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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN CHRONIC RHEUMATIC DISEASES AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST IN “OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PUBLICATIONS IN TURKEY”

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To editor:

The profession of “Occupational Therapy” encourages individuals to achieve health and wellness by participating in meaningful occupations in daily life. It plays a critical role in primary healthcare services (1). Both healthy individuals and people with physical and cognitive impairments experience limitations in their daily and professional lives. The main goal of “Occupational Therapy” is for the individual to be self-sufficient and to fulfill his duties and responsibilities within his nuclear family or society (2). With developments in the field of health, the elderly population is increasing, and these people are accompanied by cognitive and psychiatric problems at different levels. Older people with cognitive/psychiatric disorders often experience various functional deficits in their daily lives that affect their independence, safety, and activity levels (3). In chronic rheumatic diseases, unwanted pain, swelling, and limitation of movement may develop in the musculoskeletal system. Even if many people do not develop a physical limitation, it causes limitations in psychological and social areas. Therefore, there is a need for a holistic perspective of “Occupational Therapy” in the rehabilitation of chronic rheumatic diseases (4,5).

Bibliometric analysis provides an objective perspective on scientific studies by providing statistical information about scientific articles, including author, institution, citation, country, article type, and year information etc. It enables the dissemination

of publications’ impact, productivity, quality, and collaboration indicators. We see that the volume of occupational therapy data has grown worldwide in the last decade, and scientific interest in these articles needs to increase in Turkey (6,7).

Bibliometric analysis of occupational therapy publication activity in Turkey provides a cross-sectional perspective on the developments in current research in rehabilitation science (8). On 14.12.2023, the keyword “Occupational Therapy” was written on the first line in the Web of Science (WoS) (9) database at all times, and a total of 42.613 documents were accessed. When only those in Turkey were marked in the countries section, 282 (0.6%) documents were obtained. According to the countries and regions, the top 5 list was as follows: 1st USA (15.498), 2nd England (4.920), 3rd Canada (3.835), 4th Australia (3.581), 5th Sweden (1.662) (Figure 1). Turkey ranks 26th among 169 countries.

Of these, 85.8% were research articles (n=242), 92 were review (n=26), 3.5% were meeting abstract (n=10) and 1.4% were proceeding paper (n=4). 33.3% (n=94) of the documents were open access, 90.7% of the documents were in English, and 9.3% were in Turkish. Looking at the years, 2021 was the year with the most articles published, with 54 (19.1%) articles, and there was a linear increase in articles on the subject of occupational therapy over the years.

According to the WoS category, 33.6% (n=95) of the articles were in the field of Rehabilitation, 10.6% (n=31) were in Medicine

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General Health, 9.9% were in Public Environmental Occupational Health, 7.8% were in Clinical Neurology, and 6.7% (n=19) were in Pediatrics. Hacettepe University ranked first in the affiliation list with a frequency of 40.7% (n=115) (Figure 2).

According to the citation report, the number of citing articles was 2951 (self-citations included), times cited was 3.067 (self-citations included), average per tem= 10.88 and H index= 25 (Figure 3).

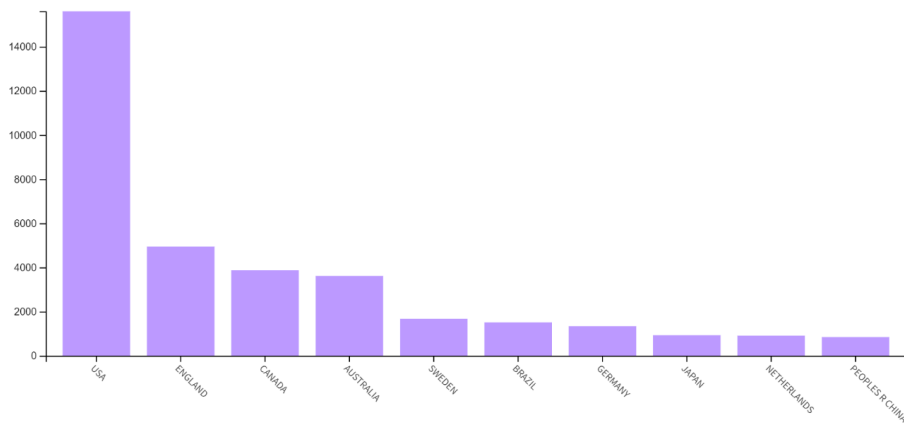


Figure 1. Bar chart of the countries

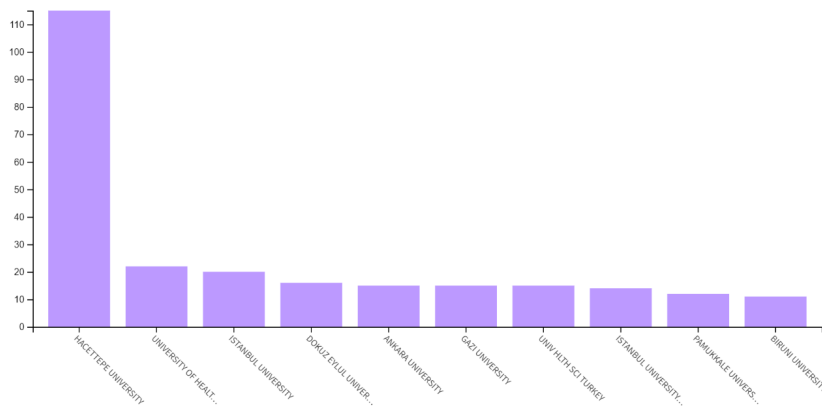


Figure 2. Bar chart of affiliations in Turkey

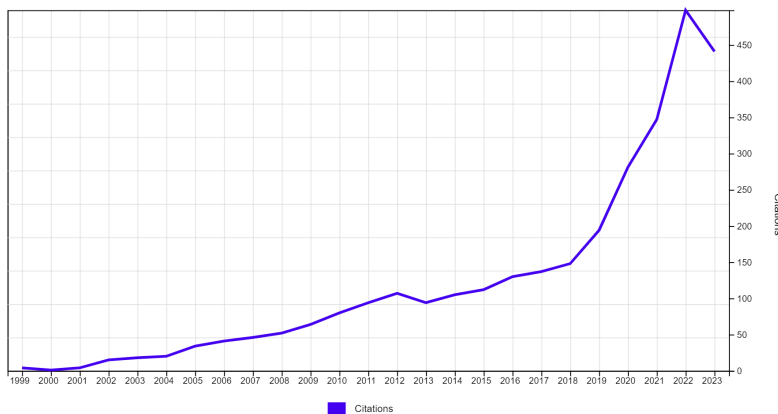


Figure 3. Times cited and publications over time

As can be seen, there is not enough scientific interest in the subject of occupational therapy in Turkey compared with other countries. After natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, and hot wars, which started during the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic period and developed due to the climate crisis in 2023, the importance of people being able to both be self-sufficient individually and fulfill their duties and responsibilities as a part of society has become more important. During the disaster period, a multidisciplinary team must be formed to determine the situation of the disaster and list the needs. An occupational therapist should be included in this team (10).

The aim of the treatment of rheumatic disease is to control inflammation, prevent attacks, and protect joints. Occupational therapy approaches that target problems in the patient's daily routine, social and recreational activities, and professional life will benefit these patients, increase the functional capacity of the person, and contribute positively to the quality of life.

When we look at the core literature data about occupational therapy, we see that there are data in a multidisciplinary field such as rehabilitation, clinical neurology, internal medicine, psychiatry, and basic care services such as nursing, pediatrics, sports sciences, and orthopedics. Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are professional practitioners who perform assessments and treatments to improve, improve, or maintain the daily activities or professional lives of individuals, groups, or communities. The number of people in this field in Turkey is also insufficient.

Scientific research topics are affected by official health policies, countries' development levels, traditional beliefs and attitudes, individuals' needs, and environmental factors such as climate and geography. The articles written may also vary because of

differences in the areas in which the authors and clinicians are experienced. In the field of occupational therapy, there is a need for qualitative research on the good management of individuals' needs, considering their subjective perspective.

Ethics

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