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Partial Bibliometric Analysis of Academic Studies in the World and Turkey on Brand Issue in the Health Services Sector

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Keywords

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Abstract

The global health sector continues its economic growth and has a total GDP of 7.3 quadrillion dollars. It is observed that developed countries, which are also included in the OECD, allocate close to 15% of their expenditures to the health sector. It can be said that the increase in health services, the increase in the transition of health services from the public to the private market, and the desire of people to be healthy lie on the basis of the breakthrough shown by the health sector, especially after the 2000's. In this direction, health services have started to benefit from marketing services by expanding the mission of keeping people healthy. The product (service), price, distribution and promotion efforts were separated in the health service classification and the marketing process of health services started in this direction. However, hospitals, practices, clinics and other organizations providing health services have realized that while they are carrying out their marketing efforts, they also need to focus on branding and branding efforts, which is another instrument of marketing. In this direction, both public institutions and private institutions have carried out a number of studies to create and develop brand values. However, the fact that this effort is mostly managed by external support creates a financial burden especially on health institutions and health workers. It has been noted that most of the sector institutions and employees who try to advertise on social media today mostly make this effort without creating a brand identity. At this point, a need has arisen especially for the guidance of the academic community. This study has tried to shed light on the number of studies carried out on the brand in the health services sector in academic databases with both frequency (f) and percentage (%) and to offer some solution suggestions.

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1. Introduction

The century we live in has shown a revolutionary effect in terms of the quality and diversity of health services. Health services have increased in both the public and private sectors, and technological innovations have been followed from time to time. In parallel, the increase in diseases over the years has been the subject of scientific research and is supported by academic studies. In this case, people needed to benefit from health services more. Thus, with the increase in humanity's awareness of being healthy, the awareness of being healthy has developed more, and this has led to the desire of patients and clients to receive faster and more qualified services in the field of health services. There are some situations that negatively affect this situation in terms of public-private health institutions. For example, the current doctor circulation in public hospitals and the dense crowd in the hospital have led people to distinguish between public and private health institutions in terms of receiving health services, and with the spread of private health insurances, the interest in private hospitals and private practice has increased.

With the reduction of the new media discipline to the health sector with mass media, people became more informed about the concepts of health and reflected their desire to be healthier or to look better in their daily lives. Here, it can be said that services as well as health institutions, which are brands, have a brand-creating effect on people. A comprehensive approach is required to improve service brand equity in general. In addition, it has been determined that the concept of branding in health institutions has received limited attention in the literature compared to other services (Hayes et al., 2007). Among the few studies on healthcare brand equity, Kim et al. (2008) suggest that hospitals should focus on improving customer relationship management to increase brand equity, while Hausman (2004) finds the benefits of patients and the independence of physicians as important factors contributing to brand loyalty.

In the health sector, the experiences of consumers during the service delivery process guide their later preferences. In this way, the continuity of the service is ensured. (Kemp et al., 2014). In theory, this sector is based on consumer preferences. Healthcare consumers have access to an unlimited number of hospitals, doctors, medical technology, and a wide selection of doctors and treatments. Health service providers, while 'creating their own markets', strive to be superior to their competitors by providing the highest quality and qualified service to patients in the selection of technology-oriented, public and private health services (Evans, 2008).

The health sector represents an area that will live forever with the existence of humanity. In this direction, it is possible to say that the efforts of health service providers to continue their existence will be a tool for the development of this sector and for countries to raise healthy individuals.

It has been observed that the concept of marketing has gained a place in the health sector over time and sought answers to the product (service), price, distribution and promotion mixes in the health sector (Dinçel, 2019). understood. It is thought that being permanent in the health sector and creating a permanent preference

behavior on patients requires creating a brand in health services and carrying it to the future. (Kotler, 2011). Branding provides value to customers and acts as a means of differentiation between competitive products, where it increases customers' trust, enables customers to better visualize their service products (Dinçel, 2019).

They use many methods to increase the quality of service in private hospitals. In this context, private hospitals have started to conduct research to understand patient preferences, to measure and evaluate service quality and satisfaction. Health and marketing managers are trying to increase their service quality by better understanding the market and the customer (Duran, 2021: 3).

In the steps to be taken for strengthening and branding in health institutions, certain rules have been defined considering the characteristics of health institutions (Kuru, 2009: 23) .

i. “The Rule of Creating Value: The word behind the brand of the health institution will prevail over the products and services that represent the brand. It is important to do this in creating a new brand or strengthening an established brand .

ii. Rule of Robustness: An organization's brand includes more than a name, logo or advertisement, and is the core of the health institution's internal management mechanism . Patients should be able to understand the entire infrastructure system in the institution's brand.

iii. The Great Expectation Rule: This rule involves two things. A good brand cannot live in a bad package, and a weak brand cannot live in a flashy package.

iv. Relationship Rule: Patients demand their needs by empathizing with the organization and seek services that meet their needs. Thus , within an effective brand management, the organization should structure patient relations and offer their services.

v. Rule of Humanity: Brands are only as successful as their employees. It is a good idea to keep the brand in its employees when it is sure to develop and implement it. Employees will support the brand.

vi. Rule of Integrity: Remembering is important, the whole of the brand is greater than the business segments .

vii. Performance Rule: Regular work of the health institution will always enrich the brand. The real indicator of the organization's brand is its performance. “

The aim of this study is to examine the current situation of health services, health services marketing and brand process in health services and to make predictions about the future.

2. Importance of Research

This research sheds light on the current state of academic studies on “branding” in the health sector (related keywords: health, health centers, health management, health institutions management, hospital, medical, etc.) in the world and in Turkey. The importance of the study provides branding in the health sector by determining

the research limitations and status of the academic community. Thus, the number of research in the academic databases of the academic community, which is one of the leading stakeholders that shape the current situation of the sector, will be important in determining some determinants. Thus, starting from the number of research in the academic databases determined, the current situation will be revealed and it will provide a scope to make some suggestions.

3. Purpose of the research

The aim of this research is to reveal the importance given to this issue by the academic community, which is a part of the bindingness of the importance given to marketing in the health sector. In this regard, for the purpose of the research, studies were carried out to determine the distribution of academic research in Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, DergiPark and Thesis Center.

4. Research Method

This research was conducted with the keyword "branding" in the field of health sciences research on branding in the health sector. In this regard, data were collected from studies in Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, DergiPark and YÖK Thesis Center and analyzed with descriptive analysis research using a qualitative research method, scanning methodology.

1-The distribution of studies in Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, YÖK Thesis Center and DergiPark by years

2- Distribution of studies in YÖK Thesis Center by years

3-Number/distribution of studies in YÖK Thesis Center by universities

4- Distribution of theses according to regions in YÖK Thesis Center

5-The distribution of graduate academic studies in YÖK Thesis Center by years

6-Distribution of thesis topics in YÖK Thesis Center

7-The distribution of publications in DergiPark by years.

The scanning model is a model that aims to describe a situation that exists in the past or today in order to reveal its various features (Karasar, 1995). Content analysis method was used in this project. Content analysis includes the regular and analytical categorization and interpretation of the questions that are the subject of the research in a systematic order (Kleinheksel et al., 2020). The purpose of this research carried out; According to the years, the articles, papers, theses and other publications made in the studies searched in Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, YÖK Thesis Center, Dergipark with the keywords "Branding", especially in the health sector, are divided into branches of science. According to research techniques, it is to determine the trends and percentages of the studies that are separated according to the method.

5. The Universe and Limitation of the Study

The universe and limitations of this research are about "branding" in academic studies on health sciences in the important databases Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, YÖK Thesis Center, Dergipark. make publications

6. Findings of the Research

The health sector attracts more attention every year than the previous year with the increase in innovation and diversity in health services, and it is observed that it increases every year in the same direction in its scientific publications. Health seems to be the most important fact in the principle of increasing the life span and quality of people. In this direction, it has become essential for institutions/organizations and individuals providing health services to focus on service change in line with marketing principles, and to create and develop their brand levels. Therefore, it will be important to examine the academic literature in terms of sector-based health services, marketing and brand. In this section, the number of publications/results and sub-parameters of academic studies on the subject of brand in health services marketing are examined.

The data obtained as a result of the research were expressed in terms of percentage (%) and frequency (f) and classified according to their diversity, and also tried to be interpreted by creating tables.

In the literature section, popular international and national academic databases were searched with the keywords "brand" in the publications related to the health services sector. The data of 2000, 2007, 2014 and 2022 were analyzed by using year constraints on Google Scholar, Web Of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Jstor, YÖK Thesis and DergiPark. It has been observed that the search word "health services + marketing + brand" has increased 10-15 times on average from 2000 to January 2023. At this point, it can be said that there has been a serious increase in the number of studies with keywords.

In Table 1 below, the table of the number of academic studies conducted in the field of health services with the theme of "brand" is given in detail.

The data obtained as a result of the research were expressed in terms of percentage (%) and frequency (f) and classified according to their diversity, and also tried to be interpreted by creating tables.

Table 1. Number of Academic Studies Scanned in Health Databases by Brand Keyword

Database	Total Number of Publications/Results by Keyword				Total
	Keyword Scanned in the Field of Health Services: Brand				
	2000	2007	2014	2023 / January	
Google Scholar	14400	63600	184000	623000	885000
Web of Science	151	289	1042	1649	3131
Scopus	346	598	1872	3316	6132
ScienceDirect	891	2962	7882	20045	31780
SpringerLink	866	2838	8737	28852	41293
Jstor	1467	3644	9065	10313	24489
<i>Total</i>	18121	73931	212598	687175	991825

As can be seen in Table 1, it has been observed that the most publications in the Google Scholar database are found in the studies conducted with the keyword “Brand” in the field of health care sector. At this point, it is possible to state that the high number is due to the fact that Google Scholar does not take into account many qualitative and quantitative measurements of publication quality compared to other databases. In particular, it was thought that it would be useful to compare other databases.

Web Of Science, Scopus, Science Direct, SpringerLink and Jstor are scientifically very important databases. They seek significant support, validity and reliability in the acceptance of publications. In the research conducted in this database, it has been observed that there is a continuous increase from 2000 to January 2023. At this stage, it can be said that there is a balanced increase from 2000 to 2023 in research published on ScienceDirect.

In Table 2 below, the table of the number of academic studies on the brand in the field of health services in the YÖK Thesis Center is given.

Table 2. Number of Academic Studies on Brand in the Field of Health Services in YÖK Thesis Center

Type	Total Number of Publications/Results by Keyword	
	Keyword Scanned in the Field of Health Services: Brand	
	2023 / January	
Degree	57	81.4%
Doctorate	13	18.6%
<i>Total</i>	70	100.0%

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the thesis studies conducted in our country are in a very small number compared to the databases around the world. At this point, it can be said that there is not enough interest in the subject of “Brand in Health Services” at the graduate and doctorate level in Turkey.

In Table 3 below, the number of academic studies on the brand in the field of health services in Dergi Park is given.

Table 3. Number of Academic Studies on Brands in the Field of Health Services in DergiPark

Type	Total Number of Publications/Results by Keyword	
	<i>Keyword Scanned in the Field of Health Services: Brand</i>	
	2023/January	
	46,342	

When Table 3 is examined, it is observed that the number of academic studies conducted in the DergiPark database is 43,643. In this sense, it can be stated that it is on a normal level when compared to world-wide academic studies.

In Table 4 below, a holistic view of the number of academic studies on the brand in the field of health services within the framework of a large database has been made.

Table 4. The Situation of the Number of Academic Studies in the Field of Health Services and Brands in the Framework of Large Database

Database	Total Number of Publications/Results by Keyword	
	<i>Keyword Scanned in the Field of Health Services: Brand</i>	
	2023 / January	
Google Scholar	885000	85%
Web of Science	3131	0.30%
Scopus	6182	0.6%
ScienceDirect	31730	3.1%
SpringerLink	41293	4.0%
jstor	24489	2.4%
YÖK Thesis Center	70	0.01%
MagazinePark	46342	4.5%
Total	1038237	

Table 4 shows the status of the brand issue in health services in general in national and international academic publication platforms. At this point, it is seen that Google Scholar creates dense clustering with a frequency of 85%. As mentioned earlier, the high cumulative number of Google Scholar at this point is due to the low incentives for publication acceptance. Google Scholar is kind of a tool. Therefore, it was thought that it would be healthy to exclude Google Scholar in Table 5 and to look at the situation with a new percentage (%).

Table 5. The Status of Academic Studies in the Field of Health Services and Brands in the Framework of Large Database Excluding Google Scholar

Database	Total Number of Publications/Results by Keyword	
	<i>Keyword Scanned in the Field of Health Services: Brand</i>	
	2023 / January	
Web of Science	3131	2.04%
Scopus	6182	4.0%
ScienceDirect	31730	20.7%
SpringerLink	41293	26.9%
jstor	24489	16.0%
YÖK Thesis Center	70	0.05%
MagazinePark	46342	30.2%
Total	153237	100.0%

(Excludes Google Scholar)

In Table 5, excluding Google Scholar, it is aimed to determine the status of the brand issue in health services in national and international academic publication platforms in important databases in general. Especially when we look at Web Of Science and Scopus, it is seen that it has a lower percentage compared to other databases. At this point, although it is known that these two important databases are very selective, it should be noted that this situation does not create a formation in terms of publication quality. It is possible to say that other databases have a balanced distribution, except for the YÖK Thesis Center.

7. Result

Today, health services have found themselves in a tight competition and service range with the effect of globalization. Developing communities have sought to increase the level of welfare with their investments in health services and have instilled the consciousness of being healthy as a country. While Germany is the country that invests the most in health services among the Economic Development and Cooperation countries, Turkey is the country that invests the least. Despite this, health institutions in Turkey are known for their physical equipment and following innovations. In addition, doctors and nurses have proven themselves all over the world in parallel with the quality of education they receive and their workforce has become demanded. In particular, the publication of public service announcements and information brochures by health institutions, the increase in health programs on television and the interaction with the power of information in social media have helped people in Turkey to increase their knowledge and experience, to develop their research direction, and to increase the level of awareness. Health services refer to the service area that cannot be met by any other alternative that includes all segments of the society. The service provider must reach the recipients with correct communication. For this, it is essential that health service providers are focused on patient satisfaction. The increase in the level of competition is a driving force for the survival and development of service providers and requires them to need marketing and marketing tools at this point. For this, the right marketing strategies should be carried out together with the right branding policies. The importance of the brand in healthcare services, first of all, requires a careful and professional marketing effort. In order to become a brand in this regard, the health institution or the person/organizations providing services must reveal their goals, objectives, mission and visions. However, before determining the in-house quality standards, SWOT analysis must be done. The healthcare provider who will provide service should give priority to the most realistic and institutionalized service policies while determining the quality policies. The health institution should mobilize all the resources of the health institutions without making any discrimination based on religion, language, race, gender, financial power. At this point, health personnel must be trained and developed. It is possible that the health institution will gain a competitive advantage by showing an approach that serves the purposes of the penny by prioritizing the service quality. As in every sector, the target market in the health sector should be determined accurately and with foresight. Relations with the patient should be focused on patient satisfaction. It should be aimed to improve the service provided by following technological innovations. In this direction, a

budget should be allocated for investments in health services during the period. Accordingly, being a brand in health services should start with this framework. The branding process in healthcare has some branding rules. These are examined within the framework of the value creation rule, the robustness rule, the great expectation rule, the relationship rule, the humanity rule, the integrity rule, and the performance rule. Branding strategies should be implemented within the scope of this rule. However, the high perceived service quality level is also important for branding. It forms a part of the brand process in creating brand loyalty towards patients in the brand process. Brand loyalty in healthcare provides a risk reduction and easy decision-making process. In parallel with this, it can be said that it is a part of the survival of health service providers. In healthcare institutions, brand image is directly related to patient loyalty and refers to the process of being preferred again. The brand process in health services also wants to progress by taking advantage of the possibilities of technology. In this regard, internet, social media networks, communication networks should be used in daily active flow. At the same time, complaints and suggestions towards health institutions should be taken into account and the public relations unit should work actively. Today, the increase in the volume of health tourism transactions is a sign that shows how meticulously health institutions should approach branding. Health institutions are also in competition with each other and the more patients prefer an institution, the more healthcare institutions have the potential to increase their brand quality and brand image. When choosing an institution, foreign patients will want to choose the most ideal institution, which has proven itself with its service quality and which they can trust the most among many options. In this case, healthcare organizations need to trust their brand strength, and in this direction, they will need to give importance to their efforts to create, develop and maintain a brand.

8. Discussion

There are high indications that there is not enough effort on the subject of branding in the health sector, especially since the health sector is a unique and unrequited sector. Here, it is known that the governments and legislators of the country put stop laws on advertising and marketing in the health sector, which creates a disadvantage for them. Due to the efforts of hospitals and health centers (except public institutions), it is thought that it is necessary to approach them with guiding suggestions, especially by the academic community. In this regard, it is possible to say that most of the efforts made from social media exhibit untrustworthy approaches outside of the brand identity. The increase in academic publications and their progress with industry connections will gain confidence in the subject.

Acknowledgment

- In cases where the cumulative distribution is disproportionate in the bibliometric analysis (as seen in Table 4 and Table 5), this situation must be expressed and the reasons for this must be explained.
- Thesis advisors in Turkey should encourage thesis students in this field.
- In addition to the fact that the health sector is closed to advertising in national media channels, advertising and marketing efforts of doctors and common stakeholders are seen in social media. At this point, they need to be made aware of branding.
- Universities should encourage academicians to increase academic publications.

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