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Theses Prepared In the Field of Public Health and Features Between The Years 2008-2013 in Turkey

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Abstract

Background: With this study which is planned descriptively; it is aimed to reveal characteristics of theses prepared in the field of public health between the years 2008-2013. Methods: Planned study is performed scanning electronically National Thesis Center between January 18, 2014 and March 10, 2014, 552 theses published between the years 2008-2013 are included into the research. Data are evaluated by number and percentage calculations, besides Chi-Square Test of Independence is used in order to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between variables. Statistical analyses are made at a significance level of 0.05 with using the SPSS-17 package program. Conclusions: Of the thesis prepared in Medical and Nursing departments, 8.9% of them by Marmara University, 8.2% of them of Erciyes University and Dokuz Eylul University, 7.1% of them by Hacettepe University are prepared. Theses are published so close to each other in the years 2009-2010 and 2011 with (respectively, 19.7%, 18.3%, and 18.7%), a decrease is seen in the number of thesis on Public Health published in 2013.

Keywords: Postgraduate education, Department of Public Health, Department of Public Health Nursing, Postgraduate Theses on Public Health.

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1. Introduction

Public Health is a social and political concept aiming at the development of the entire population health, prolonging life and improving quality of life by means of development of health promotion and disease prevention, and other forms of health interventions [1]. Identification of health problems that exist in a society, description of priorities among the issues being identified and then devising methods which have proven effective interventions with prevention and control of these problems, implementation and evaluation of them constitute the main field of Public Health [2]. To be effective and appropriate of the health policies and decisions depends on reliable, current and correct data [3]. Planning of the provision of health services, the fulfillment of the health workers with success, making effective and rational decisions of the decision-makers at all levels, receiving equal, effective, efficient, continuous, comprehensive and responsive to the needs, the chance to choose which subjects they need and offering in cooperation with other units of people receiving health care services depend on reliable data and monitoring of this data appropriately, evaluation of them [4]. The researches which are prepared in accordance with requirements, well-planned and focused on gathering accurate and realistic data, evaluating them and producing solutions have important roles, too.

As in all fields in which aim to output, researches are the main instrument of production in medicine [5]. Universities fulfill a significant part of their duties to make research and to produce new technologies which is one of the social functions of them with post graduate studies in the educational process [6]. Graduate faculty is a major teaching area of the modern university. Graduate education bears particularly the responsibility in terms of, making research related to the problems of the country and raising highly skilled manpower needs of the country [7]. In addition, to train scientists respecting moral values, being able to find rational solutions to problems, participating in group work, being able to adapt to the society in which s/he lives and responding the needs of society with the help of producing quality work is also among the goals of the graduate education [8].

Graduate theses written in the teaching process lead to many research and provide solutions to the problems in the field literature. Another contribution of the thesis study is to create awareness about the researchers engaged in the study and application of current developments in their fields [9].

Scientific studies in the field of public health undertake important roles and responsibilities on protection, upgrading and development of individuals' and communities' health. These studies; are useful on indicating current health problems and health risks, implementing preventive and curative measures as soon as possible and demonstrating the impact of these practices; contribute adequate health personals in the field of public health and in the training of scientists. With this study which is planned descriptively on importance of the public health starting from individual and public health; it is aimed to reveal characteristics of theses prepared in the field of public health between the years 2008-2013.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Sample

In Table 3, the characteristics of Public Health theses published between the years of 2008 to 2013 are situated. Of the published theses, 8.9 % of them is theses of Marmara University, 8.2 % of them is both: theses of Erciyes and Dokuz Eylul University, 7.1 % of them is theses of Hacettepe University, with a big percent 75 % of them is theses of Department of Public Health. Theses are published so close to each other in the years 2009-2010 and 2011 with (respectively, 19.7%, 18.3%, and 18.7%), theses published in 2013 showed a decline in the number. Theses published in 2013 are part of the 10% of all theses published between the years 2008 to 2013. More than half of the theses (60.1%) are Master's theses, 20.8% is PhD theses, and 19.0% is the specialization theses.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

Planned study is performed scanning electronically National Thesis Center between January 18, 2014 and March 10, 2014, theses published between the years 2008-2013 are included into the research. During the study National Thesis Center detailed search engine is used. By typing keywords of "Public Health Department" and "Department of Public Health Nursing" in the Department field, theses between the years 2008-2013 are scanned separately. It is found that there are 552 registers by the scanning.

2.3. Statistical analyses

Data are evaluated by number and percentage calculations, besides Chi-Square Test of Independence is used in order to determine whether there is a statistically significant relationship between variables. Statistical analyses are made at a significance level of 0.05 with using the SPSS-17 package program.

Table 1. Characteristics of Public Health Theses published between the years of 2008-2013

University	N	%
Hacettepe University	39	7,1
Ankara University	23	4,2
Erciyes University	45	8,2
Marmara University	49	8,9
Gazi University	26	4,7
Ege University	28	5,1
Firat University	20	3,6
Dokuz Eylul University	45	8,2
Uludag University	11	2,0
Istanbul University	35	6,3
Pamukkale University	9	1,6
Gaziantep University	10	1,8
Zonguldak Karaelmas University	17	3,1
Suleyman Demirel University	17	3,1
Inonu University	24	4,3
Trakya University	18	3,3
GATA	11	2,0
Cumhuriyet University	8	1,4
Ataturk University	28	5,1
Selcuk University	12	2,2
Ondokuz Mayis University	20	3,6
Karadeniz Teknik University	9	1,6
Others	48	8,7
Department	N	%
Department of Public Health	414	75,0
Department of Public Health Nursing	138	25,0
Year of the theses	N	%
2008	87	15,8
2009	109	19,7
2010	101	18,3
2011	103	18,7
2012	94	17,0

2013	58	10,5
Type of the theses	N	%
Master	332	60,1
PhD	115	20,8
Specialization in Medicine	105	19,0
Total	552	100,0

3. Results

Table 2. Characteristics of Public Health Department Theses published between the years of 2008-2013

Year of the Theses	Master		PhD		Specialization in Medicine		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2008	35	47,9	18	24,7	20	27,4	73	100,0
2009	47	59,5	11	13,9	21	26,6	79	100,0
2010	49	60,5	12	14,8	20	24,7	81	100,0
2011	39	48,8	17	21,2	24	30,0	80	100,0
2012	39	66,1	9	15,3	11	18,6	59	100,0
2013	26	61,9	7	16,7	9	21,4	42	100,0
Total	235	56,8	74	17,9	105	25,4	414	100,0

$\chi^2=9,238$, $sd=10$, $p=0,510$

Subject of the Theses	Master		PhD		Specialization in Medicine		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Women Health	35	63,6	7	12,8	13	23,6	55	100,0
Frequency/Prevalence of Health-related condition / Health Problems	64	47,8	23	17,1	47	35,1	134	100,0
School Health	21	63,6	7	21,2	5	15,2	33	100,0
Individuals /Patients' Information, Opinions, Thoughts and Attitudes	10	66,7	2	13,3	3	20,0	15	100,0
Hospital Staff / Health Personnel's Information, Opinions and Thoughts	15	93,8	1	6,2	-	-	16	100,0
Employee / Occupational Health	44	55,7	13	16,5	22	27,8	79	100,0
Health Education	9	47,4	8	42,1	2	10,5	19	100,0
Elderly Health	6	60,0	1	10,0	3	30,0	10	100,0
Environmental Health	3	37,5	2	25,0	3	37,5	8	100,0
Adolescent Health	4	57,1	3	42,9	-	-	7	100,0
The Study of The Effectiveness of Applied Different Methods or Techniques	9	64,3	3	21,4	2	14,3	14	100,0
Others	15	62,5	4	16,7	5	20,8	24	100,0
Total	235	56,8	74	17,9	105	25,3	414	100,0

4. Characteristics of the Department of Public Health Nursing Theses

Table3. Characteristics of Public Health Department Nursing Theses published between the years of 2008-2013

University	Master		PhD		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hacettepe University	5	45,5	6	54,5	11	100,0
Marmara University	13	59,1	9	40,9	22	100,0
Ege University	12	70,6	5	29,4	17	100,0
Dokuz Eylul University	7	70,0	3	30,0	10	100,0
Istanbul University	16	84,2	3	15,8	19	100,0
Ataturk University	13	52,0	12	48,0	25	100,0
Ondokuz Mayıs University	13	100,0	-	-	13	100,0
Others	18	85,7	3	14,3	21	100,0
$\chi^2=18,226$, $sd=7$, $p=0,011$						
Year of the Theses	Master		PhD		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
2008	11	78,6	3	21,4	14	100,0
2009	24	80,0	6	20,0	30	100,0
2010	13	65,0	7	35,0	20	100,0
2011	17	73,9	6	26,1	23	100,0
2012	21	60,0	14	40,0	35	100,0
2013	11	68,8	5	31,2	16	100,0
$\chi^2=4,020$, $sd=5$, $p=0,547$						
Subject of the Theses	Master		PhD		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Women Health	17	94,4	1	5,6	18	100,0
Frequency/Prevalence of Health-related condition / Health Problems	20	90,9	2	9,1	22	100,0
School Health	9	90,0	1	10,0	10	100,0
Employee / Occupational Health	11	91,7	1	8,3	12	100,0
Health Education	5	50,0	5	50,0	10	100,0
Elderly Health	8	80,0	2	20,0	10	100,0
Adolescent Health	6	85,7	1	14,3	7	100,0
The Study of The Effectiveness of Applied Different Methods or Techniques	4	13,3	26	86,7	30	100,0
Others	97	70,3	41	29,7	138	100,0
Total	97	70,3	41	29,7	138	100,0

5. Features regarding the Theses of Department of Public Health

When it is examined the features of the Department of Public Health theses when compared to the year in Table 4: it is seen that there is an increase in the proportion of (30.0%) theses for medical specialties in 2011 compared to other years, 24.7 % of the theses prepared in 2008 and 21.2 % of the theses prepared in 2011 are the PhD theses. Health education of the theses made about 42.1% of PhD

theses and 47.4 % of master theses. Of almost all (93.8%) of the planned work for detection of hospital workers'/health care personnel's information, opinions and ideas is master's thesis, of the 37.5% of theses on the environmental health and of 35.1% the theses aimed to determine the incidence-prevalence health-related condition or a health problem are expertise theses.

In Table 5, there are characteristics of the Department of Public Health Nursing. 138 theses are prepared as the Department of Public Health Nursing between the years 2008-2013. 70.3% of them are master's theses, and 29.7% of them are PhD theses. 18.1% of them are prepared by Ataturk University, 15.9% of them are by Marmara University, and 13.8% of them are by Istanbul University. While more than half of Hacettepe University theses (54.5%) are PhD theses, 48.0% of Ataturk University theses are doctorate theses. 40.0% of the theses prepared in 2012, 35.0% of the theses in 2010 and 31.2% of the Public Health Nursing theses are PhD theses. 80.0% of the theses in 2009 are the master theses. For the majority of the studies planned to measure the impact of health services and nursing care for applied different methods or techniques (86.7%), half of health education theses forms as PhD theses. 94.4% of the theses on women's health are master theses.

6. Discussion

Applications for postgraduate education in Turkey and postgraduate education quality are increasing and higher education system is experiencing a rare expansion and a process of structural change in the last quarter century and especially in the last fifteen years [10, 12]. During this period, the number of state University was 19 in 1981, it was 27 in 1982, it increased 51 in 1992, 68 in March 2006. This number has reached 85 as of August 2007. University of Foundations increased rapidly and continuously and the number also increased to 30 as of May 2007 [12]. According to statistics of higher education OSYM, postgraduate training capacity increased by 20% between 1997 and 2003; showed an increase approximately 37% between 2003 and 2006 [13]. Since the beginning of 1970 about 40.000 PhD theses and around 170.000 master theses in various fields have been prepared [14, 15]. According to statistics in 2011, 3817086 students are registered in higher education. 168628 of these students (4.4%) receive postgraduate education and 74.5% of them receive Master and 25.5% of them receive PhD training [16].

As a result of research conducted, 552 Public Health theses published between the years 2008-2013 could be reached. 414 of them are theses of Department of Public Health and 138 of them are theses of Department of Public Health Nursing. 8.9% of medical and nursing sections theses are prepared by Marmara University, 8.2% of them are prepared by Erciyes University and Dokuz Eylul University, 7.1% of them are prepared by Hacettepe University. Theses are published so close to each other in the years 2009-2010 and 2011 with (respectively, 19.7%, 18.3%, and 18.7%), Public Health theses published in 2013 showed a decline in the number (Table 3). Similar to our study, Sipahi et al (2009) theses have examined the theses conducted in the branch of Public Health specialist and PhD; they've reported that 538 master's and PhD theses are recorded to the center of the national thesis until 2009, as a result of their study; it is concluded master's and PhD theses in the field of Public Health in Turkey are an adequate level [17]. Medical specialty training in Turkey is an organized training program to specialize the students in a certain area after the medical school studentship acquiring of the basic knowledge and skills and the students which will take the training are chosen by Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC) conducted by the Medical Specialization Examination (TUS) [18, 19].

According to medical specialization regulation "in order to enter the expertise exam, assistants are required to prepare a thesis on a topic of specialized training they deem branches." Along with this definition, the preparation of the thesis of an assistant constitutes one of the basic conditions for the medical specialty education [20, 21]. Thesis preparation process constitutes an important opportunity

to develop their skills who receive specialized training of research assistants in terms of research, execution and interpretation besides the ability to make the person scientific production [21].

In the study conducted, the thesis of Public Health Medicine Specialist is examined, it is seen there is an increase in the rate of (30.0%) medical specialty thesis in 2011 compared to other years. While in 2009, the 26.6% of the theses are in specialization in medicine, this rate decreases 24.7% in 2010 (Table 4).

138 theses are prepared in Department of Public Health Nursing between 2008 and 2013. While more than half of Hacettepe University nursing theses (54.5%) are the PhD theses, with a close percentage 48.0% of Ataturk University nursing theses are PhD theses, all of the public health nursing theses in Ondokuz Mayıs University is master theses. As a result of the statistical analysis conducted, it is observed thesis types changed according to the Universities ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3). When viewed as a subject, it is seen the vast majority of planned studies to measure the impact of the different methods or techniques applied health services and nursing care (86.7%) and half of health education theses are PhD theses; almost the entire theses on women's health (94.4%) is master theses (Table 5).

Karatay and Emiroglu (2006) reveal that a majority of the articles published in the Journal of Nursing Research Development consist of theses and the majority of them are master's theses. With the same study, it is identified that 69.4% of the studies in the journal of nursing research and development consists of descriptive studies and scale implementation of the method (28.0%) is in the second rank. When looking at the printed article, it is conducted that articles are concentrated in certain departments and in particular schools and not too exited out of the usual topics, that's why it is seen articles can be collected under a few title [22]. Sengul et al (2013) indicates that there are 48 accessible studies, 37 of them are postgraduate theses and 11 of them are articles made on the basis of theories / models by the nurses in Turkey between 1995 and 2010 and emphasizes that the findings showed that limited usage of theories / models in the research conducted by nurses in our country [23]. Binici and Arslantekin (2010) in their study; when considering medical field , it is seen that the number of journals in general subjects (General Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry) is more than those of other specific issues [24]. In conclusion, our results corroborate the results of the work done in the field of nursing.

7. Conclusion

As a result of the research; it is seen that among thesis submitted to the National Center, thesis of public health still remains with a limited number; thesis done in the medical and nursing sections constitutes mainly with master thesis. Department of Public Health in this section may be increased by the number and to it may be given putting more emphasis on being prepared PhD thesis to solve existing health problems, protect and improve the health of individuals and communities.

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