

The Analysis of Articles Related to Curriculum and Instruction Field in Educational Researcher Journal (2005 - 2016)

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doi: 10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p305 [URL:http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p305](http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p305)

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal the research tendencies in the articles related to curriculum and instruction published in Educational Researcher Journal during the last ten years (2005-2016). Descriptive survey model and document analysis were used to conduct the study. A content analysis approach was used to analyse the data obtained. By making general evaluation in the analysed articles according to their subjects, research design and methods, data collection tools, sampling types, genders of the researchers and the publishing years of the articles, the tendency in this field was aimed to be determined. As a result of the study, it was revealed that the subjects of the articles are mostly related to instruction levels curriculum, tendencies in education, teacher training, education reform, and teaching approaches. The main research design used in this article is the literature review. The research method used is qualitative, and the document analysis was employed as a data collection tool.

Keywords: Curriculum and Instruction, general tendency in articles, research designs, methods, data collection tools

Introduction

According to Varis (1996), curriculum includes all the activities for the realization of all the aims of national education and the institution provided by an education institution for children, young people, and adults. Demirel (2009), similarly, describes the curriculum as an experience mechanism for learning that is provided by the activities planned in or out of school for the learners. Considering the explanations for curriculum, it may

be said that “curriculum” concept was discussed on a wide framework. On one hand, there exist social change and mobility and, on the other hand, student experiences. Firstly, under the title of “curriculum and instruction”, it is seen that this discipline, which occurs as a teaching and research field in related faculties in the universities of the USA, takes place in the universities in other continents after 1950s (Varis, 1997; trans. Gömleksiz & Bozpolat, 2013).

“Department of Curriculum and Instruction” was first established in Turkey at ‘Ankara University, Faculty of Educational Sciences’ in 1965. In Turkey, “Department of Curriculum and Instruction” offers education at bachelor’s degree level until 1997. After the bachelor’s degree was closed, it continues to offer education at master level. Under the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, which begins to offer education only at master level, it is intended to get detailed information in many fields such as curriculum development, teacher training, curriculum evaluation, learning-teaching processes, and perpetual innovation and development of curriculum.

In this concern, the most important tools, which are the sources of the field, are master theses and PhD dissertations. Besides them, it should not be forgotten that the articles written all over the world and which are related to the field have substantial source qualification. Also, there are scientific articles which are related to curriculum and instruction field, and are published in different sources all over the world. Consequently, these articles are published with certain articles related to assessment and evaluation, psychological counselling and guidance, education management and inspection, education technologies etc. It is thought that the analysis of articles written in curriculum and instruction field might provide insight to reveal both the research tendency in the field and the tendencies related to curriculum and instruction in international field.

Therefore, this study aimed to reveal the research tendencies in the articles related to curriculum and instruction published in Educational Researcher Journal between 2005-2016. The following research questions were formulated for the purpose of investigation:

1. What are the genders (sex) of the researchers who wrote the articles?
2. What are the publishing years of the articles?
3. What are the research subjects of the articles?
4. Which research designs are used in the articles?
5. Which research methods are used in the articles?
6. What are the data collection tools used in the articles?
7. What are the sampling methods used in the articles?
8. What are the education levels studied in the articles?

Methodology

Research Design

This research aimed to analyse the articles related to curriculum and instruction published in Educational Researcher Journal between 2005-2016. Thus, the research is designed in accordance with survey model.

Population and Sample

The population and the sample of this research consist of 30 articles related to curriculum and instruction published between 2005- 2016 in Educational Researcher Journal.

Data Collection and Analysis

Document analysis method was used in the study. This is used for the purpose of reviewing the articles – concerning the curriculums and education – which were published between 2005 and 2016 in the journal of Educational Researcher. According to Forster (2006), document analysis can be carried out in aspects of gaining the documents, checking the originality, understanding the documents, and analysing the data.

The articles – concerning the curriculum and instruction – which were published between 2005 and 2016 in the journal of Educational Researcher were taken under research in the direction of the aim of the research as part of the aspect of gaining the documents. While performing the document analysis, keywords such as “curriculum, curriculum development, curriculum and instruction, curriculum evaluation, curriculum theory, teacher training, education reform, teaching-learning approaches and tools, assessment and evaluation, learning outcomes” were benefitted.

Consequently, it was assumed that the articles which were taken under research were original. This is due to the fact that the journal of Educational Researcher which was taken under research within the scope of aspect of checking the originality was a peer-reviewed journal.

It was viewed to ascertain whether the articles which were gained were related within the scope of curriculum and instruction in the aspect of understanding the documents. Also, the consistency among the stages of articles was considered in determining the criterions and themes which is to be used in the document analysis.

Furthermore, on the point of carrying out the sub-goals of the research in aspect of analysis, in the analysis of the articles – concerning the curriculum and instruction– which were published in the journal of Educational Researcher, the approach of deductive content analysis was preferred. This was based on the fact that the basic dimensions of theoretical frame were formed.

Firstly, the categorisation matrix was developed by basing the dimensions which need to be in an article. After determining the categories, the units of analysis were determined. At this stage, coding was made by determining the possible words which were likely to take part under each category. After coding, the frequencies which were related to each category were determined. The collected data was interpreted and presented with tables.

Findings

The findings were structured under the sub-titles such as the topics searched in the articles in this field, research design and methods of articles, data collection tools used in the articles, sample characteristics, education levels of the articles, genders of the researchers, and the publishing years of the articles. In addition, the articles included 30 curriculum and instruction articles published between 2005- 2016.

Table 1. The Genders of the Researchers Writing the Articles

Gender	n	%
Female	26	48
Male	28	52
Total	54	100

When Table 1 was analysed, it was seen that the number of the female (n=26) and male (n=28) authors were equal. Also, as understood from the total number, all the articles were not written by a single writer. Some of the articles were written by females and males collectively.

Table 2. Publishing Years of Articles

Publication Year	n	%
2005	4	11,5
2006	5	14,3
2007	4	11,5
2008	5	14,3
2009	1	2,8
2010	1	2,8
2011	2	5,7
2012	5	14,3
2013	2	5,7
2014	1	2,8
2015	1	2,8
2016	4	11,5
Total	35	100

When Table 2 was analysed, it was found that the numbers of the articles related to curriculum and instruction published during 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, and 2016 were close to each other. However, it might be

said that a few articles were written during 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, and 2015.

Table 3. Research Topics of the Articles

Research Topics	n	%
Curriculum	12	34,3
Tendencies in Education	6	17,1
Teacher Training	7	20
Education Experiences and Gains	2	5,7
Education Reform	2	5,7
Teaching-learning Approaches and Tools	2	5,7
Assessment and Evaluation	2	5,7
Curriculum Evaluation	1	2,9
Curriculum Theory	1	2,9
Total	35	100

In Table 3, research topics which focused on the general meaning in the articles were seen. These include curriculum (n=12), tendencies in education (n=6), teacher training (n=7), education experience and gaining (n=2), education reform (n=2), learning- teaching approaches and tools (n=2), assessment and evaluation (n=2), curriculum evaluation (n=1), and curriculum theory (n=1). In distributions according to the subjects, it was seen that most studies were carried out on curriculum. Likewise, the studies of Dursun and Saracaloglu (2010) and Gomleksiz and Bozpolat (2013) indicated that the most focused topic in the post graduate theses in Turkey was curriculum.

Table 4. The Research Designs Used in the Articles

Research Designs	n	%
Literature Review	26	74,3
Model Building	0	0,0
Content Analysis	2	5,7
Descriptive Research	5	14,3
Experimental Research	0	0,0
Theorizing	2	5,7
Total	35	100

When Table 4 was analysed, it might be said that literature survey (n=26) design was used generally in the articles. Besides, the usages of content analysis (n=2), descriptive research (n=5), and theorizing (n=2) designs might be said to be close to each other but preferred less. Subsequently, it was seen that in the articles related to curriculum and instruction which is published in Educational Researcher Journal between 2005-2016, model building and experimental research design were not used. The results from the studies of Dursun and Saracaloglu (2010) and Gomleksiz and Bozpolat (2013) indicated that mainly literature survey was preferred in the theses. Therefore, it might be stated that this case results

from receiving the data in the literature survey within a short time. Also, its requirement shows less effort when compared to the other designs.

Table 5. The Research Methods Used in the Articles

Method	n	%
Quantitative	2	5,7
Qualitative	30	85,7
Mixed Method	3	8,6
Total	35	100

When Table 5 was analysed, it was seen that qualitative research methods (n=30) were preferred in the articles. This finding supported the result which indicated frequent usage of literature survey design in the articles. Besides, in 2 of the 20 articles, qualitative methods were used. In the other 2 articles, mixed methods were preferred. In the studies of Dursun and Saracaloglu (2010) and Gömleksiz and Bozpolat (2013), it was seen that qualitative studies were predominating. However, when the qualitative and mixed methods were analysed, it might be said that qualitative methods were primarily used.

Table 6. Data Collection Tools Used in the Articles

Data Collection Tools	N	%
Survey	2	5,4
Observation	1	2,7
Interview	2	5,4
Document Analysis	32	86,4
Total	37	100

When Table 6 were analysed, among the data collection tools, writers preferred mainly the document analysis (32). Besides, survey (2), observation (1), and interview (2) were the data collection tools. Since more than one data collection tool was used in this study, the total number was over 37. Thus, the main reason for using document analysis method generally could be the fact that the mainly used model in articles was literature survey. In addition, preferred research method was qualitative, and document analysis provided opportunity to study at a shorter time with limited financial possibility. When the studies of Gomleksiz and Bozpolat (2013) were analysed, the most preferred data collection tools which were used in post graduate theses were seen as scales and surveys. Besides, the studies indicated that document analysis was one of the frequently used methods.

Table 7. The Sampling Methods Used in the Articles

Sampling Methods	n	%
Random Sampling	2	15,4
Non-random Sampling	11	84,6
Total	13	100

When Table 7 were analysed, it was seen that sampling was done only in 7 of the articles covered in the study. The main reason for this might be the fact that most of the articles were based on literature survey. When the indicated 13 articles were analysed, 11 of them uses non-random sampling methods (Systematic and Maximum Diversity Sampling). In other articles, random sampling methods (Basic Random and Layer Sampling) were used.

Table 8. The Education levels mentioned in the Articles

Education Levels	N	%
Pre-school	2	5,7
Primary School	8	22,9
Secondary-High school	2	5,7
Bachelor's Degree	4	11,4
Graduate Education	0	0
General	19	54,3
Total	35	100

When the mentioned education levels in the articles in Table 8 were analysed, it was seen that the articles were mainly focused on education and teacher training. In addition, it mentioned education levels. The main reason for this might be the fact that curriculum, tendencies in education, and teacher training topics in the articles were studied generally. Furthermore, a substantial part of the articles mentioned primary school level. While less articles were seen mentioning secondary-high school and bachelor's degree, it was clear that there were no post graduate degree articles.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research topics of the articles are distributed as curriculum (34.3%), tendencies in education (17.1%), teacher training (20%), education experiences and gaining (5.7%), education reform (5.7%), learning- teaching approaches and tools (5.7%), assessment and evaluation (5.7%), curriculum evaluation (2.9%), and curriculum theory (2.9%).

When the research designs in the articles were analysed, it may be said that the percentages are distributed as literature review (74.3%), descriptive research (14.3%), content analysis (5.7%), and theorizing (5.7%). Generally, literature survey design is mostly used.

In the articles, it is seen that mostly the qualitative methods (85.7%) are used. Furthermore, mixed (8.6%) and quantitative (5.7%) methods were less applied.

In the articles analysed based on this study, data collection tools include document analysis (86.4%), interview (5.4%), survey (5.4%), and observation (2.7%). The use of the literature survey design in the articles majorly indicates that this result was expected.

Since most of the articles analysed in this study are based on only document analysis, only a small part of these articles' population and sampling were studied. In 13 articles in which population and sampling were studied, non-random (84.6%) and random (15.4%) sampling methods were applied. In these researches, the number of the individuals who join the studies varies between 49 and 712.

When the education levels mentioned in the articles are analysed, 54.3% of them are about general education level, 22.9% primary school, 11.4% bachelors degree, 5.7% preschool, and 5.7% secondary and high school. Consequently, it was determined that there is no study on post graduate level.

In regards to these results, the articles on curriculum and instruction field published in Educational Researcher Journal are mainly analysed without minimising the topics such as curriculum, tendencies in education, and teacher training into any level. However, the studies generally are qualitative because of the structures of the topics. Also, they are based on document analysis, and there is no sampling performed in many of them.

In further studies in this field, it is expected that by having an extensive content of the research, analysing the articles published in academic journals in different countries may provide more information for the field. Also, the direction of the research will be conducted in the curriculum and instruction field in Turkey.

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