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TRENDS IN POSTGRADUATE THESES ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN TURKEY

Annotation. *The aim of the research is to determine the trends in the graduate theses on children's rights in Turkey between 2013–2022 and to create a perspective for the researches to be carried out later. A literature review was conducted at the YÖK National Thesis Center with 53 different keywords, and as a result, 70 postgraduate theses, 61 of which were master's and 9 of which were doctoral theses, were examined.*

Document analysis method was used to reach the results of the research. Researched theses were examined in terms of the keywords used, the universities which are linked to the institutes where these theses were made, the year of publication of the theses, the distribution of the theses, research topics, sample / study group, research designs / methods used, data collection tools used and data analysis methods. In the theses, it was determined that the issue of parents' attitudes towards children's rights was emphasized. The results of the research are explained with tables according to frequency and percentage distributions. It was concluded that mostly teachers were studied as a study group/sample in the examined theses, the most frequent quantitative research method was preferred as a research design, scales (attitude, classroom management profile, perception, self-regulation skills, etc.) and questionnaires (Likert) were commonly used in the data collection tool.

Keywords: *Children's rights, graduate theses, research trends, document analysis, parents attitude, research design, Turkey.*

Introduction

Child is defined as a boy or girl in the development period between infancy and puberty. Right, on the other hand, is what justice, law requires or allocates to someone, gain [1]. In this context, we can express Children's Rights as the rights for the future of children who protect children with the rules of law in order for the child to live in dignity and freedom in social, moral, emotional, mental and physical terms, grow up in a healthy way and develop normally [2]. It is of great importance to develop two important concepts such as human rights and children's rights, which have become an important

symbol of peace, tranquility, tolerance and democracy in the world, and to gain a more comprehensive dimension.

Children's rights is an official document created by the United Nations in 1989 to protect all children between the ages of 0-18 from harm that may be caused by anyone from the society, relatives, the state, the environment, and to prevent them from being harmed and to protect their developmental, vital rights, protection, participation, and assurance rights [3].

The rights of children under 18 years of age are children's rights. Since childhood covers a precious time in human life, children have different rights than other adults. Childhood is a period of time that children spend under the responsibility of being protected and cared for by adults and meeting their needs, as well as a process that should ensure that they feel happy, safe and comfortable.

Many studies have been carried out worldwide to ensure the protection of persons between the ages of 0-18. The first systematic Child Rights work was carried out by the League of Nations. The League of Nations adopted the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924. When we look at this adopted declaration, the legal guarantee of children and the rights of children and the safety of children are mentioned in the declaration. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. With this convention, it has been accepted by all states that have signed the convention, which states that all children in the world have equal rights regardless of gender, language, religion and race [2]. In Turkey, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed on 14.09.1990. It was approved by Law No. 058 on 09.12.1994 and ratified by the Council of Ministers on 23.12.1994 with the decision No. 94/6423 and entered into force after being published in the Official Gazette No. 22184 on 27.01.1995 [4]. Article 41 of the Constitution states that 'The State shall take the necessary measures and establish the necessary organization to ensure the peace and welfare of the family, especially the protection of mother and children and the teaching and implementation of family planning'. In addition, every child has the right to protection and care in areas such as food and drink, shelter, health and care, and to communicate directly with his/her parents and to continue his/her life, unless there is a harm in the best interest of the child. It is the duty of the state to protect children against violence and child abuse and the state takes protective measures in this regard. Thus, measures are taken nationally for children's rights [5].

Children's rights have gradually increased in importance over the years and have become more accepted today. There is a need to examine the theses researched on children's rights according to certain years and to analyze and classify their results. In this way, it can shed light and give direction to other studies. In this context, the aim of this study is to determine the trends in postgraduate theses on children's rights in Turkey

and to guide researchers to have an idea for future studies. Determining the trends in the master's and doctoral theses on children's rights is extremely important as it will shed light on future studies on this subject.

Materials and methods

In this study, document review method, which is among the qualitative research methods, was used. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek [6], the primary purpose of document analysis is defined as examining and interpreting the events and phenomena to be investigated and analyzing the results. In this case, it was decided to conduct the analysis with descriptive content analysis method. According to Çalık and Sözbilir [7], descriptive content analysis is defined as the analysis method in which the trends of the studies on a particular subject are determined and the results are defined and evaluated.

Research Model. Qualitative research method was used in this study. This research method is based on the evaluation of the subjects to be examined without intervention and without disturbing their natural structure. Thesis classification forms were used as data collection tools and descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data.

Population and Sample / Study Group. The theses examined for the research were obtained from YÖK National Thesis Center. Theses between the years 2013-2022 on the subject of children's rights were examined. Theses related to the subject were examined, 53 different keywords were used in the search, and 70 theses, 61 master's theses and 9 doctoral theses, were included in the research.

Data Collection Tools. In order to classify the articles in the study, classification forms developed for different studies [8] were examined and a thesis classification form was developed by the researcher. The thesis classification form, which was developed by taking expert opinions, was composed of six fields: thesis title, subject, method, data collection tools, sample and data analysis methods.

Data Collection Process. In this study, data were obtained by examining a total of 70 theses, 61 master's theses and 9 doctoral theses, written about children's rights between 2013 and 2022. The theses examined were obtained from the National Higher Education Council [11] thesis center. In this research method, the subject or subjects to be discussed are evaluated without any intervention and without disturbing their natural structure.

Data Analysis. All of the theses were examined and the theses addressing children's rights between 2013 and 2022 were analyzed. There were 61 postgraduate theses and 9 doctoral dissertations conducted between these years. Each thesis was examined independently. The data of the theses were recorded one by one on the thesis classification form. After this stage, the theses were analyzed through descriptive statistics in terms of their titles, topics, research designs, samples, data collection tools and data analysis types, and the findings were visualized with graphs, percentages and frequency tables.

Results

Data on the titles, research topics, research methods, samples, data collection tools and data analysis methods of the theses were analyzed and presented in the tables below.

Table 1 – Frequency and percentage distributions of keywords used in the review

Key Words	Theses reached	
	f	%
1	2	3
1. Child rights	62	29.3
2. Child	21	9.9
3. Convention on the Rights of the Child	18	8.5
4. Child rights education	12	5.7
5. Pre-school	9	4.2
6. Parent	7	3.3
7. School administrator	5	2.3
8. Pre-school education	5	2.3
9. Social Studies	4	1.9
10. Childhood	4	1.9
11. Primary School	4	1.9
12. Attitude	4	1.9
13. Teacher	3	1.4
14. Human Rights Education	3	1.4
15. Attitude towards child rights	3	1.4
16. Children's books	3	1.4
17. Right to education	2	0.9
18. Classroom teachers	2	0.9
19. Creative drama	2	0.9
20. Child abuse	2	0.9
21. Children's literature	2	0.9
22. Parent	2	0.9
23. Flag ceremony	1	0.5
24. Student	1	0.5
25. Democracy	1	0.5
26. Knowledge of parenting	1	0.5
27. Mothers' attitudes towards children's rights	1	0.5
28. Primary Education	1	0.5

Continuation of table 1

1	2	3
29. Classroom management profiles	1	0.5
30. Students' views on children's rights	1	0.5
31. Program development	1	0.5
32. Turkish textbooks	1	0.5
33. Syrian asylum seekers	1	0.5
34. Perception	1	0.5
35. Popular science magazines	1	0.5
36. Curious little one	1	0.5
37. Science child	1	0.5
38. Childhood traumas	1	0.5
39. Parental behavior	1	0.5
40. Social Studies textbooks	1	0.5
41. Secondary school students	1	0.5
42. Classroom teacher candidates	1	0.5
42. Intercultural sensitivity	1	0.5
43. Art activities	1	0.5
44. Scale development	1	0.5
45. Professional development	1	0.5
46. Pre-school teacher candidates	1	0.5
47. Individuals with special needs	1	0.5
48. Special education teachers	1	0.5
49. Social Studies teacher candidate	1	0.5
50. Social Studies curriculum	1	0.5
51. Professional value	1	0.5
52. Family	1	0.5
53. Life Science curriculum	1	0.5
Total	211	100

Table 1 shows that 53 different keywords were used to reach the theses. Various numbers of postgraduate theses were reached with 53 of these keywords. With 62 theses, it is seen that the highest number of theses were reached by using the keywords «children's rights».

This is followed by the keywords «child» with 21 and «Convention on the Rights of the Child» with 18. This is followed by theses with the keywords «Child Rights Education» with 12, «preschool» with 9 and «parent» with 7.

Table 2 – Frequency and percentage distributions regarding the distribution and accessibility of theses

Publication type	Theses reached	
	f	%
1. Master's Degree	61	87.1
2. PhD	9	12.9
Total	70	100

When Table 2 is examined, it is determined that 61 of the 70 theses on children's rights are master's theses and 9 are doctoral theses.

Table 3 – Frequency and percentage distributions of the universities affiliated to the institutes where the theses were conducted

Universities	Theses reached	
	f	%
1	2	3
1. Hacettepe	7	10
2. Gazi	5	7.1
3. Gaziantep	4	5.8
4. Aydın Adnan Menderes	4	5.8
5. Marmara	3	4.3
6. Ankara	3	4.3
7. Van Yüzüncü Yıl	3	4.3
8. Giresun	3	4.3
9. Yeditepe	2	2.9
10. Üsküdar	2	2.9
11. Kastamonu	2	2.9
12. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	2	2.9
13. Okan	2	2.9
14. Ondokuz Mayıs	2	2.9
15. Çukurova	2	2.9
16. İstanbul Aydın	2	2.9
17. Maltepe	2	2.9
18. Gaziosmanpaşa	1	1.4
19. Dumlupınar	1	1.4
20. Hasan Kalyoncu	1	1.4

Continuation of table 3

1	2	3
21. Fırat	1	1.4
22. Siirt	1	1.4
23. Haliç	1	1.4
24. Kafkas	1	1.4
25. Sakarya	1	1.4
26. Trakya	1	1.4
27. İnönü	1	1.4
28. Ömer Halisdemir	1	1.4
29. Necmettin Erbakan	1	1.4
30. Sivas Cumhuriyet	1	1.4
31. Sinop	1	1.4
32. Yıldız Teknik	1	1.4
33. Kırıkkale	1	1.4
34. Adıyaman	1	1.4
35. Dokuz Eylül	1	1.4
36. İzmir Katip Çelebi	1	1.4
37. Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart	1	1.4
Total	70	100

When Table 3 is examined, it is determined that 37 postgraduate theses on children's rights were conducted in different university institutes. It is seen that most of the theses were conducted at Hacettepe University with 7 theses each, followed by Gazi University with 5 theses each, Gaziantep University and Aydın Adnan Menderes University with 4 theses each. Marmara University, Ankara University, Van Yüzüncü Yıl University and Giresun University follow with 3 theses each.

Table 4 – Frequency and percentage distributions of the year of publication of the theses

Publication year	Theses reached	
	f	%
1	2	3
2022	2	2.9
2021	13	18.6
2020	3	4.2
2019	27	38.6

Continuation of table 4

1	2	3
2018	7	10
2017	6	8.6
2016	1	1.4
2015	6	8.6
2014	3	4.2
2013	2	2.9
Total	70	100

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that the theses were conducted between 2013 and 2022, but there was an increase in the number of theses in 2019. Again, when the table is examined, it is determined that the highest number of theses was made in 2019 with 27 theses. This is followed by 2021 with 13 theses.

Table 5 – Frequency and percentage distributions of the research topics of the theses

Study topics	Theses reached	
	f	%
Attitudes Towards Children's Rights	35	50
Child Rights in Media	7	10
Attitudes towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child	5	7.1
Child Rights Training	4	5.8
Opinion and Perception Studies on Children's Rights	6	8.6
Investigation of Social Studies Textbooks and Curricula in terms of Children's Rights	4	5.7
Evaluation of the Services Provided by Social Service Centers, Non-Governmental Organizations, Inpatient Health Institutions in terms of Children's Rights	2	2.8

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that 35 of the theses examined were studies examining parents' attitudes and behaviors towards children's rights. The number of theses on children's rights in the context of products in the media and the number of theses on attitudes towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child was 7. These are followed by 6 theses examining Social Studies textbooks and curricula and 5 theses on Children's Rights Education. Theses on perception and attitude studies on children's rights and theses evaluating the services provided by social service centers, non-governmental

organizations, inpatient health institutions in terms of children's rights were found to be 4 theses each.

Table 6 – Frequency and percentage distributions of the sample/study group of the theses

Sample/Study group	Theses reached	
	f	%
1. Pre-school	1	1.4
2. Primary School	7	9.5
3. Middle School	6	8.1
4. High School	0	0
5. University (Undergraduate)	9	12.1
6. University (Graduate)	–	–
7. Teacher	22	30
8. Administrator	10	13.5
9. Parent	12	16.2
10. Other (children's books, textbooks, science magazines, cartoon series, story books, teaching programs)	7	9.2

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that 22 of the studies were conducted mainly with teachers. In this context, it is seen that studies were conducted with basic education students in 13 theses, including primary school students in 7 theses and secondary school students in 6 theses, student parents in 12 theses, school and institution administrators in 10 theses, undergraduate students (teacher candidates) in 9 theses and documents in 7 theses.

Table 7 – Frequency and percentage distributions of research designs/methods used in theses

Research design/methodology	Theses reached	
	f	%
1. Quantitative ¹	35	50
2. Qualitative ²	24	34.2
3. Mixed	11	15.8

¹ Survey (20), correlational (9), descriptive (5) and quasi-experimental design (1)

² Situation (11), Document (6), Phenomenology (3), Historical (2), Basic interpretive (1), Action (1)

When Table 7 is analyzed, it is seen that 35 of the theses used quantitative research methods, 24 used qualitative research methods and 11 used mixed research methods.

When the quantitative research methods used in the theses are examined, the first rank is taken by survey research (35) from non-experimental designs, followed by correlational research (9). This is followed by descriptive research (5) and quasi-experimental design study (1) respectively. The leading qualitative research method used in the theses is case study (11), followed by document analysis (6). This is followed by case study (3), historical research (2), basic interpretive design study (1) and action research (1).

Table 8 – Frequency and percentage distributions of data collection tools used in theses

Data Collection Tools	Theses reached	
	f	%
1. Surveys ¹	29	23
2. Information sheet ²	15	11.9
3. Scales ³	34	26.9
4. Interview ⁴	21	16.6
5. Observation ⁵	6	4.7
6. Document ⁶	21	16.6

¹ Likert (17), open-ended (8), closed-ended (1), pretest-posttest control group (3)

² Personal information form (11), General information form (4)

³ Attitude (24), classroom management profile (2), self-regulation skills (1), perception (1), professional self-esteem (1), emotional intelligence (1), democratic behavior (1), mental trauma (1), moral maturity (1), tolerance education (1)

⁴ Structured (1), semi-structured (15), focus group interview (5)

⁵ Participant observation (6)

⁶ Written documents (17), diaries (2) audio recordings (2)

When Table 8 is examined, a total of 34 scales measuring behaviors such as attitude (24), classroom management profile (2), self-regulation skills (1), perception (1), professional self-esteem (1), emotional intelligence (1), democratic behavior (1), mental trauma (1), moral maturity (1), tolerance education (1), etc.; a total of 29 questionnaires with open-ended (8), closed-ended (1), Likert-type (17), pretest-posttest control group (3) were used in the theses. In addition, a total of 21 interview forms such as structured (1), semi-structured (15) and focus group interviews (5); a total of 6 observation forms and 21 documents such as written sources (17), diaries (2), audio recordings (2) were used as data collection tools.

When Table 9 is examined, a total of 38 parametric analysis methods including t-test (10), correlation (10), anova/ancova (9), factor analysis (7) and regression (2); 47 descriptive analysis methods including frequency/percentage (35), arithmetic mean/standard deviation (8) and graphics (4); 48 nonparametric analysis methods including

Mann-whitney-U (19), K. Wallis (13), Wilcoxon (4), Chi-square (8), Friedman (1), Kolmogov Smirnov (3), a total of 48 nonparametric analysis methods were used. In addition, a total of 25 content analysis methods and 10 document analysis methods were used among qualitative analysis methods in the theses.

Table 9 – Frequency and percentage distributions of data analysis methods used in theses

Data Analysis	Theses reached	
	f	%
1. Quantitative		
Descriptive ¹	47	27.9
Parametric ²	38	22.6
Nonparametric ³	48	28.5
2. Qualitative		
Contents	25	14.8
Descriptive	10	6.2

¹ Frequency/Percentage (35), Art. Mean/Standard dev. (8), Graph (4)

² t-test (10), Correlation (10), Anova/Ancova (9), Factor Analysis (7), Regression (2)

³ Mann-whitney-U (19), K. Wallis (13), Wilcoxon (4), Ki-kare (8), Friedman (1), Kolmogorov Smirnov (3)

Conclusion

There is a need to examine the educational research conducted both in the world and in Turkey at certain time intervals and to determine the trends. Only in this way, the quality of the studies can be revealed and a new direction can be given to future studies. In this context, as a result of the theses examined, 70 theses, 61 master's theses and 9 doctoral theses, were examined on children's rights in Turkey between 2013 and 2022. It was observed that the most theses were conducted in 2019 with 27 theses. This was followed by 2021 with 13 theses. When the subjects of the theses were examined, it was determined that 24% of the theses included attitude studies on children's rights. Among the research methods used in the theses examined, the survey design, which is one of the quantitative research designs, is used the most, followed by case study, which is one of the qualitative research methods. It was observed that mixed research methods were used the least in the theses.

It was seen that approximately 31% of the theses were conducted with teachers. It was determined that many measurement tools were used in the theses researched. It was determined that the attitude scale was used the most as a measurement tool with a rate of 16%, followed by Likert-type questionnaires and written documents with 12% and semi-

structured interview forms with 10%. At the beginning of the data analysis methods of the theses, frequency/percentage descriptive analysis method was used with a rate of 25%. This is followed by nonparametric analysis methods such as Mann-whitney U test (13%) and K. Wallis (9%). In addition, a total of 25 content analysis methods and 10 document analysis methods were used among qualitative analysis methods in the theses.

In summary, this study has identified the current trends in theses on children's rights. Thus, it was revealed which topics the researchers addressed, which methods and data collection tools they chose, and which sample they worked on. The findings may provide different perspectives to the researchers who will work in this field and give direction to their studies.

Recommendations:

- Educating children to raise a generation of children who know and are aware of their rights
- Improving the position of children's rights both in society and in terms of education and training
- Planning research on children's rights using different methods and techniques
- Inclusion of child rights education practices in the curriculum

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Түркиядағы балалар құқықтары бойынша магистранттарға диссертация жазу үрдістері

Аннотация. Зерттеудің мақсаты – 2013-2022 жылдар аралығында Түркиядағы балалардың құқықтары бойынша жазылған магистрлік диссертациялардағы үрдістерді анықтау және болашақта жүргізілетін зерттеулерге бағыт-бағдар беру. Ұлттық Диссертация Орталығында 53 түрлі кілт сөз бойынша әдебиеттерге шолу жүргізіліп, нәтижесінде 70 диссертация, оның ішінде 61 магистрлік және 9 докторлық диссертация қарастырылды.

Зерттеудің нәтижелеріне қол жеткізу үшін құжаттарды талдау әдісі қолданылды. Зерттелген диссертациялар қолданылған кілт сөздерге, диссертациялар жасалған институттарға қатысты университеттерге, диссертациялардың жарияланған жылына, олардың таралуына, зерттеу тақырыптарына, зерттеу тобына/іріктемеге, қолданылған зерттеу дизайндына/әдістеріне, деректерді жинау құралдарына және деректерді талдау әдістеріне байланысты қарастырылды. Диссертацияларда балалардың құқықтарына ата-аналардың көзқарасы мәселесіне ерекше көңіл бөлінгені анықталды. Зерттеу нәтижелері жиілік және пайыздық таралымдар бойынша кестелермен түсіндірілді. Қаралған диссертацияларда негізінен мұғалімдер зерттеу тобы/іріктеме ретінде зерттелген, зерттеу дизайны ретінде көбінесе сандық зерттеу әдісі қолданылған, деректерді жинау құралы ретінде көбінесе шкалалар (көзқарас, сыныпты басқару профилі, қабылдау, өз-өзін реттеу дағдылары және т.б.) және сауалнамалар (Лайкерт) қолданылғаны анықталды.

Кілтті сөздер: Балалардың құқықтары, дипломдық жұмыстар, зерттеу тенденциялары, құжаттарды талдау, ата-аналардың көзқарасы, зерттеу дизайны, Түркия.

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Тенденции в написании магистерских диссертаций по правам детей в Турции

Аннотация. Целью исследования является определение тенденций в выпускных работах по правам детей в Турции в период с 2013 по 2022 год и создание перспективы для будущих исследований. Была проведена литературная проверка в Национальном центре диссертаций с использованием 53 различных ключевых слов, в результате чего были проанализированы 70 выпускных работ, из которых 61 магистерская и 9 докторских диссертаций.

Для достижения результатов исследования был использован метод анализа документов. Исследованные диссертации были рассмотрены с точки зрения используемых ключевых слов, университетов, связанных с институтами, где были выполнены эти диссертации, года публикации диссертаций, распределения диссертаций, тем исследований, выборки (исследуемой группы, используемых исследовательских дизайнов) методов, инструментов сбора данных и методов анализа данных. В диссертациях было выявлено, что особое внимание уделялось вопросу отношения родителей к правам детей. Результаты исследования представлены в таблицах по частотным и процентным распределениям. Было установлено, что в исследованных диссертациях в основном изучались учителя как выборка/исследуемая группа, наиболее часто в качестве исследовательского дизайна предпочитался количественный метод, в качестве инструмента сбора данных широко использовались шкалы (отношение, профиль управления классом, восприятие, навыки саморегуляции и т. д.) и анкеты (Лайкерт).

Ключевые слова: права детей, дипломные работы, тенденции исследований, анализ документов, видение родителей, дизайн исследований, Турция.