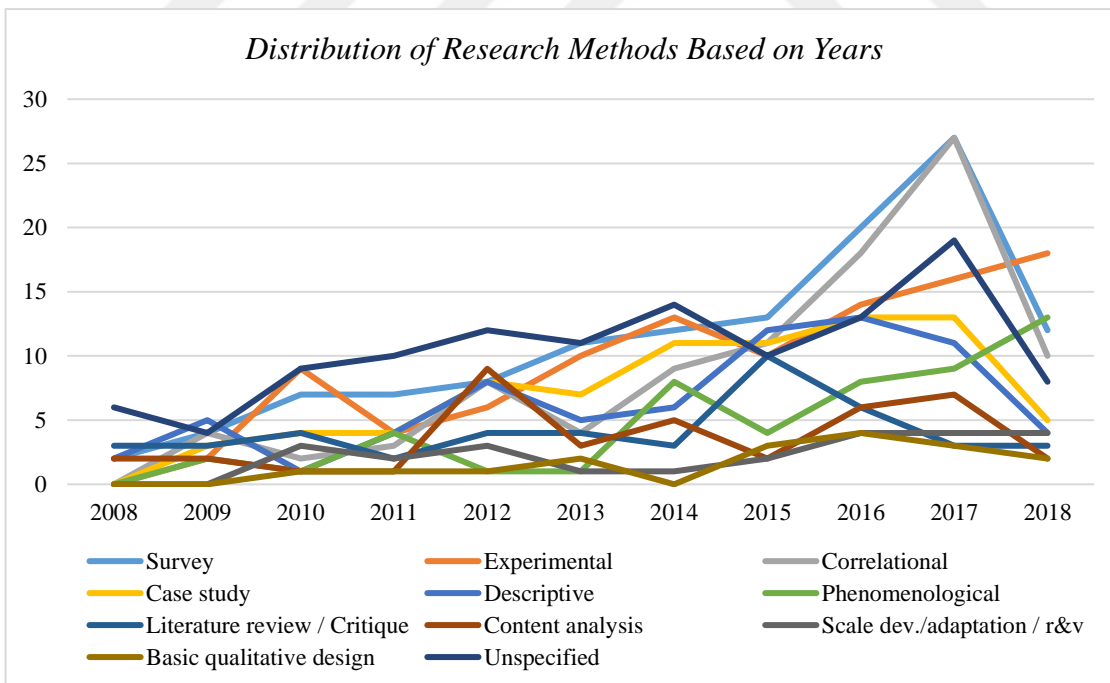


Figure 4.13. Distribution of Research Methods According to Publication Years

As it can be inferred from Table 4.15., survey method (n=123), experimental method (n=102), and correlational method (n=96) were the top three methods which were adopted by the researchers. Further in the line, approximately 14% of the articles did not contain any information concerning the research method.

Table 4.15.

Research Methods of the Articles

Research Method	Frequency	Percent
Survey	123	14.7
Experimental	102	12.2
Correlational	96	11.5
Case Study	79	9.5
Descriptive	71	8.5
Phenomenological	51	6.1
Literature review / Critique	45	5.4
Content analysis	40	4.8
Scale dev./ adaptation / reliability & validity	24	2.9
Basic qualitative design	17	2.0
Action	9	1.0
Single-subject	9	1.0
Casual-comparative	7	.8
Ethnographic	6	.7
Exploratory	4	.5
Explanatory	4	.5
Grounded theory	2	.2
Unspecified	116	13.9
Other	30	3.6
Total	835	100.0

4.3.3. Research Settings of the Articles

Table 4.16.

Research Settings of the Articles

Research Setting	Frequency	Percent
Pre-school	522	73.0
University	124	17.3
Unspecified	28	3.9
Primary school (1 st to 4 th grade)	21	2.9
Special education school / Rehabilitation center	8	1.1
Museum	3	.4
Nursery	2	.3
Bookstore	2	.3
High School	1	.1
Other	4	.6
Total	715	100.0

Note. Articles which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=127).

Results from Table 4.16. represent the distribution of research settings across the articles. It can be observed that the most frequently-preferred setting for the articles was pre-schools (73%). Supplemented by the fact, it can be put forward that the second most frequently-selected type of setting for the studies were universities (17.3%). It is also worth noting that studies (n=127) which were not applicable for this category were excluded while calculating the percentages.

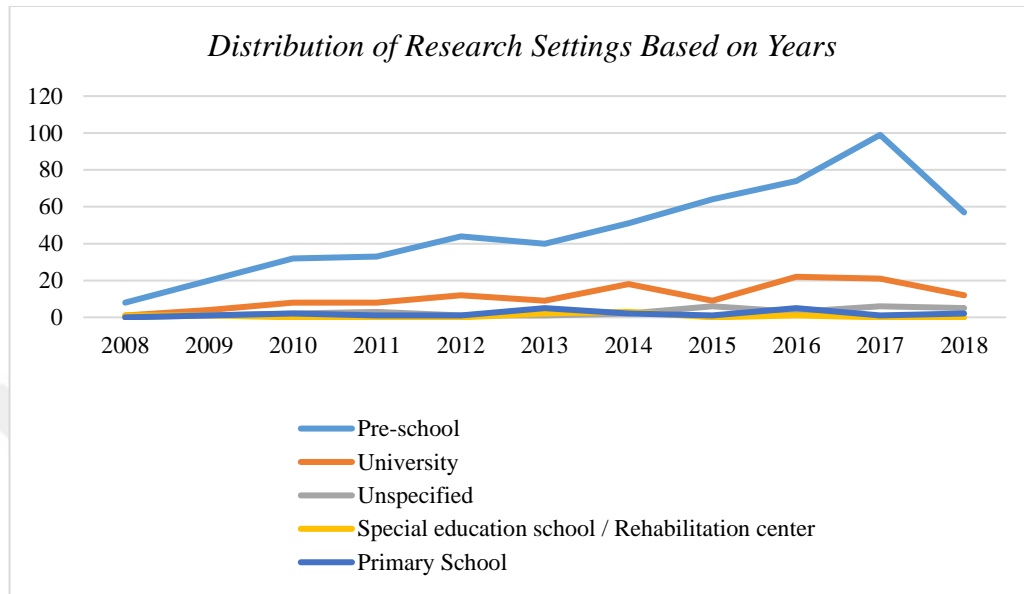


Figure 4.14. Distribution of Research Settings According to Publication Years

4.3.4. Sampling Methods and Sample Sizes of the Articles

As can be observed from Table 4.17., 43.5% of the articles did not contain information regarding their sampling methods. 20.3% of the articles' samples were chosen by using the purposive sampling method. Along with that, 62 articles could not be presented in the table due to the fact that they were not applicable for this category. Additionally, 2.6% of the articles examined were conducted working with the entire population, subsequently no sampling method was used.

Table 4.17.

Sampling Methods of the Articles

Sampling Method	Frequency	Percent
Unspecified	331	43.5
Purposive Sampling	154	20.3
Simple Random Sampling	112	14.7
Convenience Sampling	94	12.4

Table 4.17. (cont'd)

Cluster Random Sampling	21	2.8
All of the Population	20	2.6
Stratified Random Sampling	18	2.4
Two-stage Random Sampling	9	1.2
Systematic Sampling	1	.1
Total	760	100.0

Note. Articles which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=62).

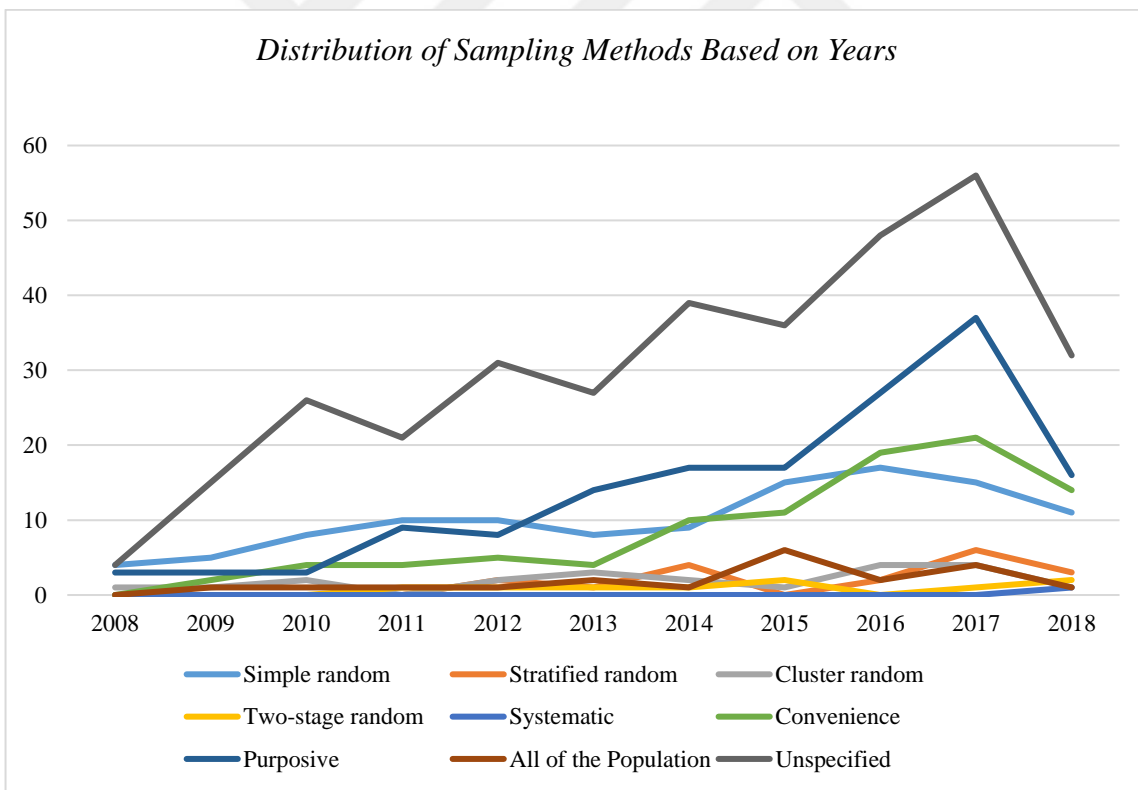


Figure 4.15. Distribution of Sampling Methods According to Publication Years

Table 4.18.

Sample Size of the Articles

Sample Size	Frequency	Percent
$30 < n \leq 100$	221	29.1
$100 < n \leq 300$	214	28.2
$10 < n \leq 30$	128	16.9
$300 < n \leq 1000$	105	13.8
$n < 10$	66	8.7
$n > 1000$	16	2.1
Unspecified	9	1.2
Total	759	100.0

Note. Articles which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=63).

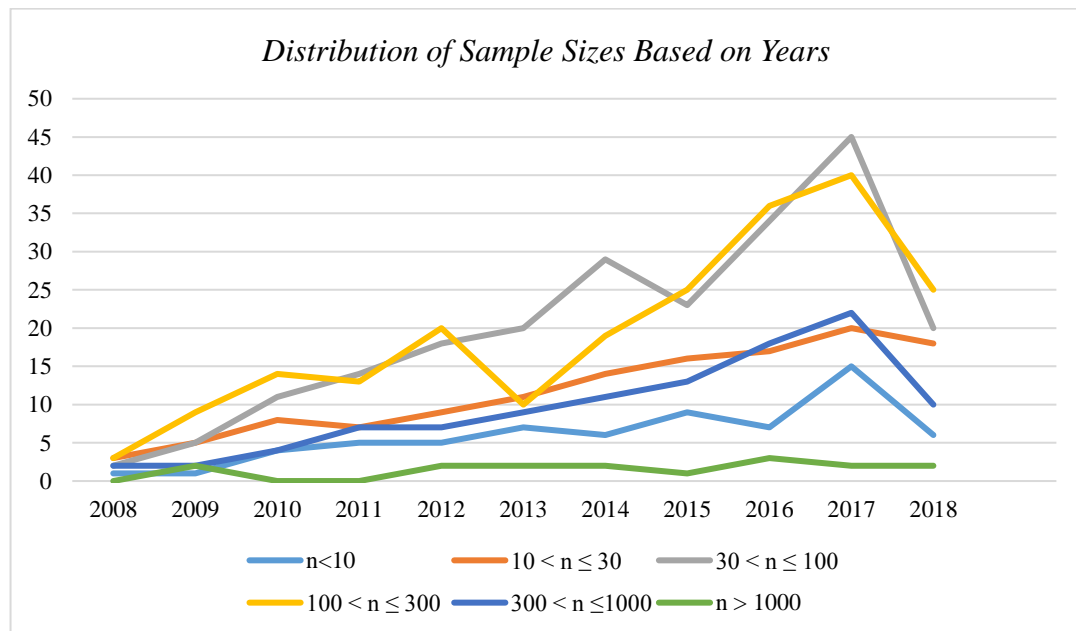


Figure 4.16. Distribution of Sample Sizes According to Publication Years

Table 4.18. is dedicated to present the distribution of articles based on their sample sizes. The table demonstrates that the most common choice for a sample size ranging between 30 and 100 is 29.1%. This is followed on a very narrow margin by sample sizes ranging between 100 and 300 at 28.2%. Articles excerpted from this category were not included in the analysis of the category.

4.3.5. Demographics of Samples

The researcher further investigated the sample demographics of the articles. Results of this examination is illustrated in Table 4.19.. The table reveals that the most popular sample was children (36.4%). It can also be inferred from the results that articles which centralized on teachers (in-service and pre-service) as their sample were almost at the same percentage as the articles which worked with the same about children (37.6%). Additional analysis on the articles provided data about the children’s average age throughout the articles, which was found to be 62 months.

Table 4.19.

Sample Demographic of the Articles

Sample Demographic	Frequency	Percent
People	837	89.9
Children	339	36.4
In-service teachers	225	24.1
Pre-service teachers	126	13.5
Parents	115	12.3
<i>Mothers & Fathers</i>	66	
<i>Mothers</i>	43	
<i>Fathers</i>	3	
<i>Others</i>	2	
School administrators	13	1.3
Primary education teachers	10	1.0

Table 4.19. (cont'd)

Academicians	8	.8
Psychological counselors	4	.4
Others	5	.5
Documents	83	8.9
Previous studies in the field	30	3.2
Children books	24	2.6
Curriculum	13	1.4
Undergraduate curriculum	2	.2
Lesson Plans	2	.2
Others	12	1.3
Schools	11	1.2
Total	931	100.0

Note. Articles which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=23).

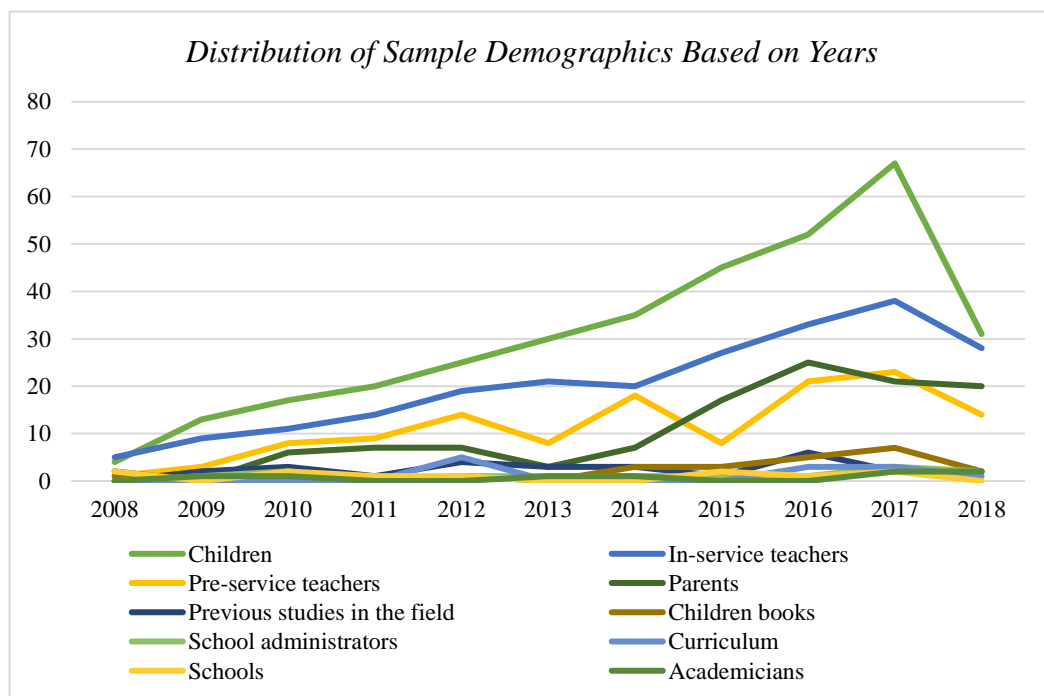


Figure 4.17. Distribution of Sample Demographics According to Publication Years

4.3.6. Data Collection Instruments and Data Collection Instruments' Originality of the Articles

Table 4.20.

Data Collection Instruments of the Articles

Instruments	Frequency	Percent
Questionnaire	264	24.8
Interview	219	20.6
Document analysis	111	10.4
Performance test	103	9.7
Observation	77	7.2
Rating scale	74	7.0
Achievement or Aptitude test	67	6.3
Attitude scale	33	3.1
Personality inventory	23	2.2
Checklist	17	1.6
Anecdotal records	14	1.3
Unspecified	6	.6
Sociometric device	4	.4
Photograph and video recording	4	.4
Tally sheet	3	.3
Projective device	2	.2
Other	41	3.9
Total	1062	100.0

Note. Articles which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=27).

Data collection instruments and their design were investigated as well by the researcher. It can be seen from Table 4.20. that the most frequently-employed data collection instrument was questionnaire (24.8%). Within this scope, the most commonly-used was discovered to be interviews (20.6%), meanwhile the third most commonly-implemented one was revealed to be document analysis (10.4%).

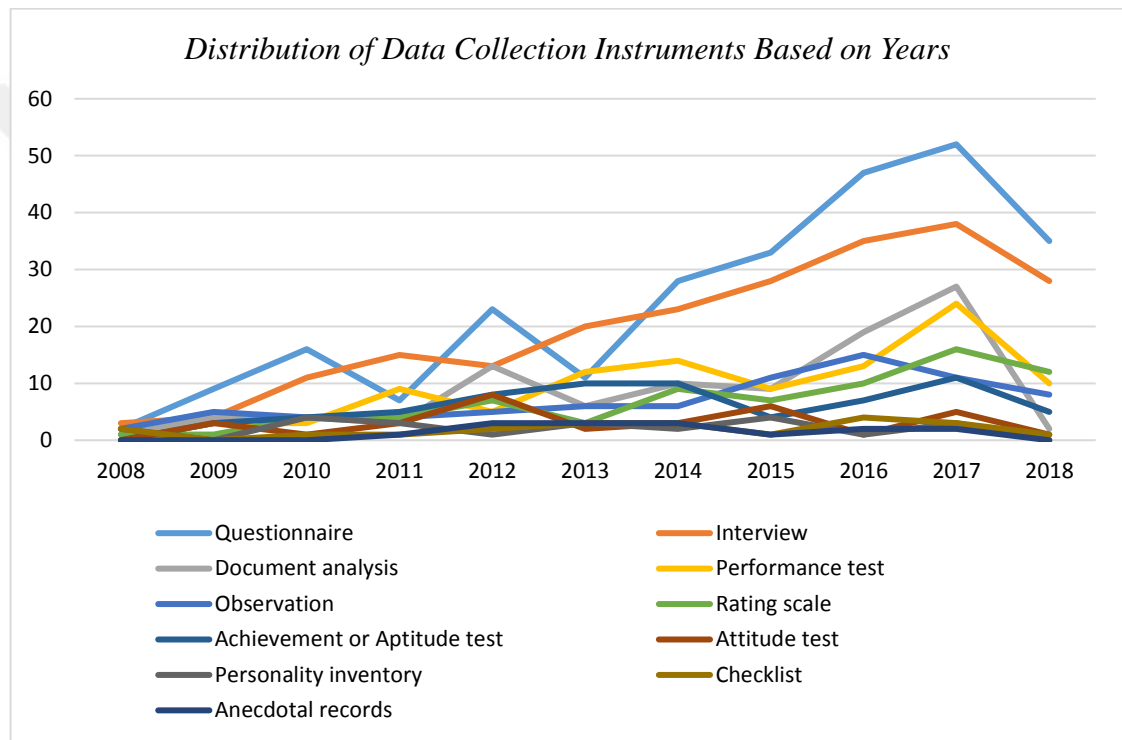


Figure 4.18. Distribution of data Collection Instruments According to Publication Years

Results presented in Table 4.21 provide insights on the development of instruments. It should also be taken into consideration that instruments not applicable for this category were therefore not presented in the table (n=239). Findings of the study signify that 46.9% of the instruments used by the articles were developed by the respective researcher. Further analysis besides exposed that more than half the instruments designed by the researchers were interview questions (54.6%).

Table 4.21.

Development of the Data Collection Instruments of the Articles

Development of the Instruments	Frequency	Percent
Developed by the researcher	399	46.9
An adaptation done by another researcher	212	24.9
Developed by another researcher and no adaptation needed	147	17.3
An adaptation done by the researcher	55	6.5
Unspecified	37	4.3
Total	850	100

Note. Instruments which this category were not applicable, excluded from the table (n=239).

4.3.7. Data Analysis Methods of the Articles

The final analysis of the current study concentrated on reviewing methods of data analysis in the articles. Findings from Table 4.22. explain that inferential statistics were the most frequently-utilized method of data analysis by a rate of 47%. These results were consistent with the fact that the most common research type was found to be quantitative (Table 4.14.). Frequency of the articles that did not provide any information about their methods of data analysis was less than 1% (n=5).

Table 4.22.

Data Analysis Methods of the Articles

Data Analysis Methods	Frequency	Percent
Inferential Statistics	386	47.0
Qualitative Analysis	270	32.8
Descriptive Statistics	65	7.9
Inferential Statistics and Qualitative Analysis	33	4.0

Table 4.22. (cont'd)

Not applicable	30	3.6
Descriptive and Inferential Statistics	9	1.1
Descriptive Statistics and Qualitative Analysis	8	1.0
Unspecified	5	.6
Other	16	1.9
Total	822	100.0

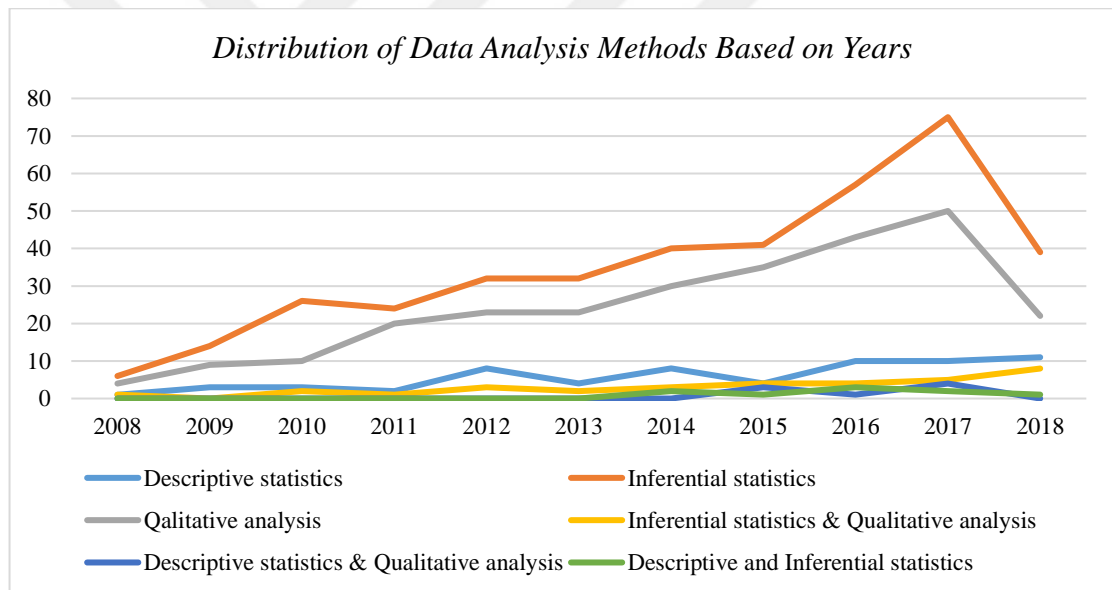


Figure 4.19. Distribution of Data Analysis Methods According to Publication Years

4.4. Summary of the Findings

Within this study, 822 articles were analyzed by the researcher. Findings of the analysis were examined under three categories. The first among them was the descriptive characteristics of the articles. The analysis revealed that articles on early childhood education displayed a continuous increase in the last ten years for most of the time. Two exceptions in this increase occurred in 2011 and 2013. No difference was observed in the number of publications in 2010 and 2011. In effect, in 2013,

there was a slight decrease in the total number of publications, approximating to 12%. Examining languages of the articles, it became possible to claim that more than half the articles (68.2%) were published in Turkish. The runner-up popular choice of language happened to be English (22.9%), followed by articles written in both of the above mentioned languages (8.4%). The outlook of distribution of the articles based on journals and databases appears that out of 62 academic journals that were examined, Kastamonu Education Journal was found to be the journal which had the most number of publications (n=88). Along with that, it was further discovered more than half the articles (n=522) were indexed in ULAKBIM. The examination of the number and departments of authors uncovered that approximately slightly more than half the articles (51.3%) were written by two authors. Furthermore, findings of the current study showed that the departments of early childhood education (47.9%) and child development (12.2%) were the two departments from where the most number of articles were published. As the last descriptive characteristic on the studies, percentages of the articles which were works of academic theses were identified. Accordingly, it was found that approximately 15% of the articles were works of theses.

To continue, subjects of the articles were examined, too. Topics of the articles were divided into ten main categories for clearer depiction. These categories involved education, development, teachers, school, parents, children's literature, children's rights and immigrant children, media, health, and scale development. Each of the categories had their own sub-categories. Among these ten categories of topics, education was the most popular category engaged by authors with a rate of 38.8%. Diversely, among educational topics, special education/inclusion was concluded to be the most preferred (n=43).

As for the final inquiry, methodological characteristics of the articles were investigated. Methodological characteristics of the articles were examined under seven categories. It was found that almost half the articles (n=407) were designed

with quantitative features. The second most frequently-seen research design was qualitative (n=280). When research methods of the articles were looked over, it was revealed that survey method (n=123), experimental method (n=102), and correlational method (n=96) occupied the ranks of top three frequently-used methodologies. Considering that, 73% of the articles were found to be using pre-schools as a research setting. Universities (17.3%) were the second most preferred research setting among the articles. Findings of the study also showed that 43.5% of the articles did not contain any information about their sampling method, whereas 20.3% of the articles utilized from purposive sampling method to choose their samples. In fact, the widespread sample sizes used in the articles were between 30 and 100 (28.4%). Similar to this, the widespread type of sample was children (35.6%), more specifically 60- to 72-months-old children. In addition to the sampling method, sample characteristics, and sample size, the process of examination was further performed by the researcher on the instruments and originality of the instruments. The most popular instrument that was employed by the researchers was questionnaire (24.8%), while the second most popular choice was interview (20.6%). More importantly, it was found that 46.9% of the instruments were developed by the respective researchers. Ultimately, data analysis methods of the articles were examined by the researcher, as well. In the end, it was determined that the most chosen analysis methods among the articles were inferential statistics (47%), followed by qualitative analysis methods at a rate of 32.8%.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this discussion section, findings of the content analysis performed as per this study are described. Beyond that, implications and recommendations for future studies are discussed, as well.

5.1. Descriptive Characteristics of the Articles

One of the main purposes of the current study was to conduct an examination of the descriptive characteristics of articles published in Turkish academic journals on early childhood education within the period of past ten years. Subjected to the examination, the set of characteristics included the year of publishing, name of journal, name of database, language of publication, departments of authors, number of authors, and lastly whether or not the article is based of a thesis or dissertation.

As noted earlier, the data collection procedures of this study were completed on September 1st, and for this reason, the researcher was not be able to include in the examination the articles that were published in late 2018. The results of the current study validate that the highest amount of publications was achieved in 2017, and provided that articles published in the last quarter of 2018 could not be examined, articles from 2018 were excluded from the endeavors to determine their descriptive characteristics. Alternatively, it is imperative to express here that publication of articles regarding early childhood education in Turkish academic journals mostly presented a continuous increase throughout the last decade. There were two exceptions, however, meaning that in the years of 2010 and 2011, the count of published articles had been exactly the same; whereas in 2013, there was a visible decrease in the total number of publications by a rate of approximately 12%. For

some, these exceptions may not have a significant meaning, especially in view of the fact that the amount of time that it takes in between submitting and publishing an article often varies depending upon the journal. A study performed by Thyer and Myers (2003) revealed that in certain journals from the subject field of social work, the period between submitting and publishing an article may from time to time take as long as two years. This can be justified by journals from other departments, as well. The reason for publishing an article on journals to take such a long period of time might indeed be the great deal of applications being received and the rather limited amount of referees to govern the entire process. Variables alike influencing the quantity of articles may have caused the almost identical irregularity in studies conducted by examining academic theses and dissertations from the field of early childhood education (Altun, Öneren Şendil & Şahin, 2011; Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017).

Notably enough, when the languages of the articles are taken into consideration, it is possible to claim that Turkish language for the most part was the most commonly-chosen language (68.2%) measured against other languages preferred among the articles. To be objective, this was actually an anticipated result since the articles were collected from Turkish academic journals.

Further on the journals, examining the distribution of the articles based on journals affirmed that the Kastamonu Education Journal was the most common choice of journal with regards to publishing articles on early childhood education among the ones indexed under all three databases (n=88). Kastamonu Education Journal was one of the journals that published over 40 issues in the last ten years, in addition to being a journal that was established in 1995. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that most of the other journals with analogously high numbers of publications on early childhood education did have similar backgrounds in terms of the quantity of their issues. To elaborate more, journals indexed under the SSCI (Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, Education, and Science) ranked second and fourth in

the leaderboard of all journals when they were listed in a descending manner based on the aggregate number of articles they hosted about the subject field of early childhood education. Authors might have preferred these journals in hopes of having their studies published in an international database. In complement with this, academic scores for publishing on international periodicals are naturally higher than doing so on national publications as per the academic incentive system being implemented. This might be the most probable and potential reason behind the popularity of journals, indexed under the SSCI, among Turkish author(s).

Within the scope of the current study, articles were collected from 62 journals in Turkish literature, which were indexed in three different databases. Along the process, it was noticed that 15 of the journals were indexed in ESCI, while 2 of them were indexed in SSCI, and 53 in ULAKBIM (8 of the journals from ULAKBIM, in particular, were also indexed in other said databases). Parallel to this case, it was also observed that most of the articles were only indexed in ULAKBIM, whereas articles listed in SSCI had the lowest percentage compared to the rest. Despite with regrets, it can be witnessed that Turkish educational journals have been losing ground at international databases day by day even though Turkish academic journals specializing in various fields increase in quantity on the same platform (Asan, 2017). This can be noticed by checking the listing of journals at the databases where studies conducted in previous years can be queried. A study performed in 2012 (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012) identifies that there were 7 Turkish academic journals on education listed in SSCI, while another study completed in 2017 (Asan, 2017) concludes that there were 3, and the current study shows that there were no more than 2 Turkish academic journals on education listed so.

Findings of this study likewise demonstrate that almost half the articles (51.3 %) were co-authored. Articles published by a single author were found to constitute approximately one fourth of all the articles (23.6%). Deepening the outlook, it can be seen that articles published by five or more authors were the least common type

across the collection examined during the study. These findings were accompanied by the fact that articles published through studies conducted on an M.S. thesis or a PhD dissertation occupied approximately 15% of those examined, whereas articles that were published based on a conference presentation or within the scope of a lecture were in similar frequencies, as well. In light of this, one can conclude that most of the articles which were co-authored by two authors were published in pairs of a student and an academic supervisor. In addition, when the quantity and distribution of articles published by a single author throughout years are examined, it is possible to conveniently observe that, despite its irregularity, there was a continuous increase. Contrarily, there was a rapid increase in 2016 and in fact, the timing of the increase corresponds with the commencement of the academic incentive program.

Coupled with the abovementioned case, examining the departments of the authors expectedly reveals that the department with the highest percentage became the department of early childhood education (47.9%). This was followed by the departments of child development (12.2%) and educational sciences (8.6%). One unanticipated but arguably pleasant finding was that there were authors from a wide variety of departments such as landscape architecture, graphic design, fashion design, nutrition education, plantal production and animal husbandry, statistics, and many more. Further analysis showed that 90.6% of the authors that are outside the early childhood education department published their articles with least one other person, which can be interpreted as most of the articles that were written by authors outside the early childhood education department were products of interdisciplinary studies. Interdisciplinary studies constitute the communication and reciprocal integration between different disciplines, which benefits all (Figueiredo & Pereira, 2017). As a result, the advantage of interdisciplinary studies is that they procure different points of view for researchers.

5.2. Research Topics of the Articles

At the second phase of the study, research topics of the articles were examined. Research topics were divided into ten major categories and each category was examined with their sub-categories in consideration. These categories included education (38.8%), development (23.5%), teachers (17.0%), parents (7.4%), scale development (3.9%), health (2.7%), children's literature (2.6%), school (1.7%), media (1.3%), and children's rights & immigrant children (0.8%) on a descending order of frequency. Among all, the prevailing research topic was found to be educational subjects by an approximate rate of 40%. These results conformed to the studies that focused on theses in the field of early childhood education (Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017). Special education / inclusion (n=43) was the most prevalent topic of research under the education category, followed by science education (n=30). In the study by Demirtaş İlhan (2017), the most popular research topic in educational subjects on both theses and dissertations was identified as special education, as well; though, in the study performed by Ahi and Kıldan (2013), which examines theses and dissertations from the earlier decade at the time, the most popular research topic was identified as science and nature education.

In another study, Keskin (2016) analyzed issues of Early Childhood Research and Practice as well as International Research in Early Childhood Education journals published in the time frame between 2010 and 2014 regarding the coverage of approaches on early childhood education (namely, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia, the Project Approach, Montessori Method, Head Start, High Scope, Tools of the Mind, the Portage Model, the Pyramid Model, and Bank Street). Keskin concluded that early childhood education approaches were mentioned 58 times through the five years of issues from 2 journals. Surprisingly enough, results of the current study demonstrate that the frequency of early childhood education approaches (Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf, High Scope, Bank Street and Head Start) were 19 through the ten years of issues from 62 journals.

That being the case, the second most commonly-seen research topic was diagnosed as developmental subjects (23.2%). In the current study, developmental subjects were divided into four groups as cognitive development, language and literacy development, social-emotional development, and physical development. Out of these four groups, the highest percentage belonged to social-emotional development. This result matches with the results from the study by Yılmaz and Altınkurt (2012). Results of their study which focuses on 220 articles about early childhood education (Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2012) exhibit that the most prevalent research topics included social-emotional skills/behaviors, language/foreign language education, play in preschool, and science teaching/environment, all of which in the same frequency (n=7). Given these points, the findings of the current study also provide that physical development was the least common subject (n=8). In studies examining theses and dissertations, physical development was the least common developmental subject group, as well (Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017).

5.3. Methodological Characteristics of the Articles

The last main research question of the current study was with respect to the methodological characteristics of the articles. Under the scope of this question, the researcher aimed to examine types of research, methods of research, data collection instruments and their originalities, methods of sampling, sample demographics, sample sizes, research settings, and methods data analysis in the articles. As a result, according to findings of the current study, researchers preferred quantitative research designs (49.5%) more often than qualitative research designs (34.1%). These results remained consistent with the results from previous studies centralizing on articles and graduate studies (Yılmaz & Altınkurt, 2012; Ahi & Kıldan, 2013). Notwithstanding the consistency, another study concentrating on graduate studies on early childhood education (Demirtaş İlhan, 2017) indicated that qualitative studies were more common than quantitative studies among PhD dissertations. As claimed in the current study, surveys were the prevailing method of research among the

articles. The second most utilized method of research was the experimental method, followed by correlational. These results are in harmony with the fact that most of the studies were found to be quantitative.

Another striking finding during the research was the frequency of the articles which did not provide clarification about their methodology. Articles that did not specify their research methods totaled up to 116. This amount can be defined as rather low on theses and dissertations (Demirtaş İlhan, 2017); however, it can be defined as remarkably high in studies that examine articles from Turkish academic journals (Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012; Aydoğdu, 2015; Dönmez & Gündoğdu, 2016; Hüseyinbaş, Çalap, & Kurnaz, 2018). In all likelihood, the reason for articles to not clarify their methodologies can be that the flow of articles is faster when compared to that in theses and dissertations.

As can be seen from the sampling methods of the articles, almost 45% of them, leaving out the articles which were not applicable for this category (n=62), did not provide any information regarding their sampling methods. Researchers who clarified their sampling methods for most of the time chose to implement the purposive sampling method (20.3%). This was followed by the simple random sampling method (14.7%). Indeed, the reliability of a study, more specifically its external reliability, is critical for the credibility of the study. It should be noted here that external reliability refers to the ability to generalize findings of the study to different populations (Bryman, 2012). In order to ensure generalization, elaborate information on sample characteristics is imperative (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

It follows in this study that the sample demographics of the articles were subjected to further examination. The ubiquitous sample demographic was identified as children (36.4%). In fact, this was an expected result as similar studies in the field find children to be the most conventional sample demographic justified by children residing at the focal point in this field of specialty (Altun, Öneren Şendil, & Şahin,

2011; Yılmaz & Altinkurt, 2012; Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017). Investigating the age groups of the children constituting the samples in these studies, the average age was found to be 62 months while the widespread research group was composed of children aged 60 to 72 months. As a matter of fact, this result can be acknowledged as a reassurance of previous studies, as well. According to Yılmaz and Altinkurt (2012), the persistent choice of age group for the children throughout the articles was from 3 to 6 years. Along with that, in the current study, children under the ages of 3 as well as over the age of 7 were discovered to be the least studied age groups. Turkish Ministry of National Education defines early childhood education as the education of children between the ages of 3 and 6, even though children who are up to 8 years old fall internationally under this very category. This can perhaps be explained by the considerable lack of studies concentrating on children of 7 or 8 years of age. Plus, according to data from 2016 by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018), 37% of the children who are 3 to 5 years old are able to receive pre-school education in Turkey, albeit less than 2% of children under 3 years of age are able to receive any education. This unquestionably demonstrates how challenging it would be for researchers to reach and find sufficient data on children under 3 years of age.

Contrary to previous studies concentrating on theses and dissertations (Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017), results of the current study registered that pre-service teachers were profoundly a more common choice for sample compared to those in-service, almost double the rate, to be precise. Meanwhile, most of the articles were architected as quantitative studies, and in other respects, certain experts in the field defend that quantitative studies need relatively larger samples than what would be needed for a qualitative study (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). In witness of the fact that most of the authors were academics, it must have been easier for them to have access to larger samples of pre-service teachers than what they would be able to with in-service teachers. On top of that, motivations of in-service teachers to attend

scientific studies may as well be lower due to the hectic daily schedule they have at work.

As far as the results from previous studies agree (Altun, Öneren Şendil, & Şahin, 2011; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017), this study also achieved similar outcomes via detailed examination of parents demographic, concluding that 66 articles availed themselves with both mothers and fathers, wherein the ratio of fathers to mothers was noticeably low, whereas 43 articles weighed on mothers and 3 on fathers as their samples. There have been identified a great deal of studies in the literature that focus on the lack of father involvement in each level of education. Particularly, a recent study in Turkey (Ertan, 2017) exploring the reasons lying underneath parents' decision to attend in any parent involvement-related activity showed that, for a variety of different reasons, father involvement is lower than mother involvement in early childhood education. This might suffice to explain the reason why researchers mostly involve mothers in their studies since it would be more convenient and less demanding to approach mothers for a scientific endeavor. Some other eye-catching sample demographics adopted by researchers include health professionals, clergymen, reeves, baby-sitters, and teacher assistants aka "sınıf ablaları".

Findings of the study highlight that the prevailing choice of research setting in the articles was pre-schools (73%). This was an expected result due to the fact that almost all the studies examining graduate studies in the field of early childhood education had similar conclusions with one another. Different from the theses and dissertations (Ahi & Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017), the second most frequently-chosen research setting in the articles, with a decidedly sizable difference from the other research settings, was universities. This, indeed, correlates with sample demographics of the articles. More diversely, museums and book stores were also encompassed in some of the other research settings adopted by researchers.

Questionnaires, interviews, and document analyses were ranked top three choices for data collection instruments by researchers. As for the originality of these data

collection instruments, 46.9% of them were developed by the respective researcher. Alternatively, further research showed that more than half of these instruments that are developed by their researchers came out to be interview questions. Quantitative data collection instruments, on the other hand, were mostly products of an adaptation. Designing an instrument, especially a quantitative data collection instrument, is undeniably time-consuming and it is not the most convenient path to undertake. Fraenkel et. al (2012), suggested the serviceability of an already-developed instrument rather than developing one from scratch. Articles which did not advise on the originality of their instruments were veritably less than 5%.

During the last phase of this section of the research, methods of data analysis in the articles were explored. Findings of this study underline that, as expected due to the most prominent and trendy research design among the articles being quantitative, the widespread choice on methods of data analysis was inferential statistics by a rate of 47%. The number of studies in which no information regarding methods of data analysis was communicated forward was less than 1%.

5.4. Implications & Recommendations

With reference to recommendations, it can be put forward that findings of the current study host the current status of the Turkish literature in relation to early childhood education. To repeat, articles are easily accessible and often preferred sources of information for students as well as researchers. The variety and quality of this information play key role for the improvement of the early childhood education field of expertise. To illustrate, roughly all the early childhood education undergraduate programs in Turkey (94.5%) offer lectures only in Turkish, which renders the Turkish literature in this field more significant limelight in the eyes of researchers targeting the local. By bringing fresh insights on the current status of the literature, this study hopes to give an opportunity for scholars to see the understudied areas of research as well as the underused methods of research.

In accordance with the findings of the study, it was observed that authors of the articles examined were certainly from a wide range of fields. However, publishing frequency of the departments outside the educational specialties were much lower compared to the rest. It should be noted by every researcher that in an ever-globalizing world of science, teaming up and interoperating with researchers from various departments will surely improve the growth of the literature on early childhood education in an extensively rapid manner, let alone adding in divergent, fresh perspectives. In effect, creating new opportunities for and paving the way towards interdisciplinary studies can handsomely benefit not only the disciplines in relation to early childhood education but also countless other disciplines. University administrations can offer specified grants to facilitate such studies more and more in the future. On another note, it was discovered that articles published by more than three authors were not prevalent. Notwithstanding the existing status quo, co-authoring with multiple authors can enable studies to combine disparate perspectives of individuals while also ensuring natural peer-reviewing processes all along. Cooperation in between different departments might as well transform the benefits of this incalculably.

Another finding regarding the authors was that 6.2% of the authors were constituted by in-service teachers. They might be graduate students who are colleagues or just in-service teachers who are eager to research. Either way, encouraging more in-service teachers to get involved in scientific research will bring many advantages by itself. It would help researchers to have an easier access to in-service teachers and children, while keeping in-service teachers up-to-date with recent educational trends and studies. This can be accomplished by encouraging in-service teachers and informing them about the research and other potential opportunities for research beforehand, ensuring their active participation in the study, sharing the results with them, and showing respect to their contributions regardless of the amount.

Results of the current study also underscored the less studied topics of research in this field. As an illustration, in educational research topics, early childhood education approaches as well as movement education and multicultural education were some of the understudied subjects. In developmental research topics, for instance, physical development proved to be the least frequently-studied subject when compared to other developmental research topics. Deeper into the study, it was featured that empathy was also one of the least studied topics among social-emotional subjects of research. In-service training, father involvement, parent-school relationship, digital games and apps, and children's rights and immigrant children were, too, listed among the understudied subjects that researchers should take into account for broader studies. Researchers may choose to devote their energy into this field by focusing on these understudied subjects.

Another window of opportunity was revealed by the findings of the current content analysis indicating that quantitative studies were more generic than qualitative studies or mixed method studies among the articles examined. In addition, Hatch and Coleman-King (2015) defend the ideology that in the twenty-first century the field of early childhood education needs qualitative studies to develop or reconfigure early childhood research, theory, practice, and policy. Consequently, increasing number of the qualitative studies can ensure grand benefits to early childhood education researchers, academics, and even policy makers. To be able to enhance research designs to be more divergent among publications, universities can offer specialized research courses specific to early childhood education, and as an ancillary approach on the matter, provide fundamental scientific research courses for larger audiences of post-graduate researchers. The underlying reason for this is that getting familiar with research methods within the context of their own discipline can markedly encourage researchers to explore different research methods with more confidence.

Once more, chapters on the methodologies in certain articles did not provide as much information as they arguably should have per demonstrations in the findings chapters

along with their frequencies. However, it feels necessary to indicate at this point that there were articles that delivered a description on their methodological procedures which yet did not match with the procedures described in the articles to have been followed. This can conveniently be prevented by a set of actions. Firstly, academic journals can choose to enforce higher standards and regulations. Secondly, scientific research lectures in both undergraduate and graduate levels can be rendered more comprehensively over an extended period of time as an essential part of any curriculum. Further, it was also observed that keywords in the articles or titles of the articles did not always present the article in a way that is accessible to a wide network of researchers through database search. Overarching and inclusive keywords and titles contribute towards making articles more accessible to its target readers.

5.5. Recommendations for Further Studies

The sample of the current study was composed of articles from Turkish educational academic journals that are indexed under SSCI, ESCI, and ULAKBIM, collected by implementing the purposive sampling method. To be able to have a more comprehensive study, further studies are recommended to include in their samples Turkish academic journals from different fields of study into their samples or journals that are indexed under different databases such as EBSCO, ERIC, Spocus etc. or Turkish articles that are published in foreign academic journals. This follows that, instead of using samples that are almost impossible to cover within the limited time periods allotted for its research, samples on smaller scales from various international academic journals can be examined for comparison.

Ultimately, results of the current study were by and large collected through descriptive analysis and were represented via frequency tables and graphs. A study utilizing from parametric statistics to interpret their examinations in articles might prove useful in featuring a different perspective.

Articles, overall, incorporated the sole focal point of this study. For future studies, the inclusion of not only articles but also a variety of different scientific publications for examination can further be recommended.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Journal List

Journal List

Journal Name	Database
Adiyaman University Journal of Educational Sciences	ULAKBIM
Anadolu Journal of Educational Sciences International	ULAKBIM
Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences Journal of Special Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM
Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences	ULAKBIM
Bartın University Journal of Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM
Başkent University Journal of Education	ULAKBIM
Creative Drama Journal	ULAKBIM
Çukurova University Faculty of Education Journal	ESCI & ULAKBIM
Cumhuriyet International Journal of Education	ULAKBIM
Education and Science	SSCI & ULAKBIM
Educational Administration – Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM
Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice	SSCI
Educational Technology Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM

Ege Journal of Education	ULAKBIM
Elementary Education Online	ULAKBIM
Erzincan University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM
Eurasian Journal of Educational Research	ESCI
Gazi University Journal of Gazi Educational Faculty	ULAKBIM
Hacettepe Journal of Sport Sciences	ULAKBIM
Hacettepe University Journal of Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM
Hitit University Journal of Social Sciences Institute	ULAKBIM
Inonu University Journal of the Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM
International Journal of Assessment Tools in Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM
International Journal of Curriculum and Instructional Studies	ULAKBIM
International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM
International Journal of Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology	ESCI
International Journal of Instruction	ESCI
International Online Journal of Education and Teaching	ULAKBIM
Journal of Bayburt Education Faculty	ULAKBIM

Journal of Education and Future	ESCI
Journal of Education and Humanities: Theory and Practice	ULAKBIM
Journal of Education for Life	ULAKBIM
Journal of Higher Education	ESCI & ULAKBIM
Journal of Inquiry Based Activities	ULAKBIM
Journal of Language Teaching and Learning	ESCI
Journal of Qualitative Research in Education	ULAKBIM
Journal of Sports and Performance Researches	ULAKBIM
Journal of Theoretical Educational Science	ULAKBIM
Journal of Uludag University Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM
KALEM International Journal of Educational and Human Sciences	ULAKBIM
Kastamonu Education Journal	ULAKBIM
Mediterranean Journal of Educational Research	ULAKBIM
Mehmet Akif Ersoy University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM
Mersin University Journal of the Faculty of Education	ULAKBIM
National Education-Journal of Education and Social Science	ULAKBIM

Necatibey Faculty of Education - Electronic Journal of Science and Mathematics Education	ULAKBIM
Novitas-Research on Youth and Language	ULAKBIM
Ondokuz Mayıs University Journal of Education Faculty	ULAKBIM
Pamukkale University Journal of Education	ESCI
Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction	ESCI & ULAKBIM
Review of International Geographical Education Online	ULAKBIM
Sakarya University Journal of Education	ULAKBIM
SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences Journal of Social Sciences	ULAKBIM
SPORMETRE Journal of Physical Education and Sport Sciences	ULAKBIM
The Journal of Higher Education and Science	ULAKBIM
Trakya Journal of Education	ULAKBIM
Turkish History Education Journal	ULAKBIM
Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education	ULAKBIM
Turkish Journal of Education	ESCI
Turkish Journal of Sport and Exercise	ULAKBIM
Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education	ESCI



Appendix B: Code Book

No:

Language of the Article:

0. Turkish
1. English
2. Both in Turkish and English
3. German
4. French

Name of the Journal:

The Database:

0. SSCI
1. ESCI
2. ULAKBIM
3. SSCI + ULAKBIM
4. ESCI + ULAKBIM

Publication Year:

Department of the Author(s):

Number of the Author(s):

Based on a Thesis/Dissertation:

Research Topic:

1. Education
 - 1.1. Art education
 - 1.2. Concept education
 - 1.3. Constructivism
 - 1.4. Creativity education
 - 1.5. Curriculum
 - 1.6. Educational environments
 - 1.7. Education policies
 - 1.8. Educational settings / Learning centers
 - 1.9. Educational technologies
 - 1.10. Effects of early childhood education
 - 1.11. Environmental education / Sustainability
 - 1.12. Free-time activities
 - 1.13. Foreign language education
 - 1.14. Guidance and psychological counseling
 - 1.15. Literacy skills
 - 1.16. Materials
 - 1.17. Math education
 - 1.18. Montessori
 - 1.19. Moral / Religion education
 - 1.20. Movement education
 - 1.21. Multi-cultural education

- 1.22. Music education
- 1.23. Peace education
- 1.24. Philosophy
- 1.25. Piaget
- 1.26. Reggio Emilia
- 1.27. Science education
- 1.28. School readiness
- 1.29. Sexual education
- 1.30. Special education / Inclusion
- 1.31. Vygotsky
- 1.32. Waldorf
- 1.33. High Scope
- 1.34. Bank Street
- 1.35. Head Start
- 1.36. Lesson plans
- 1.37. Assessment
- 1.38. Active participation
- 1.39. School adjustment / Classroom adaptation
- 1.40. Head Start
- 1.41. Material design
- 1.42. Animation
- 1.43. Child centered education
- 1.44. Play
- 1.45. Museum education
- 1.46. Computer assisted instruction

- 1.47. Multiple intelligences theory
- 1.48. Differentiated instruction
- 1.49. Story telling / Interactive reading
- 1.50. Drama / Creative drama
- 1.51. Intervention program
- 1.52. Reward and punishment methods
- 1.53. Project based learning approach
- 1.54. Other

2. Development

2.1. Cognitive Development

- 2.1.1. Concept development
- 2.1.2. Cognitive development stages
- 2.1.3. Mental reasoning skills
- 2.1.4. Metacognitive skills
- 2.1.5. Problem solving
- 2.1.6. Visual perception
- 2.1.7. Math skills
- 2.1.8. Cognitive progress skills
- 2.1.9. Memory
- 2.1.10. Cognitive / Learning styles
- 2.1.11. Other

2.2. Language and Literacy Development

2.3. Physical Development

2.4. Social-emotional Development

- 2.4.1. Attachment

- 2.4.2. Behavioral problems
- 2.4.3. Communication skills
- 2.4.4. Creativity
- 2.4.5. Empathy
- 2.4.6. Gender
- 2.4.7. Peer relationships / Bullying / Aggression
- 2.4.8. Self-concept
- 2.4.9. Self-efficacy
- 2.4.10. Social skills / competence
- 2.4.11. Moral development
- 2.4.12. Prosocial behaviors
- 2.4.13. Emotional Skills
- 2.4.14. Self-regulations
- 2.4.15. Other

3. Teachers

- 3.1. Classroom management
- 3.2. Discipline
- 3.3. Ethic
- 3.4. Job satisfaction / Burnout
- 3.5. Leadership skills / styles
- 3.6. Attitude
- 3.7. Personal characteristics
- 3.8. Professional expectations
- 3.9. Professional perception
- 3.10. Social skills / Empathy / Communication skills

- 3.11. Teacher-administrator relationships
- 3.12. In-service teacher education/training
- 3.13. Professional competence
- 3.14. Self-efficacy
- 3.15. Others

4. School

- 4.1. Administration
- 4.2. Quality
- 4.3. Design
- 4.4. Other

5. Parents

- 5.1. Parent education
- 5.2. Parent involvement
- 5.3. Parent- school relationship
- 5.4. Parent's expectations
- 5.5. Family support
- 5.6. Father involvement / level of knowledge / attitude
- 5.7. Mother involvement / level of knowledge / attitude
- 5.8. Parents level of knowledge / attitude
- 5.9. Family perception
- 5.10. Parenting styles
- 5.11. Parent-child relationship
- 5.12. Other

- 6. Children Literature
- 7. Children's Rights / Immigrant Children
- 8. Media
 - 8.1. Ads
 - 8.2. Social media
 - 8.3. Cartoons
 - 8.4. Other
- 9. Health
 - 9.1. Abuse / Violence
 - 9.2. Psychological problems
 - 9.3. Development
 - 9.4. Nutrition
 - 9.5. Self-care skills
 - 9.6. Hearing / Speech impairment
 - 9.7. Other
- 10. Scale Development
 - 11.1. An original
 - 11.2. An adaptation
 - 11.3. Reliability & Validity

Research Type:

- 0. Mixed method
- 1. Qualitative
- 2. Quantitative
- 3. Review Studies

4. Other

Research Method (Design):

0. Action
1. Causal-comparative
2. Content analysis
3. Correlational
4. Ethnographic
5. Survey
6. Historical
7. Single-subject
8. Experimental
9. Phenomenological
10. Case Study
11. Grounded theory
12. Narrative
13. Exploratory
14. Explanatory
15. Descriptive
16. Literature review / Critique
17. Basic qualitative design
18. Unspecified
19. Other

Research Setting:

0. Pre-school
1. Nursey
2. Primary school (1st to 4th grade)
3. High school
4. University
5. Special education school / Rehabilitation center
6. Unspecified
7. Not applicable
8. Other

Sample Size:

0. $n \leq 10$
1. $10 < n \leq 30$
2. $30 < n \leq 100$
3. $100 < n \leq 200$
4. $200 < n \leq 300$
5. $300 < n \leq 1000$
6. $n > 1000$
7. Unspecified
8. Not applicable
9. Other

Sampling Method:

0. Simple random sampling
1. Stratified random sampling
2. Cluster random sampling
3. Two-stage random sampling
4. Systematic sampling
5. Convenience sampling
6. Purposive sampling
7. All of the population
8. Unspecified
9. Not applicable
10. Other

Sample Demographic:

0. Children
 - Age group:
1. Pre-service teachers
2. In-service teachers
3. Parents
 - 3.1. Mother & Father
 - 3.2. Mother
 - 3.3. Father
 - 3.4. Other
4. School administrators
5. Schools

6. Children Books
7. Curriculum
8. Previous studies in the field
9. Academicians
10. Teachers from other departments
11. Documents
12. Other

Instrument:

0. Achievement or Aptitude tests
1. Anecdotal records
2. Attitude scales
3. Flowcharts
4. Interviews
5. Observation forms
6. Performance tests
7. Personality inventories
8. Projective devices
9. Questionnaires
10. Rating scales
11. Checklists
12. Sociometric devices
13. Tally sheets
14. Photograph and video recording
15. Document analysis

16. Unspecified

17. Other

Development of the Instrument:

0. Developed by the researcher

1. An adaptation done by the researcher

2. An adaptation done by another researcher

3. Developed by another researcher and no adaptation needed

4. Other

Data Analysis Methods:

0. Descriptive statistics

1. Inferential statistics

2. Qualitative analysis

3. Inferential statistics and Qualitative analysis

4. Descriptive statistics and Inferential statistics

5. Qualitative analysis and Descriptive statistics

6. Unspecified

7. Not applicable

8. Other

**TÜRK AKADEMİK DERGİLERDE YAYINLANAN OKUL ÖNCESİ
EĞİTİMİ İLE İLGİLİ MAKALELERİN İÇERİK ANALİZİ**

GİRİŞ

Araştırmanın Amacı ve Araştırma Soruları

Bu çalışmanın amacı ULAKBIM'in Eğitim Bilimleri kategorisinde, SSCI ve ESCI' de endeksli Türk akademik dergilerinde okul öncesi eğitimi alanında 2008-2018 yılları arasında yayınlanmış makalelerin tanımlayıcı özellikleri, araştırma konuları ve yöntemsel özelliklerini incelemektir. Elde edilen bulgularla geçtiğimiz on yıldaki Türkçe okul öncesi eğitimi alan yazını hakkında kapsamlı bilgi verilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu bağlamda aşağıda belirtilen araştırma sorularını cevaplamak hedeflenmiştir:

1. ULAKBIM'in Eğitim Bilimleri kategorisinde, SSCI ve ESCI'de endeksli Türk akademik dergilerinde okul öncesi eğitimi alanında 2008-2018 yılları arasında yayınlanmış makalelerin tanımlayıcı özellikleri nelerdir?

1a. Makalelerin basım yıllarına göre dağılımı nedir?

1b. Makalelerin yazım dillerine göre dağılımı nedir?

1c. Makalelerin veri tabanları ve dergilere göre dağılımı nedir?

1d. Makalelerin yazarlarının bölümleri nelerdir?

1e. Makalelerin kaç tanesi yüksek lisans veya doktora tezi temel alınarak yazılmıştır?

2. ULAKBİM'in Eğitim Bilimleri kategorisinde, SSCI ve ESCI'de endeksli Türk akademik dergilerinde okul öncesi eğitimi alanında 2008-2018 yılları arasında yayınlanmış makalelerin araştırma konularına göre dağılımı nedir?

3. ULAKBİM'in Eğitim Bilimleri kategorisinde, SSCI ve ESCI'de endeksli Türk akademik dergilerinde okul öncesi eğitimi alanında 2008-2018 yılları arasında yayınlanmış makalelerin yöntemsel özellikleri nelerdir?

3a. Makalelerin araştırma türleri nelerdir?

3b. Makalelerin araştırma yöntemleri nelerdir?

3c. Makalelerin araştırma ortamları nerelerdir?

3d. Makalelerin örnekleme yöntemleri ve örneklem büyüklükleri nelerdir?

3e. Makalelerin örneklem grupları nelerdir?

3f. Makalelerin veri toplama araçları ve bu araçların orijinalliği nedir?

3g. Makalelerin veri analiz yöntemleri nelerdir?

Araştırmanın Önemi

Araştırmacılar, yaptıkları bilimsel çalışmaların nasıl ilerleyeceğini seçme konusunda özgürdürler ama bununla birlikte günümüzde bilimsel çalışmalarda kullanılan eğilimlerin hepsinin geçmişteki araştırmacıların yaptıkları seçimlerle ilişkisi vardır (Keskin, 2016). Buna ek olarak, alanda yapılan çalışmaların eğilimlerinin kaydını tutmak ve belirli aralıklarla alanda yapılan çalışmaları düzenleyerek sunmak araştırmacıların çalıştıkları alan hakkında fikir edinmeleri için önemlidir (Cohen, Manion ve Morrison, 2011). Bu sebeplerle, mevcut çalışmanın sonuçlarının araştırmacı olma yolunda ilerleyen insanlara bir başlangıç noktası sağlayacağı için önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Yükseköğretimde, akademik dergilerde yer alan makalelerin analiz edilmesi, o alandaki eğilimleri göstermesi açısından faydalıdır (Thyer, 2008). Bu çalışmanın bulguları, okul öncesi eğitimi alanında yapılan araştırmaların eğilimlerinin görülmesine katkıda bulunacaktır. Bu sebeple, alanda göz ardı edilen araştırma konularının ve yöntemlerinin ortaya çıkmasında fayda göstereceği düşünülmektedir.

Dressel ve Mayhew (1974), akademik makaleler ile yüksek lisans ve doktora tezlerinin araştırmacılar arasında kullanılan birincil bilgi kaynağı olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, daha önce okul öncesi eğitimi alanında tezler kullanılarak yapılan çalışmanın sonuçları ile kıyaslanarak; alandaki iki büyük bilgi kaynağı olan makaleler ve tezler arasındaki boşluğu doldurması hedeflenmiştir. Bu iki ana bilimsel bilgi kaynağının birbirine bağlanması ve karşılaştırılması; araştırmacılara, erken çocukluk eğitimi alanının şu anki durumu hakkında bir gösterge olarak fayda sağlayacağı umulmaktadır.

YÖNTEM

Araştırma Modeli

Çalışmanın amacı Türk akademik dergilerde okul öncesi eğitimi ile ilgili yayınlanmış makalelerin tanımlayıcı özelliklerini, araştırma konularını ve yöntemsel özelliklerini incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bryman (2012)'a göre içerik analizi araştırmacı tarafından önceden belirlenmiş kategorilere dayanarak dokümanların sistematik ve tekrarlanabilir bir şekilde incelenmesidir. Buna ek olarak Krippendorff (2004) içerik analizini, tekrarlanabilir ve geçerli bulgular oluşturmak adına sözel veya görsel materyallerin incelenmesi olarak tanımlamıştır. Çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturan makaleler toplanırken, doküman analizinden faydalanılmıştır. Doküman analizi, araştırmacının önceden belirlenmiş bir konu kapsamında yazılı veya elektronik dokümanları yorumlayarak incelemesidir (Bowen, 2009; Rapley, 2007).

Evren ve Örneklem

Türk akademik dergilerinde okul öncesi eğitimi ile ilgili yayınlanmış makalelerin hepsi çalışmanın evrenini oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın örneklemini seçerken amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Yapılan çalışmanın belli bir amacı temel alınarak seçilen kriterlere göre, örneklem seçilmesine amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi denir (Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun, 2012). Makaleler belirlenen şu üç ölçüte göre seçilmiştir: Okul öncesi eğitimi ile ilgili bir konuda yazılmış olmak; SSCI, ESCI veya ULAKBİM'in eğitim bilimleri kategorisinde endeksli bir Türk dergisinde yer almak; 2008-2018 yılları arasında yayınlanmış olmak. Bu ölçütlere uyan 822 dergi, çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Verilerin toplanma süreci 1 Eylül 2018'de bittiği için, 2018'in son çeyreğinde yayınlanan makaleler örnekleme dahil edilememiştir.

Veri Toplama Aracı

İçerik analizi olarak tasarlanan bu çalışmanın veri toplama aracı, araştırmacı tarafından üç aşama halinde oluşturulmuştur. Araştırmacı ilk olarak kodlama aracını, ilişkili alan yazın taraması ve çalışmanın örnekleminin incelenmesi ile oluşturmuştur. Oluşturulan kodlama kitabı ve makale inceleme formu bir devlet üniversitesinde okul öncesi eğitimi bölümünde öğretim üyesi olan iki uzmana gönderilmiştir. Uzman görüşü alınıp, kodlama aracının düzenlemeleri yapıldıktan sonra, en son olarak pilot çalışma uygulanarak test edilmiştir.

Kodlama ve Kategorizasyon

Bütün içerik analizlerinin ortak özelliği, tanımlayıcı bilgileri kategorilere dönüştürmesidir (Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun, 2012). Bu kategorilerin sahip olması gereken özellikler Sarantakos (2005) ve Mayring (2014) tarafından şu şekilde açıklanmıştır: Kategoriler araştırmacı tarafından açıkça tanımlanmalıdır; kategoriler araştırma konusunun her bir yönünü kapsamalıdır; her kategori çalışma konusunun belli bir yönüne odaklanmalıdır. İçerik analizlerinde kategoriler, veri analizine

başlamadan önce veya başladıktan sonra belirlenebilir (Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun, 2012). Buna ek olarak Neuendorf (2002), kategorileri içerik analizine başlamadan önce belirlemenin öneminden bahsetmiştir. Bu bilgilere dayanarak, kategoriler veri analizine başlanmadan önce araştırmacı tarafından oluşturulmuştur. Kodlama kitabının kategorilerini ve alt kategorilerini belirlerken üç farklı yaklaşım kullanılmıştır. Tanımlayıcı özelliklere ait kategoriler belirlenirken, çalışmanın araştırma soruları temel alınmıştır. Makalelerin çalışma konuları ile ilgili olan kategoriler, eğitim alanında yapılmış benzer çalışmalar ve mevcut çalışmanın örneklemeden rastgele seçilmiş bir grup makalenin ayrıntılı olarak incelenmesi sonucu oluşturulmuştur. Son olarak yöntemsel özelliklere ait kategoriler çeşitli bilimsel araştırma yöntemleri kitapları temel alınarak oluşturulmuştur (Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun, 2012; Newby, 2010; Kelly, Lesh ve Baek, 2008; Büyüköztürk, Aygün, Kılıç Çakmak ve Karadeniz, 2016; Merriam 2009; Wortham,2001).

Pilot Çalışma

Veri toplama aracını test etmek için uygulanan küçük kapsamlı araştırmalara pilot çalışma denir (Bryman, 2012). Pilot çalışma veri aracının planlandığı gibi çalışıp çalışmadığını gözlemlemenin yanında, güvenilirliğini de kontrol etme imkanı tanır (Krippendorff, 2004). Mevcut çalışma için yapılan pilot çalışma da örneklem içinden alınmış 85 makale kullanılmıştır. İkinci bir araştırmacı, pilot çalışma sırasında aynı verileri araştırmacı ile aynı anda ama araştırmacıdan bağımsız olarak incelemiştir. Bu iki analizin sonuçları, Krippendorff'un alfasına bakılarak kontrol edilmiştir ve alfa değeri .8 bulunmuştur. Bu değer iki araştırmacının bulguları arasında yüksek bir güvenilirlik olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca pilot çalışmanın sonuçları ana çalışmaya eklenmemiştir. Kullanılan 85 makale çalışmaya, araştırmacı tarafından veri toplama aracının son hali kullanarak incelendikten sonra eklenmiştir.

Veri Analizi

Çalışmanın veri analizi, tanımlayıcı istatistiksel yöntemler kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012)'un belirttiğine göre, içerik analizlerinin bulguları frekanslar ve belirli bir verinin bütün veriye olan oranları kullanarak ifade edilir. Bu doğrultuda, çalışmanın verileri Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 24.0 programı kullanılarak hesaplanmıştır. İçerik analizi ile toplanmış bütün veriler SPSS programına araştırmacı tarafından girilmiş ve bu analizin bulguları frekans ile oranlar kullanılarak gösterilmiştir.

Geçerlilik ve Güvenilirlik

Geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik bir çalışmanın niteliğini belirleyen en temel unsurlardan biridir (Bryman, 2012). Krippendorff'a (2004) göre geçerlilik bir çalışmanın sonuçlarının doğru olarak kabul edilmesini sağlayan niteliğidir. Bu çalışmanın geçerliliği; görünüş geçerliliği, içerik geçerliliği ve kapsam geçerliliği incelenerek sağlanmıştır.

Görünüş geçerliliği bir veri toplama aracının, görünüşte ölçmeyi amaçladığını gerçekten de ölçüp ölçmediğini ifade eder (Krippendorff, 2004). Mevcut çalışmanın veri toplama aracı araştırmacı tarafından kapsamlı bir alan yazın taraması sonucunda oluşturulmuştur. Veri toplama aracının görünüş geçerliliğini sağlamak adına, hazırlanan makale inceleme formu ve kodlama kitabı okul öncesi eğitimi alanındaki uzmanlara gönderilmiştir. Uzman görüşü alındıktan sonra makale inceleme formu ve kodlama formu yeniden düzenlenmiştir. Sonrasında, veri toplama aracı pilot çalışma uygulanarak test edilmiştir. Pilot çalışma sonrasında veri toplama aracının son hali oluşturulmuştur.

İçerik geçerliliği, veri toplama aracının odaklanan araştırma konusunun bütün özelliklerini ölçebilecek kapsamda olup olmadığı gösterir (Krippendorff 2004). İçerik geçerliliğini sağlayabilmek için, veri toplama aracı okul öncesi eğitimi alanından olan uzmanlar tarafından ve yine okul öncesi eğitimi alanından olan ve

daha önce bu çalışmaya benzer bir çalışma yapmış bir uzman tarafından incelenmiştir.

Kapsam geçerliliği, Frankel, Wallen ve Hyun (2012) tarafından bir çalışmanın sonuçlarının genellenebilirliği olarak tanımlanmıştır. Çalışmanın örnekleme seçilirken amaçlı örneklem yöntemi kullanılmış ve örneklem seçim süreci hakkında detaylı bilgiye yer verilmiştir.

Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun (2012) güvenilirliği bir veri toplama aracıyla ulaşılan verilerin doğruluğu ve tutarlılığı olarak tanımlamıştır. Aynı zamanda Bryman (2012) güvenilirliği bir araştırmanın sonuçlarının tekrarlanabilir olup olmadığı şeklinde tanımlamıştır. Mevcut çalışmanın güvenilirliği, yapılan pilot çalışma ve bu pilot çalışmaya eklenen ikinci bir kodlayıcı ile sağlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Sınırlılıkları

Bu araştırma da, evren ile çalışmak zaman ve çalışmanın tasarımı açısından mümkün olmadığı için örneklem ile çalışılmıştır. Bu bağlamda, üç veri tabanından amaçlı örnekleme yöntemi kullanılarak seçilen 822 makale çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Makaleleri seçerken kullanılan ölçütlerden biri makalelerin okul öncesi eğitimi ile ilgili bir konuda yazılmış olmalarıydı. Bahsedilen veri tabanlarındaki her makalenin anahtar kelimeleri olmaması veya makale okul öncesi eğitimi alanında yazılmış olmasına rağmen seçilen anahtar kelimelerinde ilgili bilginin yer almaması sebebiyle, çeşitli arama motorlarının kullanılmasının yanı sıra dergilerdeki bütün makalelerin özetleri araştırmacı tarafından gözden geçirilmiştir.

Veri toplama süreci sırasında, makalelerin yazarlarının çalışmaların yönlemsel özelliklerini doğru tanımladıkları varsayılmıştır. Veriler, herhangi bir kişisel yargıya yer verilmeden, yazarların kendi tanımladıkları şekilde toplanmıştır.

ESCI, EBSCO, Scopus gibi Türk akademik dergilerin yer aldığı birçok farklı veri tabanı bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca, okul öncesi eğitimi alanında yazılmış makaleler

yalnızca eğitim alanına yoğunlaşmış akademik dergilerde yayınlanmamaktadır. Ancak, araştırmanın verileri SSCI, ESCI ve ULAKBİM’de endeksli olan eğitim dergileri ile sınırlandırılmıştır.

BULGULAR

Bu çalışma da, araştırmacı tarafından 822 makale analiz edilmiştir. Yapılan analizin bulguları üç kategori altında incelenmiştir: Tanımlayıcı özellikler, araştırma konuları ve yöntemsel özellikler. Makalelerin tanımlayıcı özellikleri kapsamında ilk olarak yayın yılları incelenmiştir. Analiz sonuçlarına göre okul öncesi eğitimi ile ilgili yazılan makalelerin miktarında son on yılda genel bir artış olduğu görülmüştür. Bu artışın iki istisnası, 2011 ve 2013 yıllarında gerçekleşmiştir. 2010 ve 2011 yıllarında, yayınların miktarında bir fark olmadığı ve 2013 yılında toplam yayınlarda yaklaşık % 12 oranında bir azalma olduğu gözlenmiştir. Makalelerin yayın dilleri incelendiğinde ise makalelerin yarısından fazlasının (% 68.2) Türkçe olarak yayınlandığı tespit edilmiştir. İkinci en popüler yayın dili seçiminin ise İngilizce (% 22.9) olduğu gözlemlenmiştir.

Makalelerin veri tabanlarına ve dergilere göre dağılımına bakıldığında, incelenen 62 akademik dergi arasında Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi ‘nin en çok yayın yapan dergi olduğu (n=88); buna ek olarak, incelenen makalelerin yarısından fazlasının (n=522) ULAKBİM’de endeksli olduğu görülmektedir. Yazar sayıları ve yazarların ait olduğu bölümler incelendiğinde, makalelerin yaklaşık yarısının (% 51.3) iki yazar tarafından yazıldığı görülmektedir. Ayrıca, okul öncesi eğitimi (% 47.9) ve çocuk gelişimi (% 12.2) bölümlerinin en çok makale yayınlayan iki bölüm olduğunu ortaya çıkmıştır. Tanımlayıcı özellik olarak en son yüksek lisans veya doktora tezini temel alarak yazılan makalelerin yüzdesine bakılmıştır. İncelenen makalelerin yaklaşık % 15'inin bir yüksek lisans veya doktora tezi temel alınarak yazıldığı gözlemlenmiştir.

Makalelerin araştırma konuları incelenirken, bulguların daha düzenli ve anlaşılır olabilmesi için araştırma konuları on ana başlık altında toplanmıştır. Bu ana konu başlıkları şunlardır: eğitim, gelişim, öğretmenler, okul, ebeveynler, çocuk edebiyatı, çocuk hakları ve göçmen çocuklar, medya, sağlık ve ölçek geliştirme. Bu ana başlıkların her biri kendi alt kategorileri göz önüne alınarak incelenmiştir. Makaleler arasında en çok karşılaşılan araştırma konularının eğitim (% 38.8) kategorisinde yer alanlar olduğu görülmüştür. Eğitim kategorisi içinde ise, araştırmacılar tarafından en çok tercih edilen konunun özel eğitim ve kaynaştırma (% 10.1) olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.

Son olarak makalelerin yöntemsel özellikleri yedi kategori altında incelenmiştir. Bu kategoriler: Araştırma türü, araştırma yöntemi, çalışma ortamı, örneklemin büyüklüğü ve seçim yöntemi, örneklemin demografisi, veri toplama araçları ve bu araçların orijinalliği ve son olarak veri analiz yöntemleridir. Nicel araştırmaların (n=407) araştırmacılar tarafından en çok tercih edilen araştırma türü olduğu ve sıralamada nitel araştırmaların (n=280) hemen onun arkasından geldiği görülmüştür. Makalelerin araştırma yöntemleri incelendiğinde, tarama araştırma yönteminin (n=123), deneysel araştırma yönteminin (n=102) ve korelasyon yönteminin (n=96) araştırmacılar tarafından en sık kullanılan üç yöntem olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Ayrıca, makalelerin yaklaşık % 75'inin ana sınıfları veya anaokullarını araştırma ortamı olarak kullandığı tespit edilmiştir. Makaleler için en çok tercih edilen ikinci araştırma ortamının ise üniversiteler (% 17.3) olduğu görülmüştür. Çalışmanın bulguları, makalelerin % 43.5'inin örnekleme yöntemleri hakkında herhangi bir bilgi içermediğini ve makalelerin % 20.3'ünün örnekleme yöntemi olarak amaçlı örnekleme yöntemini seçtiğini göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, makalelerde kullanılan en yaygın örneklem büyüklüğü, 30 ile 100 (% 29.1) arasındaki örneklem büyüklükleridir. Ayrıca en sık olarak kullanılan örneklem grubunu çocukların (% 36.4) oluşturduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Çocuklar arasında en yaygın çalışma yapılmış yaş grubu ise 60 - 72 aylık çocuklardır. Veri toplama araçları incelendiğinde, araştırmacılar tarafından kullanılan en popüler veri toplama aracının anket (% 24.8),

en popüler ikinci veri toplama aracının ise mülakat olduğu (% 20.6) görülmüştür. Ayrıca, veri toplama araçlarının % 46.9'unun araştırmacı tarafından geliştirildiği tespit edilmiştir. Son olarak, makalelerin veri analiz yöntemleri incelenmiştir. En sık kullanılan analiz yöntemlerinin çıkarımsal istatistikî analiz yöntemleri (% 47) olduğu ve ardından nitel analiz yöntemlerinin (% 32,8) olduğu görülmüştür.

TARTIŞMA

Makalelerin yayın yıllarına göre dağılımına bakıldığında, okul öncesi eğitimi alanında yazılan makale miktarının 2017 yılında en çok olduğu görülmektedir. 2018 yılında karşılaşılan bu ani düşüşün sebebinin bu yıla ait örneklem grubunun sınırlı olmasından kaynaklandığı düşünülmektedir. Mevcut çalışmanın veri toplama süreci 2018 Eylül ayının başında bittiği için, 2018 yılının son çeyreğinde yayınlanan makaleler araştırmaya dahil edilememiştir. Yayınlanan makale sayısı bakımından en yüksek yılın 2017 olması bu durumla açıklanabilir. Çalışmaların yıllara göre dağılımına bakıldığında düzensiz bir artış mevcut görülmektedir. Görülen bu düzensizlik, okul öncesi eğitimi alanında yayınlanan tezleri inceleyen çalışmalarda da görülmüştür (Altun, Öneren Şendil ve Şahin, 2011; Ahi ve Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017). Bu düzensizliğin, yazılan makalelerin dergilere gönderilmesi ve basılması arasında geçen süre farklılıklarından kaynaklanabileceği düşünülmektedir. İncelenen makalelerin yayın dillerine bakıldığında ise Türkçe yayınlanan makalelerin büyük bir çoğunluğu oluşturdukları görülmüştür (% 68.2).

Makalelerin endeksli oldukları veri tabanları ve yayımlandıkları akademik dergiler incelendiğinde, 62 dergi arasında Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi'nin okul öncesi eğitimi alanında en çok yayın yapan dergi olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır (n=8). Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi, son on yılda 40 dan fazla nüsha yayınlamıştır. Okul öncesi eğitimi alanında fazla yayına sahip diğer dergilerde, yıllık yayınlanan nüsha sayısı açısından Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi ile benzer özellikler göstermektedirler. Buna ek olarak, SSCI'da endeksli olan eğitim alanındaki iki Türk akademik dergisi de, en çok yayın yapılan ilk dört dergi arasında yer almıştır. Yazarların bu seçiminin sebebi,

yayınlarını uluslararası bir veri tabanında yayınlama arzusundan kaynaklanabileceği düşünülmektedir.

İncelenen makalelerin % 51.3'nün iki yazar tarafından yazıldığı ve incelenen makalelerin yaklaşık dörtte birinin tek yazar tarafından yazıldığı görülmüştür (% 23.6). Buna ek olarak incelenen makalelerin tanımsal özellikleri kapsamında bakılan bir diğer özellik, daha önce yayınlanmış bir tezi temel olarak yazılan makalelerin oranıdır. Yapılan incelemelere göre incelenen örneklemin yaklaşık % 15'nin daha önce yayınlanmış bir tez temel alınarak yazıldığı; bir ders kapsamında yazılan makalelerinde yaklaşık olarak aynı orana sahip olduğu görülmüştür. Bu bilgiler ışığında, iki yazara sahip makalelerin bir öğrenci ve danışman tarafından yayınlandığı düşünülmektedir.

Yazarların anabilim dallarına bakıldığında ise beklenildiği üzere, en yaygın olarak görülenler okul öncesi eğitimi (% 47.9) ve çocuk gelişimi (% 12.2) anabilim dallarıdır. Bunların dışında en çok rastlanan anabilim dalı ise eğitim bilimleridir (% 8.6). Bu konuda ulaşılan başka bir bilgi ise, toplam oranlarının az olmasına rağmen peyzaj mimarlığı, grafik tasarımı, moda tasarımı, bitkisel ve hayvansal üretim ve istatistik benzeri görülen birçok farklı anabilim dallarıdır. Yapılan analiz sonuçlarına göre, okul öncesi eğitimi alanı dışından olan yazarların % 90.6'sı çalışmalarını kendi anabilim dalları dışında olan yazar veya yazarlarla birlikte yapmışlardır. Bu durum, okul öncesi eğitimi alanı dışına olan yazarların çoğunluğunun makalesinin disiplinler arası bir çalışma olduğu şeklinde yorumlanmaktadır.

Yapılan içerik analizinin sonuçlarına bakıldığında, incelenen makaleler arasında en çok tercih edilen araştırma konusunun erken çocukluk eğitimi olduğu görülmüştür (% 38.8). Ahi ve Kıldan (2013), ve Demirtaş İlhan (2017)'nin okul öncesi alanında yayınlanan yüksek lisans ve doktora tezlerini inceledikleri çalışmalarında da aynı sonuca ulaşmışlardır. Erken çocukluk eğitimi alt başlıklar halinde incelendiğinde ise, makaleler arasında en çok tercih edilen konunun özel eğitim ve kaynaştırma (n=43), ikinci olarak en çok tercih edilen konunun ise fen eğitimi (n=30) olduğu görülmüştür.

Bu sonuçlara paralel olarak, Demirtaş İlhan (2017)'nin çalışmasında en çok tercih edilen konunun özel eğitim; Ahi ve Kıldan (2013) yaptığı çalışmada ise en çok tercih edilen konunun fen ve doğa eğitimi olduğunu görülmektedir.

Son olarak makalelerin yöntemsel özellikleri incelenmiştir. Bu kapsamda makalelerin araştırma yöntemleri incelendiğinde, araştırmacıların nicel araştırma yöntemlerini (% 49.5), nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden (% 34.1) daha çok tercih ettiği görülmektedir. Bu bulgular, alandaki yüksek lisans tezlerini ve makaleleri inceleyen çalışmalarla paralellik oluşturmaktadır (Yılmaz ve Altinkurt, 2012; Ahi ve Kıldan, 2013). Okul öncesi alanındaki doktora tezlerini inceleyen çalışmalar ise tam tersi bir sonuç olarak, nitel çalışmaların daha çok tercih edildikleri bulgusuna ulaşmışlardır (Demirtaş İlhan, 2017).

Araştırmada dikkat çekici başka bir bulgu ise, yöntemsel özellikleri hakkında yeteri kadar bilgi sağlamayan makalelerin miktarıdır. Araştırma yöntemlerini belirtmeyen makalelerin oranı % 13.9'dur. Türk akademik dergilerinde yayınlanan makaleleri inceleyen çalışmalara bakıldığında da bu oranın yüksek olduğu görülmüştür (Yılmaz ve Altinkurt, 2012; Aydoğdu, 2015; Dönmez ve Gündoğdu, 2016; Hüseyinbaş, Çalap ve Kurnaz, 2018). Ancak, araştırma yöntemleri hakkında yeterli bilgi vermeyen tezlerin miktarının ise çok daha düşük olduğu bilinmektedir (Demirtaş İlhan, 2017). Yöntemsel olarak yeterli bilgiye rastlanmamış olan bir diğer alan ise örnekleme yöntemleridir. Makalelerin örnekleme yöntemleri incelendiğinde neredeyse % 45'nin bu konuda bir bilgi vermediği görülmüştür. Bilgi verenler arasında ise en çok tercih edilen yöntem amaçlı örnekleme yöntemidir (% 20.3).

Bu alanda yapılan diğer çalışmalarda olduğu gibi, mevcut çalışmada da incelenen makaleler arasında en çok tercih edilen çalışma grubunu çocuklar (% 35.6) oluşturmaktadır (Altun, Öneren Şendil ve Şahin, 2011; Yılmaz ve Altinkurt, 2012; Ahi ve Kıldan, 2013; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017). Çocukların yaş grupları incelendiğinde ise en çok tercih edilen yaş grubunu 60 – 72 ay arasındaki çocukların oluşturdukları görülmüştür. Uluslararası kabul gören tanımlamalara göre, okul öncesi eğitimi 0-8

yaş arası çocukları kapsasa da; Türk Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, erken çocukluk eğitimini 3 ila 6 yaş arasındaki çocukların eğitimi olarak tanımlamaktadır. Bu durum, 7-8 yaş arası çocuklara yoğunlaşan çalışmaların az olmasının sebebi olarak açıklanabilir. Ayrıca, Ekonomik İşbirliği ve Kalkınma Örgütü'nün 2016 yılına ait verilerine göre, Türkiye'de 3 ila 5 yaş arası çocukların % 37'si ile 3 yaşın altındaki çocukların % 2'sinden azı okul öncesi eğitimi almaktadır (OECD, 2018). Bu bilgi, araştırmacıların 3 yaşın altındaki çocuklara ulaşımının ne kadar zor olduğunu göstermektedir.

Aileler ile çalışan makaleler incelendiğinde, 66 makalenin hem anne hem babalarla, 43 makalenin yalnızca annelerle ve 3 makalenin ise yalnızca babalarla çalıştığı görülmüştür. Daha önce yapılan çalışmalarda da (Altun, Öneren Şendil, ve Şahin, 2011; Demirtaş İlhan, 2017) aileler ile çalışılan araştırmacıların anneleri babalara göre daha çok tercih ettiği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Araştırmacılar tarafından kullanılan bazı diğer katılımcı örnekleri ise şöyledir: Sağlık çalışanları, imamlar, muhtarlar, bakıcılar, müze müdürleri ve sınıf ablaları vb.

Anketler (% 24.8), görüşmeler (% 20.6) ve doküman analizi (% 10.4) incelenen makaleler arasında en sık rastlanan üç veri toplama aracıydı. Bu veri toplama araçlarının özgünlüğü incelendiğinde, % 46.9'unun araştırmacı tarafından geliştirildiği gözlemlenmiştir. Fraenkel, Wallen, ve Hyun (2012), yeni baştan bir veri toplama aracı geliştirmektense, önceden geliştirilmiş bir araç kullanmayı önermektedir. Ayrıca, araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen veri toplama araçlarının büyük çoğunluğunu görüşme soruları oluşturmaktadır. Bunlara ek olarak, nicel veri toplama araçlarının çoğunluğunun uyarlama yapılarak kullanılan araçlar olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Appendix D: Tez İzin Formu / Thesis Permission Form

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Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü / Graduate School of Marine Sciences

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English) :

A Content Analysis of Articles in Turkish Early Childhood Education Context

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: Yüksek Lisans / Master

Doktora / PhD

1. **Tezin tamamı dünya çapında erişime açılacaktır.** / Release the entire work immediately for access worldwide.

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