

## An examination of doctoral dissertations in the field of educational administration in Turkey between 2012-2022 in terms of social paradigms

Baris Aksoy\*

### To cite this article:

Aksoy, B. (2024). An examination of doctoral dissertations in the field of educational administration in Turkey between 2012-2022 in terms of social paradigms. *Journal Action Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research*, Volume 3 (Issue 2), 23-36 [Online] [www.jaqmeronline.com](http://www.jaqmeronline.com) DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.13342931

### Article Info:

Received: June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Revised: July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Accepted: August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Abstract.** This study aimed to examine the distribution of doctoral dissertations in educational administration (supervision, planning, and economics) in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey between 2012 and 2022, regarding social paradigms. The systematic review design's systematic analysis type was used to search through the YÖK National Dissertation Centre database. As a result of the search, 172 doctoral dissertations were included in the scope of this study. The methodology sections of doctoral dissertations were analyzed according to research methods, research designs, data collection techniques knowledge-constitutive interests, philosophical movements, and social paradigms. In the study, it was found that the realism/modernism-based functional paradigm based on technical interest came to the fore, in this direction, the quantitative research method was the most used research method between 2012 and 2022, while idealism-based qualitative and pragmatism-based mixed method research have been used more by researchers since 2020. In addition, according to the research findings, only 10 of the researchers provided information about the philosophy and paradigm they were influenced by. In line with these results, it is recommended that researchers should follow the national and international literature, conduct their studies by following the paradigm transformation in this field, and inform the reader about the philosophy and paradigm on which the research is based in a way that reflects the world view of the researcher in their studies.

**Keywords:** Research paradigm, educational administration, research design, doctoral dissertations

### Introduction

According to Günbayı and Sorm (2018), our activities are shaped by our beliefs or philosophies, and we always consider our work's philosophy or research nature before conducting social research. Whether the researcher realizes it or not, every research process begins with assumptions about the nature of knowledge and reality. These assumptions show that every research is shaped by certain theories. Both the ontological (what do I know) and epistemological (how do I know) assumptions of the researcher take place within a certain paradigm (Çıvak & Sezerel, 2018).

Günbayı (2020) stated that a researcher's knowledge-constitutive interests precedes research methodology and that a researcher's knowledge-constitutive interests directs a study on objective or subjective reality or both realities. Habermas' (1987) theory of knowledge-constitutive (cognitive) interests is reflected in the epistemology of social science research. According to him, technical interest is the scientific, positivist, or post-positivist method that focuses on concrete "facts" about behavior, its prediction, and control as observed by an outside observer with passive research objects and instrumental knowledge (Cooper, 2016). Most importantly, when conducting research based on reductionism and determinism, technical interest tends towards an objective approach and systematic, value-neutral, context-free generalization of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 2004; Hesse, 1980). If the researcher has a technical interest, he/she conducts his/her studies in line with the radical structuralist or functionalist

\* Akdeniz University, Turkey, [baksoy58@hotmail.com](mailto:baksoy58@hotmail.com), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-3895-8156>

paradigm with tools such as experiments and scales (Köse, Yerlisu Lapa, & Günbayı, 2021). Therefore, it can be said that this interest is very suitable for guiding quantitative research (Gunbayı, 2020).

Hermeneutic or practical interest gives direction to the subjective approach that focuses on people's interpretations and common meanings and symbols of their life worlds and aims to analyze the changing and negotiated relationships that create social reality based on experience/interaction data, interpretation of participants' realities (Gunbayı, 2018). Researchers who take this view into account should conduct their studies based on the interpretive paradigm (Köse, Yerlisu Lapa, & Günbayı, 2021). Therefore, it can be said that this interest is suitable for directing descriptive qualitative research by nature (Gunbayı, 2018). The emancipatory interest, arguing that domination and coercion have removed social freedom and the full existential understanding of the individual, guides change-oriented research to develop social justice by identifying power imbalances and empowering individuals and/or communities (Greene, 2007; Cooper, 2016). According to Bali, Wickramasinghe, and Lehaney (2009), emancipation can be defined as the ability to liberate a self from environmental constraints and the power of others, empowered through self-awareness. Researchers with emancipatory interests should conduct their studies within the scope of the radical humanist paradigm (Köse, Yerlisu Lapa, & Günbayı, 2021).

The concept of paradigm in science was first used in Thomas Samuel Kuhn's book "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" published in 1962 (Sağlam Arı et al., 2009). Kuhn stated that there cannot be an objective language of observation independent of theory (Çev. Kuyaş 1995:25) and used an expression such as "shared by the members of the scientific community" for the concept of paradigm, while he characterized the scientific community as a community of people who share a paradigm (1995:179). Giau and Pitre (1990) defined the concept of paradigm as a general perspective and way of thinking that reflects basic beliefs and assumptions about events and phenomena. According to Kuhn (1995), a paradigm is a set of principles and assumptions that determine how individuals should look at the events and phenomena around them and what they should see in a certain field and a certain period.

Morgan (1980) considers the concept of paradigm as a way of looking at reality, the way of organizing or looking at science by the currents of thought associated with certain scientific achievements, and the tools used in the scientific solution process. Thus, he constructs a model that can handle theoretical and methodological pluralism together (Lelebici, 2008). Burrell and Morgan (1979) identified four basic social paradigms that are said to make the world analyzable in terms of four basic sets of assumptions and guide social science research. These are the Radical Structuralist, Functionalist, Interpretive, and Radical Humanist paradigms.

### ***Radical Structuralist Paradigm***

Köse, Yerlisu Lapa and Günbayı (2021) stated that Marx, Althusser, Poulantzas, and Colietti are the pioneers of the radical structuralist paradigm. The characteristics of the radical structuralist paradigm, which sees human actions as embedded in and shaped by political and economic contradictions and focuses on structural relations in the realistic social world, can be summarized as follows (Burrell and Morgan, 1988)

- The emancipation of human beings from social structures is the result of conflict and change.
- He argues that reality cannot be changed by people's consciousness.
- It focuses on concepts such as radical change, modes of domination, structural conflict, liberation, deprivation, opposition, and potential.
- Realist, positivist, determinist and nomothetic.

The radical structuralist paradigm assumes that social change will operate in revolutionary, rapid changes in social research methods, and since this paradigm asserts that reality cannot be changed by people's consciousness, it can be said to guide social researchers in experimental design, especially in quantitative research based on positivism and technical interest (Günbayı, 2019). Thus, under the guidance of the radical structuralist paradigm, reality or phenomenon can be changed through evidence because of positivist scientific experiments (Günbayı, 2020).

### ***Functional Paradigm***

The functional paradigm, whose pioneers can be considered Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, and Vilfredo Pareto, assumes that the existing situation in society, which has been changed from the top, should be maintained and protected in a controlled manner from the top in search of harmony and balance for a long time as it has been changed. Its features can be summarized as follows.

- The understanding of social engineering is dominant: models and methods from the sciences are valid for understanding human relations.
- Contrast, development, and tension are dysfunctional values to be avoided.
- Harmony and integrity, status quo, social order, social cohesion, consensus, and solidarity need to be met, and reality is a functional concept that needs to be protected.
- Realist, positivist, determinist and nomothetic (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Gunbayi, 2019).

In summary, the functional paradigm is based on the principle of preserving the top-down revolutions previously made in a society or institutions depending on the radical structuralist paradigm and avoiding possible conflicts. Günbayı (2020) stated that the functional paradigm is ontologically realist and epistemologically positivist and suitable for descriptive quantitative research.

### ***Interpretive Paradigm***

The interpretive paradigm, whose pioneers are Schultz, Kant, Hegel, Freud, Weber, Dilthey, Husserl, is an approach that tries to understand and explain the social world as it is, that is, from the point of view of individuals who are directly involved in the social process, and its characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- The basic characteristic of social life is face-to-face relationships between individuals.
- To learn how society works, we must understand individuals' situation descriptions.
- It is based on the view that the ultimate reality of the universe lies in 'spirit' and 'thought' rather than in the data perception of the senses.
- It is not declarative; it is implicit.
- It is nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist, and ideographic (Burrell & Morgan, 1988; Gunbayi, 2019).

The interpretive paradigm approach can be explained in two dimensions: the Phenomenological Symbolic Interaction Approach, which reflects the interpersonal (social) world that exists because of our interaction with each other, and the Ethnomethodological Approach, which reflects our subjective (individual) world that we individually exist (Habermas, 1987), and the interpretive paradigm with the Phenomenological Symbolic Interaction Approach is based on social validity. To put it more abstractly, the reality is created because of interpersonal interaction because of conversation-discussion-understanding-reconciliation (Günbayı, 2019).

The interpretive paradigm, like the functional paradigm, involves the status quo, but here the status quo is based on the democratic preservation of the status quo based on consensus and persuasion, where the individual and individuals agree with the decision rather than the authoritarian preservation of the decision about the status quo, which is determined under the guidance of the radical structural paradigm but maintained under the guidance of the functional paradigm (Günbayı, 2019). Therefore, it is very suitable for guiding qualitative research, especially in descriptive designs such as case studies, phenomenology, cultural analysis, narrative, etc. (Günbayı, 2020).

### ***Radical Humanistic Paradigm***

The characteristics of the radical humanist paradigm, which sees human thought as a phenomenon imprisoned in ideological processes dominated by the superstructure - powerful actors - and argues that

this leads to alienation and false consciousness that prevents human beings from taking correct actions, can be listed as follows:

- It concentrates on consciousness.
- A revolution or transformation can take place through consciousness. It aims at the self-realization of the individual by freeing him/her from the social pressure surrounding him/her.
- It focuses on concepts such as radical change, modes of domination, liberation, deprivation, and potential.
- It is nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist, and ideographic (Burrell & Morgan, 1988; Gunbayi, 2019).

Based on the radical humanistic paradigm, the ethnomethodological approach assumes that individuals' practical actions, not values-norms, constitute the social order and explain the subjective life of the person who perceives himself and the outside world uniquely (Günbayı, 2020).

In this paradigm, as in the ethnomethodological approach, it is assumed that transformation can take place through consciousness and aims to liberate the individual from the surrounding social pressure, it can be said that this paradigm guides social science research in transformative or critical discourse design, especially in qualitative research where the priority is based on post-modernism and emancipatory interest for value-based and ideological reasons rather than reasons related to methods and procedures (Greene, 2007; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Günbayı, 2020b).

To summarize, in the light of Habermas' (1987) knowledge-constitutive interests, we can interpret human assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of relations in three dimensions: technical interest in the objective world that exists outside us, practical interest in the social world that exists because of our interaction with others, and emancipatory interest in the subjective world that exists ethnomethodologically.

**Table 1.**

*Social science research model in the light of Burrell and Morgan's (1979) social paradigms and Habermas's knowledge-constitutive (cognitive) interests and framework (1987) (Günbayı & Sorm, 2018).*

Interests	Technical Interest		Hermeneutic Interest / Practical Interest	Emancipatory Interest
Philosophy & Paradigms	Realism/Modernism		Nominalism/Post-modernism	
	Positivism	Post-positivism	Constructivism	Critical Theory
	Radical Structuralist Paradigm	Functionalist Paradigm	Interpretive Paradigm	Radical Humanistic Paradigm
Methodology	Quantitative: Experimental	Quantitative: Surveys, Mixed	Qualitative	Qualitative

This study aims to examine the distribution of doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey between 2012-2022 in terms of social paradigms. In this direction, the answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What is the distribution of doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of Educational Administration according to years?
2. What is the distribution of doctoral dissertations according to data collection techniques (experiment-survey-natural)?
3. Which knowledge-constitutive interests (technical-practical-emancipatory) is the doctoral dissertations based on?
4. Which philosophical movement (Realism/Modernism-Idealism/post-modernism) is under the influence of doctoral dissertations?

5. Which research methods (quantitative-qualitative-mixed) were used in the doctoral dissertations?
6. What is the distribution of research methods (quantitative, qualitative, mixed) used in doctoral dissertations according to years?
7. What are the preferred research designs and research methods used?
8. Which paradigm (radical structuralist-functional-interpretive-radical humanistic) is the doctoral dissertations based on?
9. How many of the doctoral dissertations have information about the philosophical background and paradigm of the research and which university they belong to?

## **Methodology**

### ***Method and paradigm of research***

In this study, which aims to examine the doctoral dissertations in the field of Educational Administration between 2012 and 2022, the systematic analysis type of the systematic review design, one of the qualitative research designs, was used. A systematic review is a literature review that collects and descriptively analyses more than one publication, book, or article on a topic or question (Davies, 2004). Systematic analysis is a method of making sense of a large amount of information and is also a method of determining whether the research on themes is sufficient and whether new studies are needed (Petticrew & Roberts, 2008). According to Torgerson (2003), systematic reviews are generally more objective than other studies. The paradigm of this research is the interpretive paradigm, which tries to empathise with what people feel and tries to reveal what people want in the depths of the subjectivity of human life (Gunbayi, 2018; Gunbayi & Sorm, 2020).

### ***Sampling***

The research population consists of 172 doctoral dissertations in the field of educational administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in the YÖK National Dissertation Centre database between 2012 and 2022. The criterion sampling technique, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used as the research sample, and as a result, a complete number was reached.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis Techniques***

Document analysis was used as a data collection technique in the study. The data were obtained from the methodology sections of doctoral dissertations in the field of educational administration in the Department of Educational Sciences between 2012 and 2022 and these documents were accessed from the National Dissertation Centre. The dissertations in the field of educational administration in the Department of Educational Sciences were scanned using the "Detailed Scanning" section on the center's website. It was decided to leave the "institute" option blank since the institutes to which the doctoral programs of the Department of Educational Sciences are affiliated differ from university to university. The search was conducted by selecting the department "Department of Educational Sciences", science branch "Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics", dissertation type "Doctorate", permission status "Permitted", and language "Turkish".

### ***Data Analysis***

Descriptive analysis, one of the qualitative data analysis methods, was used in the study. Descriptive analysis is a qualitative data analysis method that involves summarizing and interpreting the data obtained through various data collection techniques according to predetermined themes (Gunbayi, 2023).

## Findings

### *Distribution of doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of educational administration according to years*

**Table 2.**

*Doctoral dissertations according to years*

Years	n	%
2012-2017	81	4.10
2018-2022	91	52.90
Total	172	100.00

It is important to evaluate the doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences between 2012-2022 in Turkey in two periods to show the development in this field. In this systematic review, while classifying the doctoral dissertations according to years, the first period covers 6 years, and the second period covers 5 years. When the findings of the systematic review were evaluated, it was found that the number of doctoral dissertations prepared in the second period of 5 years (2018-2022) in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey (91- 52.90%) was higher than the first period of 6 years (2012-2017) (81- 47.10%).

### *Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of data collection techniques*

**Table 3.**

*Doctoral dissertations in terms of data collection techniques*

Data Collection Techniques	n	%
Experimental	-	-
Questionnaire	78	45,34
Natural	47	27,33
Natural-Survey	47	27,33
Total	172	100,00

Researchers categorize studies in different ways according to data collection methods. However, in this study, the classification made by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was preferred and the studies were divided into four classes as experimental, questionnaire, natural (observation, interview, document analysis) and natural-survey in terms of data collection techniques. When the doctoral dissertations prepared between 2012-2022 in Turkey are analyzed, it is seen that the questionnaire is the most used data collection technique (78-45,34%). On the other hand, it is seen that natural data collection techniques (47- 27,33%) and natural-survey data techniques (47- 27,33%) are less used techniques, although they are equal. On the other hand, it was found that the experimental technique was not used at all.

### *Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of knowledge constitutive interests*

In the classification according to knowledge constitutive interests, Habermas' (1987) classification was preferred, and the doctoral dissertations were classified as technical interest, practical interest, technical+ practical interest, and emancipatory interest. Let us evaluate the study's findings in the context of knowledge constitutive interests. It is possible to say that the number of studies based on technical interest (78- 45.34%) is higher than other interests, the number of doctoral dissertations based on practical interest (47- 27.33%), and the number of doctoral dissertations based on technical + practical interest (46- 26.75%) are close to each other. The number of doctoral dissertations based on emancipatory interest (1- 0.58) was found to be the lowest.

**Table 4.**

*Doctoral dissertations in terms of knowledge constitutive interests*

<b>Knowledge constitutive interests</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Technical Interest	78	45.34
Practical Interest	47	27.33
Technical+ Practical Interest	46	26.75
Emancipatory Interest	1	0.58
Total	172	100.00

*Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of influenced philosophical movements*

**Table 5.**

*Doctoral dissertations in terms of influenced philosophical movements*

<b>Influenced philosophical movements</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Realizm-Modernizm	78	45,34
İdealizm-Post Modernizm	47	27,33
Realizm + İdealizm	47	27,33
Total	172	100,00

While classifying the doctoral dissertations according to the philosophical movements influenced by them, Gunbayı (2019)'s classification was used, and the dissertations were classified as Realism-Modernism, Idealism-Post Modernism, and Realism+ Idealism. When the findings of the systematic review were evaluated, it was found that the number of doctoral dissertations affected by Realism-Modernism (78- 45.34%) was higher than the number of doctoral dissertations affected by Idealism-Post Modernism (47- 27.33%), and the number of doctoral dissertations affected by Realism+ Idealism (47- 27.33%).

*Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of research methods*

**Table 6.**

*Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of research methods.*

<b>Research Method</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Quantitative	78	45.34
Qualitative	47	27.33
Mixed	47	27,33
Total	172	100.00

The classification made by Lincoln and Guba (1985) was preferred in the classification according to research methods. If we evaluate the findings of the study according to research methods, it was found that the number of doctoral dissertations prepared with quantitative methods (78- 45.34%) was higher than the number of qualitative research methods (47- 27.33%) and mixed method research (47- 27.33%).

*Distribution of research methods used in doctoral dissertations over the years.*

Looking at the distribution of research methods according to years, it was found that the number of doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences between 2012-2020 was 121, the number of dissertations using quantitative method (67- 55.38%) was higher than the number of dissertations using qualitative method (27-

22.31%) and the number of dissertations using mixed method (27- 22.31%), and 51 doctoral dissertations were prepared in the relevant field in 2020-2022, the number of dissertations using qualitative method (20- 39.22%) and the number of dissertations using mixed method (20-39,22%) were higher than the number of dissertations using quantitative method (11-21,56%).

**Table 7.**

*Research methods used in doctoral dissertations over the years*

Years	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Sum
Quan	1	5	10	10	7	10	10	14	3	4	4	78
Qual	1	2	-	7	7	4	4	2	11	5	4	47
Mixed	2	2	-	3	7	3	3	7	5	9	6	45
Total	4	9	10	20	21	17	17	23	19	18	14	172

### *Distribution of research designs*

**Table 8.**

*Research designs.*

Research Design	n	%
<b>Quantitative</b>		
Relational Screening	61	35,46
Scanning	9	5,23
Meta Analysis	4	2,33
Causal Desing	3	1,74
Data Mining	1	0,58
<b>Qualitative</b>		
Case Study	22	12,79
Phenomenology	14	8,13
Systematic Screening	3	1,74
Grounded Theory	2	1,17
Culture Analysis	2	1,17
Descriptive Qualitative Research	2	1,17
Discourse Analysis	1	0,58
Case Study Case Study	1	0,58
<b>Mixed</b>		
Explanatory Sequential	14	8,13
Discoverer Sequential	12	6,98
Convergent Parallel	11	6,40
Case Study	5	2,91
Intertwined Mixed Design	4	2,33
Emancipatory (Action Research	1	0,58
<b>Total</b>	172	100,00

In the analysis of the designs used in the doctoral dissertations prepared in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences between 2012-2022, it was found that the relational survey design was the most used among quantitative designs (61-78,20%) and data mining was the least used (1- 0,58%). In addition, it was found that the relational survey model was the most used design among all designs (61-35,46%). Among the dissertations conducted with the qualitative method, it was found that the case study design was the most used design (22- 46,80%), the rate of use of the case study design among all designs was 12,79%, and the discourse analysis and case study designs were the least used (1- 0,58%). In the studies conducted with mixed methods, it was found that the explanatory sequential design was the most used (14- 29,79%), the rate of use of the



explanatory sequential design among all designs was 8,13% and the emancipatory action research was the least used design (0,58).

***Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of underlying social paradigms***

**Table 9.**

*Distribution of doctoral dissertations in terms of underlying social paradigms*

<b>In terms of underlying social paradigms</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Radical Structuralist	-	-
Functional	78	45,34
Interpretive	47	27,33
Functional + Interpretive	46	26,75
Radical Humanistic	1	0,58
Total	172	100,00

In the classification according to the social paradigms, doctoral dissertations prepared based on the social paradigms defined by Burrell and Morgan (1979) for management theories and adapted to social sciences research by Gunbayı (2018) were classified as radical structuralist, functional, interpretive, functional + interpretive and radical humanistic. Let us evaluate the study's findings in the context of the social paradigms taken as a basis. It is possible to say that the number of studies based on the functional paradigm (78- 45.34%) is higher than the other paradigms, the number of doctoral dissertations based on the interpretive paradigm (47- 27.32%) and the number of doctoral dissertations based on the functional + interpretive paradigm (46-26.75%) are close to each other. The number of doctoral dissertations based on the radical humanist paradigm (1-0.58) was found to be the lowest. On the other hand, it was found that no doctoral dissertations based on a radical structuralist paradigm was prepared.

***Doctoral dissertations having information about the philosophy and paradigm of the research and university***

**Table 10.**

*Doctoral dissertations in terms of having information about the philosophy and paradigm of the research and university*

<b>n</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Research Methodology</b>	<b>Philosophy / Paradigm</b>	<b>University</b>
1	2016	Qualitative	Idealism / Interpretive Paradigm	Akdeniz University
2	2017	Quantitative	Realism / Functional Paradigm	Hacettepe University
3	2017	Qualitative	Idealism / Interpretive Paradigm	Akdeniz University
4	2018	Mixed	Radical Humanist Paradigm	Akdeniz University
5	2019	Mixed	Pragmatism	Akdeniz University
6	2020	Qualitative	Idealism / Interpretive Paradigm	Hacettepe University
7	2021	Mixed	Pragmatism	Hacettepe University
8	2021	Mixed	Pragmatism	Kocaeli University
9	2022	Mixed	Pragmatism	Akdeniz University
10	2022	Mixed	Pragmatism	Kocaeli University

In the examination of how many of the doctoral dissertations provided information about the philosophical background and paradigm of the research, it was found that only 10 studies provided information about the influenced philosophical current or paradigm. It was found that the information about the influenced philosophical current in the research has started since 2016, mixed method is the most used research method in these studies and pragmatism is the most influenced philosophical

current. According to the research findings, it was found that the philosophical background and paradigm of the research were mentioned in the dissertations of only 3 universities (Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, and Kocaeli University), 5 studies were conducted at Akdeniz University, 3 studies at Hacettepe University and 2 studies at Kocaeli University.

## Discussion and Conclusion

According to Nieminen et al. (2007), doctoral dissertations, which are one of the important outputs of the scientific research process, have an effective role in the production of new and original academic knowledge that will contribute to the development of the field of science and in revealing the dissemination process of the produced knowledge. In this study, 172 doctoral dissertations in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey between 2012-2022, which were accessed from the official website of the National Dissertation Centre of the Council of Higher Education, were examined. The dissertations were analyzed according to 9 different criteria in terms of distribution according to years, distribution according to data collection techniques, interest in knowledge creation and philosophical trend, research method used and distribution according to years, preferred research designs, paradigm taken as basis and how many of the dissertations were informed about the philosophical background and paradigm.

In this context, the first research question is: How will doctoral studies in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey be distributed over the years? The doctoral dissertations were evaluated in 2 periods based on the years 2012-2017 and 2018-2022, and it was found that the number of doctoral dissertations prepared between 2018-2022 was higher than the first period, and the highest number of doctoral dissertations was prepared in 2019. These findings also reveal that educational administration is a field open to development in Turkey. The reason for the increase in the number of doctoral dissertations in the relevant years can be seen as the increase in the number of doctoral programs opened in the field and the number of academic staff in universities.

Another research question is the distribution of dissertations according to data collection techniques. According to the results of the research, it was found that the questionnaire was the most used data collection technique, while natural data collection techniques such as interview, observation, and document analysis were used less frequently. Karadağ (2014) examined the postgraduate dissertations on reading interests, attitudes, and habits and found that questionnaires or scales were mostly used. Similarly, Aydın, Selvitopu, and Kaya (2018) concluded that questionnaires were mostly used in postgraduate dissertations in the field of classroom management. Since doctoral dissertations in the field of educational sciences are mostly in the survey type, it can be said that questionnaires are mostly used as data collection tools. Sert et al. (2012) showed that the main reason why questionnaires are mostly preferred in research is that more people can be reached with this technique and the data collection process with this method is more economical in terms of implementation time and implementation costs. In addition, according to the results of the research, it was concluded that there were no experimental studies in the related field. It can be stated that experimental studies are not used because they are not suitable for the nature of educational sciences, which is a field of social sciences (Guba & Lincoln, 2004).

In the distribution according to knowledge creation interests, it was found that dissertations based on technical interest came to the forefront.

According to another result of the study, realism-modernism is the most influential philosophical movement. Yüce et al. (2014) found that the positivist paradigm was highly preferred in their analysis of doctoral dissertations written in the field of linguistics. Çıvık and Sezerel (2018) found that the positivist paradigm was frequently preferred in 326 articles published in refereed journals to examine the paradigms used in tourism research. Similarly, Yayla and Ergün (2020) found that the positivist paradigm was highly preferred in their analysis of postgraduate dissertations written in the field of

tourism. It can be stated that the results obtained in the literature are in parallel with the results of the current study.

In the study, the distribution of dissertations in Educational Administration between 2012-2022 according to the research method used was examined and it was concluded that quantitative method was used in the preparation of the highest number of dissertations, followed by qualitative and mixed method dissertations. There are also studies in the literature that conclude that quantitative method is mostly adopted in scientific studies (Küçüköğlü & Ozan, 2013; Ergun & Çilingir, 2013; Yaşar & Papatğa, 2015). However, looking at the distribution of research methods used in doctoral dissertations according to years, it was concluded that qualitative research methods and mixed research methods were behind quantitative research methods between 2012 and 2022, while qualitative and mixed methods were used more than quantitative methods since 2020. For this reason, it can be stated that qualitative research methods are still new and open to development in terms of educational sciences in Turkey. Qualitative research methods, which are associated with idealist philosophy, are gaining importance in the relevant field, and the increase in their number supports this finding. In addition, it was found that mixed method studies are also increasing in the field of educational sciences like qualitative studies.

In this study, it was concluded that the relational survey design is the most used design in dissertations prepared with quantitative methods. The study conducted by Elmas, Açıköz, and Aşçı (2018) in the field of sports sciences also confirms this result. The relational survey design is used to examine the presence and degree of change between two or more variables. In this direction, relational analysis can be done in two types. These types are expressed as correlation-type relationships and relationships obtained by comparison (Creswell, 2017). For this reason, it can be stated that it is preferred in the field of educational sciences because it enables the determination of attitudes and tendencies. In dissertations prepared with qualitative methods, it was found that the case study design was the prominent design. According to Yin (2013), case study is the examination, investigation, and description of a phenomenon in its reality. In the field of education, case study is a preferred research method especially in answering "why" and "how" questions (Yin, 2017) and has an important function in the implementation of the theories produced in the field of educational sciences and the development of practices (Leymun, Odabaşı, & Yurdakul, 2017). It can be stated that the case study design enables the causes of the problems experienced in educational environments to be revealed by examining them in the real environment and for this reason, it is a frequently used design in qualitative studies in this field. In a dissertations conducted with mixed methods, it was found that the most used design was the explanatory sequential design. Şan (2020) analyzed the articles based on mixed methods published in the field of education between 2015 and 2019 in Turkey and concluded that explanatory sequential design and convergent parallel design are the most used designs in the field of educational sciences.

One of the important results obtained in the research is the high number of dissertations based on the functional paradigm. According to Günbayı (2020), the functional paradigm is ontologically realist, epistemologically positivist, and suitable for descriptive quantitative research. The fact that the quantitative method is the most used method, and the questionnaire stands out as the most widely used data collection tool supports this finding. It is concluded that the number of dissertations based on the interpretive paradigm (Günbayı, 2020), which is based on anti-positivist philosophy (Burrell & Morgan, 1988; Gunbayı, 2019) and is stated to be suitable for guiding qualitative research in descriptive designs such as case studies, phenomenology, cultural analysis, narrative, etc., has increased in recent years. Fazlıoğulları and Kurul (2012) examined the characteristics of doctoral dissertations in educational sciences in Turkey and concluded that the dominant paradigm adopted in the dissertations was positivism (90.4%), and that non-positivist tendencies (or qualitative research) did not penetrate the field of education and educational sciences in a Khunian form (revolutionarity, incommensurability), but only in the context of enriching research techniques. Similarly, the interpretive paradigm, which tries to understand what people feel by empathizing and tries to reveal what people want in depth within the subjectivity of human life, and the functional paradigm, which considers that behavior emerges in the context of the conditions in the concrete social relations of the real world, that facts are empirically usable knowledge producing and objective, and that the social world outside the consciousness of the

individual is relatively unchanging (Gunbayi, 2018; Gunbayi & Sorm, 2020), which combines both the philosophy of realism and idealism, the number of pragmatism-based dissertations has also increased since 2019. According to the results of the research, it was also found that only one dissertations based on the radical humanistic paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.32; Günbayı, 2019,) which puts forward the ways of raising one's consciousness, getting rid of social pressure, making decisions with one's own will and realizing oneself freely (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.32; Günbayı, 2019,) by countering the perception management that is maintained in a status quo manner.

One of the results of the research is that only 10 of the 172 dissertations analyzed in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences, philosophical background and social paradigms of the studies were mentioned, and 10 dissertations were conducted at Akdeniz University, Hacettepe University, and Kocaeli University. In addition, it was found that information about the philosophical background and paradigm was included for the first time in a dissertations prepared at Akdeniz University in 2016. According to Maxwell (2018), explaining which paradigm research is based on shows that the study has a philosophical and methodological stance and makes important contributions to the theoretical grounding of the research design. In research, sharing with the reader how the researcher makes sense of the social world and how he/she presents it contributes to the interaction between the researcher and the reader (Miles and Huberman 2016). In this sense, it can be considered as one of the shortcomings of the studies in this field that the philosophical background on which the research is based and the worldview of the researcher are given in a limited number of doctoral dissertations in the field of Educational Management in Turkey.

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made to researchers working in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey.

### ***Recommendations***

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations can be made to researchers working in the field of Educational Administration in the Department of Educational Sciences in Turkey.

- It is recommended that researchers follow the international literature in the field of educational administration, inspection, planning, and economics and thus carry out their studies by recognizing the paradigm shift in this field.
- It is suggested that researchers should obtain complementary information on the paradigm transformation in Turkey by analyzing articles, papers, etc. in the national literature.
- It is recommended that researchers should diversify data collection methods and techniques and use qualitative and mixed method techniques.
- It is recommended that researchers inform the reader about the philosophy and paradigm on which the research is based in a way that reflects the researcher's worldview in their studies.

### **References**

- Arı, G., Armutlu, C., Güneri Tosunoğlu, N., Yücel Toy, B. (2009). Pozitivist ve postpozitivist paradigmlar çerçevesinde metodoloji tartışmalarının yönetim ve pazarlama alanlarına yansımaları [The reflections of methodological discussions to management and marketing fields within the frame of the positivist and postpositivist paradigms]. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 27 (1), 113-141
- Aydın, A., Selvitopu, A., Kaya, M. (2018). Sınıf yönetimi alanındaki lisansüstü tezlerin incelenmesi [A review of post graduate theses in the field of classroom management] *Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 18 (1), 41-56
- Bali, R. K.; Wickramasinghe, N.& Lehaney. B. (2009). *Knowledge management primer*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

- Burrell, G. & Morgan, G. (1979). *Social paradigms and organizational analysis: Elements of the sociology of corporate life*. Heinemann Educational Books Inc.
- Çıvık B ve Sezerel H. (2018). Araştırma paradigmaları ve turizm yazını [Research paradigms and tourism literature], *Turizm Akademik Dergisi*, 5 (1), 1-14.
- Cooper, J. A. P. (2016). *Routledge encyclopedia of educational thinkers*. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Creswell, J. W. (2017). *Araştırma deseni nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları [Research design qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches]*. (S. B. Demir Çev.). Ankara: Eğiten Kitap.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Elmas, S., Açıkgöz, S., Aşçı, F.H. (2018). Sporda sosyal alanlarda yapılan lisansüstü tezlerde araştırma paradigmalarının incelenmesi [The research paradigms of graduate theses in social sub-disciplines of sports]. *Spor Bilimleri Dergisi*, 29 (2), 53–66.
- Ergun, M. ve Çilingir, F. (2013). İlköğretim bölümünde yapılan lisansüstü tezlerin incelenmesi: ondokuz mayıs üniversitesi örneği [Analysis of postgraduate theses in the department of primary education: the case of Ondokuz Mayıs University] *VI. Ulusal Lisansüstü Eğitim Sempozyumu Bildiriler El Kitabı*, Sakarya.
- Fazlıoğulları, O., Kurul, N. (2012). Türkiyedeki Eğitim Bilimleri Doktora Tezlerinin Özellikleri [The Characteristics of Doctoral Dissertations of Educational Sciences in Turkey]. *Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 12, (24), 43-75.
- Gioia, D.A. and E. Pitre. (1990). Multiparadigm Perspectives on Theory Building. *Academy of Management Review*, 15(4), 584-602.
- Greene, J. C. (2007). *Mixed methods in social inquiry*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gunbayı, I. (2023). Data analysis in qualitative research. *Journal of Action Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research*, 2(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7763207>
- Gunbayı, I. (2019). *Liderlik ve toplumsal değişim [Leadership and Social Development]*. In N. Guclu & S. Kosar (Eds.), *Eğitim Yönetiminde Liderlik; Teori, araştırma ve uygulama [Leadership in educational management; Theory, research and practice]*, (pp.245-279), Ankara: Pegem Academy
- Gunbayı, I. (2020). Knowledge-constitutive interests and social paradigms in guiding mixed methods research (MMR). *Journal of Mixed Methods Studies*, 1, 44-56 [Online] [www.jomesonline.com](http://www.jomesonline.com) DOI: 10.14689/jomes.2020.1.3
- Gunbayı, İ. ve Sorm, S. (2018). Social paradigms in guiding social research design: The functional, interpretive, radical humanist and radical structural paradigms, *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, 9 (2), 57-76.
- Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2004). *Competing paradigms in qualitative research*. In S. N. Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice*, (pp. 17-38), New York: Oxford University Press.
- Habermas, J. (1987). *Knowledge and human interests: A general perspective in knowledge and human interests*. Cambridge: Policy.
- Hesse, E. (1980). *Revolutions and reconstructions in the philosophy of science*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Karadağ, R. (2014). Okuma ilgisi, tutumları ve alışkanlığı konusunda yapılmış çalışmaların lisansüstü tezlere dayalı analizi: Yök ve Proquest veri tabanları örnekleme [Analysis of the graduate theses in the field of reading interest, attitudes and habits: The sample of YOK and ProQuest databases]. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 35, 1-17.
- Köse, E., Yerlisu Lapa, T., Günbayı, İ. (2021). Social Paradigms Shaping Leisure Research Designs: A Systematic Review. *Türk Spor ve Egzersiz Dergisi*, 23 (2), 230-244.
- Kuhn, S. T. (1995). *Bilimsel devrimlerin yapısı [The nature of scientific revolutions]*(4. baskı). Çev. Nilüfer Kuyaş. İstanbul: Alan Yayınevi.

- Küçüköğlü ve Ozan, (2013). Sınıf öğretmenliği alanındaki lisansüstü tezlere yönelik bir içerik analizi [A content analysis about master theses and dissertations in classroom teacher education], *Uluslararası Avrasya Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Cilt:4, Sayı:12, ss: (27-47)
- Leblebici, D. N. (2008). Örgüt kuramında paradigmlar ve metaforlar [Paradigms and metaphors in organization theory] *Sosyal Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 8 (15), 345-360.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2018). *Nitel araştırma tasarımı- Etkileşimli bir yaklaşım [Qualitative research design - An interactive approach]*. (Çev: M. Çevikbaş) Ankara: Nobel Akademi.
- Miles, M. B. ve Huberman, A. M. (2016). *Nitel veri analizi [Qualitative data analysis]*. (Çev: S. Akbaba Altun & A. Ersoy) Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Ozan Leylum, Ş., Odabaşı, H. F., & Kabakçı Yurdakul, I. (2017). Eğitim ortamlarında durum çalışmasının önemi [The Importance of Case Study Research in Educational Settings]. *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi - Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 5(3), 369-385. www.enadonline.com DOI: 10.14689/issn.2148- 2624.1.5c3s16m
- Morgan, G. (1980). Paradigms, Metaphors, and Puzzle Solving in Organization Theory, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 25(4): 605-622.
- Nieminen, P., Sipilä, K., Takkinen, H. M., Renko, M., & Risteli, L. (2007). Medical dissertations as part of the scientific training in basic medical and dental education: experiences from Finland. *BMC Medical Education*, 7(1), 51.
- Petticrew, M. & Roberts, H. (2008). *Systematicreviews in thesocialsciences: A practicalguide*. John Wiley&Sons.
- Sert, G., Kurtoğlu, M., Akıncı, A., & Seferoğlu, S. S. (2012). Öğretmenlerin teknoloji kullanma durumlarını inceleyen araştırmalara bir bakış: Bir içerik analizi çalışması. [Overview of research on teachers' technology usage: a content analysis study]. *Akademik Bilişim, Uşak*.
- Şan, E. (2020). *Türkiye`de eğitim alanında yayınlanan karma yönteme dayalı makalelerin incelenmesi* [Examination of articles based on mixed method published in the field of education in Turkey] Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Maltepe Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, İstanbul.
- Torgerson, C. (2003). *Systematicreviews*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Yaşar, Ş., Papatğa, E. (2015). İlkokul matematik derslerine yönelik yapılan lisansüstü tezlerin incelenmesi [The analysis of the graduate theses related to mathematics courses]. *Trakya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, Cilt 5, Sayı 2, 113-124.
- Yin, R. K. (2017). *Durum çalışması araştırması uygulamaları [Case study research applications]*. (Translated by I. Gunbayi), Ankara: Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık.

## Ethics Approval

In the writing process of the study titled “**An examination of doctoral dissertations in the field of educational administration in Turkey between 2012-2022 in terms of social paradigms**”, the rules of scientific, ethical and citation were followed; it was undertaken by the author of this study that no falsification was made on the collected data. “Journal of Action Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research and Editor” had no responsibility for all ethical violations to be encountered, and all responsibility belongs to the author and that the study was not submitted for evaluation to any other academic publishing environment.

## Institutional review board (IRB) approval

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval of this research is not required.