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A qualitative study on Turkish-Islamic literature theses

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Türk-İslam Edebiyatı tezleri üzerine nitel bir çalışma

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Abstract

This study, which examines the methodologies of graduate theses conducted in the field of Turkish-Islamic Literature between 1984 and 2021, emphasizes the significance of qualitative research methods widely used in social sciences. A total of 306 master's theses and 57 doctoral dissertations were analyzed. These theses were classified according to years, subjects, and universities. The theses were categorized into five main topics: biography, concept analysis, text analysis, translation-Ottoman texts-transcription-critical edition, and Turkish-Islamic Literature genres. These topics were examined in detail in terms of content and methodology. Findings revealed that biography was the most researched topic, with 249 master's and 44 doctoral theses. Additionally, transcription studies were found to be concentrated on works from the pre-Republican period, while studies on concept analysis and Turkish-Islamic Literature genres were less frequent. A significant increase in the number of academic studies in Turkish-Islamic Literature was observed, reflecting both rising academic interest and expanding research opportunities. Most of these studies were conducted at the faculties of theology at Marmara

^Δ Yazarlar bu çalışmanın tüm süreçlerinin araştırma ve yayın etiğine uygun olduğunu, etik kurallara ve bilimsel atıf gösterme ilkelerine uyduğunu beyan etmiştir. Aksi bir durumda Kayseri Üniversitesi KAYÜSOSDER Dergisi sorumlu değildir. Bu araştırma "Türk İslam Edebiyatı alanında 1984-2021 yılları arasında yapılan lisansüstü tezler üzerine bir analiz: Nitel çalışma" adlı yüksek lisans tezinden alınmıştır. *Bu çalışma "Atatürk Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma Projeleri Koordinasyon Birimi" tarafından desteklenmiştir. Proje numarası 10800-SYL2022'dir.

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University and Ankara University. However, it was noted that many theses did not adequately address qualitative research methods and designs. The findings highlight the importance of qualitative research methods and designs in interdisciplinary fields like Turkish-Islamic Literature. Narrative research and case study designs were identified as the most commonly employed approaches, which correlates with the prevalence of biographical and text analysis studies. In conclusion, this research provides a methodological examination of graduate theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic Literature and outlines the current state and future directions of these theses.

Keywords: Turkish-Islamic Literature, Postgraduate Theses, Qualitative, Research, Analysis.

Öz

1984-2021 yılları arasında Türk-İslam Edebiyatı alanında yapılan lisansüstü tezlerin yöntemlerini inceleyen bu çalışma, sosyal bilimlerde yaygın olarak kullanılan nitel araştırma yönteminin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Araştırma kapsamında 306 yüksek lisans ve 57 doktora tezi incelenmiştir. Tezler, yıllara, konulara ve yapıldığı üniversitelere göre sınıflandırılmıştır. Tezler konularına göre; biyografi, kavram incelemesi, metin incelemesi, tercüme-Osmanlıca metinler-transkripsiyon-edisyon kritik ve Türk-İslam Edebiyatı türleri olmak üzere beş ana başlık altında toplanmıştır. Bu başlıklar, tezlerin içeriği ve kullanılan yöntemler açısından detaylı bir şekilde incelenmiştir. Bulgular, biyografi konusunun 249 yüksek lisans ve 44 doktora teziyle en çok çalışılan alan olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca transkripsiyon çalışmalarının Cumhuriyet öncesi döneme ait eserlerde yoğunlaştığı görülmüştür. Kavram incelemesi ve Türk-İslam Edebiyatı türlerine yönelik çalışmaların ise daha az sayıda olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Türk-İslam Edebiyatı alanında akademik çalışmaların sayısında önemli bir artış gözlenmiştir. Bu artış hem akademik ilginin hem de araştırma imkânlarının arttığını göstermektedir. En fazla çalışma Marmara Üniversitesi ve Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültelerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Fakat tezlerin çoğunda nitel araştırma yöntemine ve desenlerine yer verilmediği görülmüştür. Elde edilen bulgular nitel araştırma yönteminin ve desenlerinin, disiplinler arası bir alan olan Türk-İslam Edebiyatı çalışmalarında önemini ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışmada özellikle anlatı araştırması ve durum çalışması desenlerinin yaygın olarak tercih edildiği belirlenmiştir. Bu durum biyografik ve metin inceleme çalışmalarının fazlalığıyla ilişkilidir. Sonuç olarak bu araştırma, Türk-İslam Edebiyatı alanında yapılan lisansüstü tezlerin metodolojik incelemesini sunmaktadır. Ayrıca bu alandaki tezlerin mevcut durumunu ve gelecekteki yönelimlerini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türk-İslam Edebiyatı, Lisansüstü Tezler, Nitel, Araştırma, Analiz.

1. Introduction

The role of research methodologies in scientific studies is of fundamental importance for the systematic and verifiable acquisition of knowledge. Particularly within the realm of the social sciences, the choice between qualitative and quantitative research methods directly influences the scope, depth, and reliability of the study's outcomes. In theses examining the rich and multi-layered field of Turkish-Islamic Literature, the significance of the chosen method becomes even more pronounced. Qualitative research methods play a critical role in delving deeply into the literature to understand the content, context, and intentions of texts. This approach allows for not merely a superficial analysis of texts but also unveils their historical, cultural, and sociological significance and placement. Therefore, in Turkish-Islamic Literature theses, the choice of methodology not only dictates the collection and analysis of information, but also influences the scope and depth of the study's academic impact. Consequently,

choosing the most effective method that aligns with the objectives of the study is a cornerstone in scientific inquiry when designing research.

With the Turks' conversion to Islam, there were many changes in literature. The subjects and forms of verse have changed. For this reason, Turkish-Islamic literature emerged as a new scholarly field (Satar, 2022, p. 135). The content of Turkish-Islamic Literature, which examines the works produced by the Turks from the 11th to the XXI centuries, is quite extensive. Turkish-Islamic Literature began in 1069 with Kutadgu Bilig, written by Yusuf Has Hâcib in Hakaniye Turkish during the Karakhanid period. It continued to develop at the end of the 11th century with Kaşgarlı Mahmud's Dîvânü Lugâti't-Türk and in the 12th century with Edip Ahmet Yükneci's Atabetü'l-Hakayık. Enriched by new works during the Seljuk and Ottoman eras, Turkish-Islamic Literature maintained its presence in the Republican Period through works that retained an Islamic character (Nauruzbayev et al., 2023, p. 99). Turkish-Islamic literature developed under the influence of Islamic culture and civilization and adhered to the values of this cultural and civilizational basin (Keleş, 2020, p. 443). Literature is a branch of science that examines the knowledge of poets or writers who grew up or lived in the Turkish cultural geography, using Turkish, Arabic, or Persian, under the influence of Islamic culture and in harmony with Turkish cultural values, from a religious, mystical, and literary perspective (Hoşoğlu Doğan, 2023, p. 1612). Turkish-Islamic Literature was established as a sub-branch of Islamic History and Arts within the Faculty of Theology. Under the Islamic History and Arts branch, there are Islamic History, Turkish Religious Music, and Turkish-Islamic Arts disciplines, along with Turkish-Islamic Literature (Baş, 2019, p. 9). The history of Turkish-Islamic literature is based on the opening of theology faculties. The Ankara University Faculty of Theology first established this branch of science on June 4, 1949. The Istanbul Higher Islamic Institute and the Erzurum Faculty of Islamic Sciences then included this branch of science. The Higher Islamic Institutes taught the Turkish-Islamic Literature course under the name of Islamic Turkish Literature. The content of these courses was determined by scholars such as Prof. Dr. Mahir İz, Prof. Dr. Ali Nihat Tarlan, Nihat Sami Banarlı, Prof. Dr. Abdulkadir Karahan, and Prof. Dr. Necla Pekolcay. There are bibliographic studies on postgraduate theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature. Alim Yıldız's article on studies in the fields of science was published in Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi (Yıldız, 2007, p. 549).

2. Method

This study uses qualitative research methods and a case study design to show results related to a specific situation. The key feature of the qualitative case study is to investigate one or more issues in depth by asking "how, why, what" questions. In other words, a holistic approach examines the factors related to the issue. When there are multiple data sources (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016), the case study design is used.

A case study is a qualitative approach in which the researcher collects detailed and in-depth information about multiple constrained systems (states) through multiple sources of information, describing situations or revealing situation themes. The case study starts with the identification of a specific case and continues with a description. At this stage, it is also important to determine the research boundaries. After determining the research limits, the selection of sources is also important. You should choose the research patterns quite broadly (Creswell, 2020).

This study examined postgraduate theses from 1984 to 2021 in the field of Islamic History and Arts at the Department of Turkish-Islamic Literature, revealing the qualitative study patterns through case studies.

3. Population and sample

Postgraduate theses published in the Department of Turkish-Islamic Literature of the Department of Islamic History and Arts, which will be examined in this research, were accessed using the YÖK National Thesis Center database. Three hundred sixty-three postgraduate theses written between 1984 and 2021 were examined. Three hundred six of these were master theses, and fifty-seven were doctoral dissertations.

We handled the research using the NVivo program. This program organized the studies into categories. We classify these studies based on their years, universities, and subjects.

The National Thesis Center (tez.yok.gov.tr) of the Council of Higher Education provided the data for this study. The research employed descriptive statistics derived from qualitative data analysis. We selected the "Department of Islamic History and Arts" and "Department of Turkish-Islamic Literature" from the "Detailed Scan" option on the national thesis center page on YÖK's official website. The year option is not available for filtering. We determined the department to be "Turkish-Islamic Literature," and scanned the completed theses. Afterwards, we collected 363 graduate theses in the computer environment, transferred them to the NVivo program, and created a list of master's and doctoral theses. The list created from both databases was checked over at the National Thesis Center according to the author and thesis name, and it was checked to see whether there was access to the theses. The program coded the targeted information after the necessary examinations, and presented the data obtained from the examination of 363 theses in the form of percentages, frequencies, and tables.

4. Findings

A total of 363 theses, of which 306 are master's and 57 are doctoral theses, were examined. The obtained results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: *Distribution of Postgraduate Theses by Types*

<i>Type</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
Master	306	84,30
PhD	57	15,70
Total	363	100

Table 2 reveals the completion of the first thesis in the field of Turkish-Islamic Literature in 1984. Following the completion of the first master's thesis in 1984, no further thesis research took place until 1992. 1992 saw the completion of one doctoral thesis, and graduate studies continued uninterrupted until 2021. We did not conduct

doctoral thesis studies in 1994, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2008, or 2012. 2019 saw the most master's theses published. 2021 saw the most doctoral theses published. The year with the highest number of postgraduate studies is 2019, with 59 studies.

Table 2: *Distribution of Examined Graduate Theses by Years*

<i>Years</i>	Masters	PhD	Total	<i>Years</i>	Masters	PhD	Total
1984	1	0	1	2008	18	0	18
1992	0	1	1	2009	6	1	7
1993	2	0	2	2010	11	1	12
1994	2	0	2	2011	6	2	8
1995	4	0	4	2012	4	-	4
1996	7	1	8	2013	8	2	10
1997	3	0	3	2014	9	2	11
1998	2	1	3	2015	28	4	32
1999	4	0	4	2016	20	1	21
2000	3	1	4	2017	12	4	16
2001	5	0	5	2018	11	3	14
2002	4	1	5	2019	54	5	59
2003	4	5	9	2020	24	5	29
2004	9	1	10	2021	22	13	35
2005	6	1	7	Total	306	57	363
2006	8	1	9				
2007	9	1	10				

Table 3 shows the distribution of master's and doctoral theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature by university and year. Table 3 reveals that Ankara University and Marmara University Theology Faculties produced the majority of master's and doctoral theses. The two universities conducted a total of 69 postgraduate thesis studies. The Marmara University Faculty of Theology carried out 64 master's and five doctoral dissertations. The Ankara University Faculty of Theology conducted 48 master's and 21 doctorate studies. Universities with the highest total number of theses published in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature are Ankara University, Marmara University, and Uludağ University, respectively.

Table 3: *Distribution of Postgraduate Theses in the Field of Turkish-Islamic Literature by Universities*

University	Master Thesis	PhD Thesis	Total	University	Master Thesis	PhD Thesis	Total
Aksaray University	2		2	İnönü University	7		7
Ankara University	48	21	69	İstanbul University	11	3	14
Atatürk University	26	5	31	Marmara University	64	5	69
Bingöl University	1		1	Necmettin Erbakan University	20	5	25
Cumhuriyet University	20	8	28	Osmangazi University	1		1
Çukurova University	7		7	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University	5		5
Dokuz Eylül University	8	1	9	Sakarya University	8		8
Düzce University	1		1	Selçuk University	10		10
Erciyes University	5	1	6	Süleyman Demirel University	12	3	15
Fırat University	1		1	Uludağ University	44	5	49
Harran University	1		1	Yüzüncü Yıl University	4		4
Total	306		57				363

We classify theses published in Turkish-Islamic literature into five headings based on their subjects. These titles are as follows: "Biographical, Concept Analysis, Text Analysis, Translation-Ottoman Texts-Transcription- Critical Edition and Turkish-Islamic Literature Types." Appendix 1 categorizes postgraduate studies in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature based on their subjects. We categorize these under multiple titles based on their respective topics. When we look at the subjects included in the theses, we see that the most common study, with 249, is "Biography." The second most studied subject is "Translation-Ottoman Texts-Transcription-Edition-Critic." This subject has been studied 193 times. There are 131 theses published on the topic of "text

analysis." There are 47 theses on "Types of Turkish-Islamic Literature." We determined that the subject of "Concept Analysis" included 37 theses.

Appendix 2 provides a classification of doctoral theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature according to their subjects. The most studied subject in doctorate theses is "biography," with 45 studies. Another of the subjects studied is "Translation-Ottoman Texts-Transcription, Critical Edition." Researchers have conducted 37 studies on this subject. Conversely, researchers conducted 32 studies on the topic of "text analysis." The title "Types of Turkish-Islamic Literature" encompassed 7 studies. The number of doctoral studies on "concept analysis" is six.

Table 4 shows the statistical results of the patterns used in the field's postgraduate thesis studies. Appendices 1 and 2 reveal that 195 postgraduates and 34 doctorates primarily utilized the narrative and situation patterns. 85 studies, comprising 74 master's and 10 doctoral degrees, used the case study design, while 8 master's theses employed the narrative research design. Twenty master's and eight doctoral theses combined the use of narrative research, case studies, and tracing research designs.

Table 4: *Patterns of Thesis Studies in the Field of Turkish-Islamic Literature*

	Master Thesis	PhD Thesis	Total
Narrative	8	0	8
Situation	74	11	85
Narrative + Situation	195	34	229
Narrative + Situation + Tracing	20	8	28
Status + Trace	5	1	6
Status + Ethnography	2	0	2
Narrative + Tracing	0	1	1
Narrative + Situation + Trace + Ethnography	1	0	1
Narrative + Tracing + Discourse	1	0	1
Narrative + Situation + Ethnography	0	1	0
Status + Phenomenology	0	1	1

5. Conclusion

This study frequently employs the qualitative research method. The method section of a scientific study must reveal the chosen method. The research first examines the history of Turkish-Islamic literature in the Faculty of Theology. The first part of the research includes the methods used in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature. We examined a total of 363 theses, including 306 master's and 57 doctoral dissertations. These are studies done between 1984 and 2021. The number of both master's and doctoral theses has increased every year. We can attribute this increase to the growing number of academicians and students in the field. The years with the lowest number of

thesis submissions were 1984 and 1992. 2019 saw a significant increase in thesis submissions. The faculties of theology at Marmara and Ankara universities in Turkey have the highest number of postgraduate studies in this field.

Five main headings categorize graduate theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature: biographical, concept analysis, text analysis, translation-Ottoman texts-transcription-critical edition, and types of Turkish-Islamic literature.

a) Biographical: The biographical heading classifies theses that include sections describing the author's life. This category encompasses studies that have titles or contents that incorporate phrases like "Life, Works, or Personality." For instance, a thesis titled "Za'fi-i Gülşeni's Life, Works, Literary Personality, and Analysis of His Divan" would fall under this classification. However, it should be noted that a single thesis can often fit into more than one category, as many studies include elements such as literary analysis, text transcription, or other interdisciplinary approaches.

b) Concept Analysis: Researchers conduct research on a specific concept. Occasionally, researchers delve into these concepts by scanning one or more existing works. Researchers should determine the concept before beginning these types of studies. Consider the title, "Mirror in the 16th Century: Love Mathnawis."

c) Text Analysis: These studies involve examining the entirety of the work. These studies analyze the concepts and topics contained in the work. This title includes theses entitled "(...) Religious and Sufi Elements, Analysis-Text, Content Analysis." Consider the title: "Religious and Sufi Analysis of the Sûzi Divan."

d) Translation-Ottoman Texts- Transcription-Critical Edition: This category includes studies that examine, translate, or transcribe copies of manuscripts or printed works. Studies with "(...) Edition Critique, Analysis Text, Text-Content-Assay, Critical Text" in the title of the study fall into this category. For instance, the study "Dictionary Production Studies in Turkish-Islamic Literature and Müstakim-zâde's Translation of Kânûn'î-Edeb (Tahkik Volumes 1 and 2)" falls into this category.

e) Types of Turkish-Islamic Literature: The subject's title provides information about the literary genres employed in religious Sufi writing. The studies that fall under this topic sometimes mention the literary genre in their titles and, at other times, in their content. "Forty Hadiths in Poetry (Examination-Text) in Turkish-Islamic Literature" serves as an example of a study that articulates its genre in its title. As an example of a study that explains the literary genre in its content, the work named "Hacı Nureddin Efendi and Hüseyin's Maktel" can be said.

In conclusion, there is extensive research on biography, including 249 master's and 44 doctoral theses. Studies discuss both the work and the author's life, making biography a dominant field. Furthermore, there is a significant focus on transcription studies in the works of the pre-Republican period. The low number of studies on concept analysis and Turkish-Islamic literature genres may be related to the higher priority given to translation or transcription studies. The most frequently used words in the titles of thesis studies in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature are "text" and "examination." It is of significant importance to examine the written works based on the postgraduate theses made in the field.

All of the postgraduate theses in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature are research-based qualitative methods. These studies employ one or more designs. Design is the element that helps build the work. The content shapes the study's design. A study with many subjects allows for the use of multiple patterns. This aspect of qualitative

research offers the researcher flexibility. The postgraduate theses in this study frequently employ narrative research and case studies as methods within their qualitative research designs. The high number of studies involving biographical and textual analysis explains this. The use of case study design in text analysis, transcription, text analysis and analysis, and translation studies is deemed appropriate due to the narrative research design employed in biographical studies. Researchers use the tracing research design for the same purpose when studying the works of writers and poets or in sections that explore their lives. Furthermore, in the past, researchers employed discourse analysis and phenomenological patterns. Studies that carry out cultural analysis typically use the ethnographic design. These are the qualitative research patterns identified in the theses made in the field of Turkish-Islamic literature.

It's important for field workers to use different designs and explain the study's method and design in the method section. When registering studies in the YK Thesis database, it's crucial to avoid incorrectly entering the index and subject headings.

6. Ethical aspects of the research

I/we declare that this research is one of the researches that do not require ethics committee permission.

7. Declaration of conflict of interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there are no financial or other material conflicts of interest in this study that may influence the results or interpretations.

8. Contribution rate

The authors declare that they have contributed equally to the article.

9. Copyright Declaration

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