

**UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION
IN TURKEY: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF DISSERTATIONS CONTRIBUTIONS
TO PUBLIC RELATIONS FIELD (1984-2007)**

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ABSTRACT

In this article, public relations education in Turkey and MA and doctoral dissertations on public relations written at Turkish universities (1984-2007) are examined in order to gain an understanding of the level of the theses within the discipline and that subjects are studied, too: Growth over the time, universities where they were written, use of language, gender, whether or not supervisors are related to public relations, and topics of MA and doctoral dissertations. Public relations MA and doctoral research in Turkey is approached respectively in terms of the total of theses examined (673). The conclusion is that their contribution to public relations' improvement and especially theory building has been negligible. Written theses are standing out the practical or operational, and no existence any dissertations related to public relations theory.

Keywords: Public relations education, Turkey, MA and doctoral dissertations, quantitative research.

**TÜRKİYE'DE LİSANS VE LİSANSÜSTÜ HALKLA İLİŞKİLER EĞİTİMİ:
TEZLERİN HALKLA İLİŞKİLER ALANINA KATKISININ
KANTİTATİF BİR ÇALIŞMASI (1984-2007)**

ÖZET

Bu makalede Türkiye'deki halkla ilişkiler eğitimi ve Türk üniversitelerinde halkla ilişkiler konularında yazılmış yüksek lisans ve doktora tezleri (1984-2007) disiplin içerisinde tezlerin düzeyleri konusunda bir anlayış elde etmek için incelenmiştir. Çalışılan konular, zamanla artış, tezlerin yazıldığı üniversiteler, dil, cinsiyet, tez danışmanının halkla ilişkiler ile ilgili olup olmadığı, yüksek lisans ve doktora tezlerinin konuları ele alınmıştır. İncelenen toplam 673 tez, sırasıyla Türkiye'deki halkla ilişkiler yüksek lisans ve doktora araştırmasını ele almaktadır. Sonuç, tezlerin halkla ilişkilerin gelişimine, özellikle de teori oluşturmaya katkısının ihmal edilebilir olduğudur. Yazılan tezlerin pratik ya da işlevsel olduğu, halkla ilişkiler teorisiyle ilgili bir tezin bulunmadığı dikkati çekmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Halkla ilişkiler eğitimi, Türkiye, yüksek lisans ve doktora tezleri, kantitatif araştırma.

1. HIGHER EDUCATION IN TURKEY

Students seeking to receive a higher education are placed in university departments at pre-bachelor's and bachelor's levels according to their respective scores they receive as a result of a central placement examination held by ÖSYM (The Student Select and Placement Center), and their order of preferences. In 2007, 1,776,441 high school graduates applied for this examination; however quota levels announced by universities stood at about one four of such number of applicants 418,655

(ÖSYM 2007b). The young and dynamic population of Turkey is one of the major elements that increased the number of applicants. Although the schooling rate is nearly 30 percent, the number of applicants seems to be hard to be met.

In Turkey, the quotas of higher education programs for the year 2007 are as follows: The quota of undergraduate programs for state universities is 207,328; while that for foundation universities is 37,310. The quota of two-year vocational training programs for universities is 208,913 (ÖSYM 2007b).

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In Turkey, there are 2 advanced technology institutes and 115 universities: 85 state universities and 30 foundation universities. Students are accepted by 2 advanced technology institutes, 81 state universities and 25 foundation universities in 2007-2008. Some state and foundation universities were established in this year. In Turkey higher education is primarily provided by means of state and foundation universities.

In 2006-2007 academic year, 569,821 students in total have enrolled to vocational training school, open (distance) education, undergraduate degree and secondary education programs of state and foundation universities. Total student number at vocational training school and undergraduate programs is 2,264,936 (ÖSYM 2007a).

1.1. Undergraduate Public Relations Education

Okay (2003) state that in Turkey, public relations education has older roots than in many European countries. The first "Journalism School" set up by Yahya Fehmi Tuna in 1948 is the genesis of this educational field. Afterwards, this school formed into the "Journalism Institute", then to the "Journalism and Public Relations Institute", then "Press and Broadcasting College" and finally to the "Communication Faculty".

Public relations in Turkey has been carried out in the academic sphere in 1966. The first curriculum program of public relations education in Turkey started as Expertise Department within classes 3 and 4 in 1966 School of Press and Broadcasting affiliated with Political Sciences Faculty, Ankara University. Then, School of Press and Broadcasting continue to open one after another in Istanbul, İzmir and other cities (Okay 2003: 20).

Until the beginning of the 1990s, public relations was regarded by the School of Press and Broadcasting just as one of a few marginal topics, but it was not studied. Names of all schools of journalism have been changed as Communication Faculty in 1992. Communication Faculties in state and foundation universities are observed to largely concentrate on

metropolises (especially, İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir).

There are currently 29 Communication Faculties actively in Turkey, the number of Communication Faculties is over that, because new Communication Faculties are established by new state and foundation universities. But not all of them provide public relations education. That is because academic staff necessary to provide such education is not available in some of them. At the time when this study was carried out, in Turkey there used to be 25 Communication Faculties providing public relations education. 23 of them are named "Communication Faculty", with the remaining the others providing public relations instruction under the name of "Communication Arts Faculty", "Communication Sciences Faculty" and exceptionally "Faculty of Business", "Faculty of Economics and Administrative Science", "School of Applied Science", "Faculty of Science and Letters" and "Art and Design Faculty". These institutions provide students with the public relations instruction in departments named "Advertising and Public Relations", "Public Relations, Promotion and Advertising", "Communication Arts", "Communication Sciences", "Public Relations and Promotion" and "Public Relations".

There are 12 state and 13 foundation universities who teach public relations (ones communication sciences) and publicity degree. The Communication Faculties carry out educational programs under three departments in general, which are journalism, radio television and cinema, and public relations and publicity. You can choose between a four-year program and a five-year program in the Communication Faculties (if you want to go on preparatory school for English, you can learn a foreign language and it lasts only one year).

There is also postgraduate study about public relations, offered by major universities. The total student number of the Communication Faculties in 2006-2007 academic year is 18,183 and 4406 of that number is public relations students (ÖSYM, 2007a). In each year approximately 4,000 students enroll to the Communication Faculties and 1651 of them are public relations students in 2007-2008 academic year.

In Turkey, besides the faculties providing four-year public relations education, there are 28 two-year vocational training schools active in this field.

The quotas of faculties and vocational training schools providing public relations instruction for the year 2007-2008, and the number of such educational institutions by state and foundation universities are shown in the Table 1.

Table 1. Quotas of Vocational Training Schools and Faculties in State and Foundation Universities

| | State Universities | | Foundation universities | | Total | |
|---|--------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| | Count | Quotas | Count | Quotas | Count | Quotas |
| Two-year vocational training schools | 16 | 1290 | 12 | 802 | 28 | 2092 |
| Four-year Faculties | 11 | 745 | 14 | 906 | 25 | 1651 |
| Total | 27 | 2035 | 26 | 1708 | 53 | 3743 |

In addition, students are given public relations instruction in 15 Anatolian Communication Vocational High Schools.

In this regard, even though it is possible to suggest that more prosperous students prefer state universities, the fact that although in state universities (Communication Faculty) annual contributions charged to students are approximately \$ 180 (232 YTL), such contributions are at foundation universities (Communication Faculty) a level ranging between \$ 9,000 and 14,500 plays a significant role in making preferences, and in variation within percentage ranking.

1.2. Graduate Public Relations Education

Various postgraduate and doctoral education opportunities provided after completing four-year educational programs are concerned in Turkey. Doctoral programs are provided especially in universities located in metropolises. In 2006-2007 academic year, 43,051 to MA and 7000 for doctorate in total 50,051 students have enrolled. Total student number receiving education at MA and doctorate are respectively 108,683 and 33,711 (ÖSYM, 2007a). There are 1125 student receiving education at public relations field in Turkey out of which 919 of them are MA and 206 doctorate students.

Graduate education is being carried out in accordance with Regulations on Graduate Education of The Council of Higher Education – YÖK- (<http://www.yok.gov.tr/mevzuat/yonet/yonet11.html> 21.11.2006) which was prepared by Interuniversity Board.

Graduate education is separated into two sections with or without thesis. It has been specified within the 9th article of the Regulation that the target of the Education Program with thesis was “to allow the student be able to gain the ability of reaching, evaluating and construing knowledge by conducting a scientific study”.

It has been specified within the 14th article of the Regulation that the target of the Education Program without thesis was to provide comprehensive knowledge and to show how to apply the knowledge in practice to student regarding to his/her profession.

It has been specified within the 18th article of the Regulation that the target of the doctorate program is to bring in the ability to students of making independent researches and to determine the necessary steps in order to make comments and reach to new synthesis by scrutinizing with a wide and deep standpoint. It has been specified that the thesis to be prepared in consequence of doctorate study shall satisfy one of the following properties:

- Bring innovation to science,
- Develop a new scientific method,
- Applying of a known method to a new field.

One of the parameters for analyzing the research carried out in Turkey was to review all MA and doctoral dissertations on public relations that have been written at state and foundation universities within the criteria laid down by the regulatory guidelines on MA and doctoral degrees. Especially MA theses should be

the first step in academic research and especially doctoral dissertations that contribute to new developments in public relations.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Data Collection

All of the MA and doctoral dissertations on public relations submitted at state and foundation universities in Turkey from 1984 (the date of the first thesis presented in the field The Council of Higher Education (YÖK) Thesis Centrum catalog) to 2007 (April, 1) partially were selected and total 673 theses were analyzed. Because of not related to public relations 62 theses were not analyzed. All theses containing the term public relations in both the title and the abstract were included in this study. We also selected those dissertations that make express reference to historical, theoretical, instrumental, strategic and tactical aspects of public relations, even when the name public relations is not explicitly used in titles.

The theses were consulted on The Council of Higher Education online database (<http://tez.yok.gov.tr>). Each successful thesis is required to be sent both to YÖK and university library in which the MA and doctoral dissertations are carried out. In addition to the name of the relevant author and examining board, The Council of Higher Education Thesis Centrum files contain summary of the thesis content and the fundamental concepts it addresses, since several years. SPSS version 11.5 for Windows is the statistical software used for data analysis.

2.2. Content Analysis

The purpose of this study is to identify and content analyze the stream of MA and doctoral theses which are written about public relations. The content analysis aims to provide such systematization to the growing number of dissertations about public relations.

Firstly, the Council of Higher Education Theses Centrum database was used to search for the dissertations and the following keywords were used to identify the dissertations: *Public relations* and *communication sciences*.

In the second stage of this content analysis was to draw up a list of topics and categories in

order to classify each of the theses studied. (Master theses must contribute to become public relations managers.) The Report of the Commission on Public Relations Education (2006) suggested that “graduate education should move toward understanding business, management and public relations as strategic management functions” (p.52). On the other hand, The Commission on Public Relations Education (1999) stated that doctoral degrees will ideally prepare the student to develop and contribute to the body of knowledge through research and develop the ability to disseminate that information to the academic and practitioner communities through some conferences and publications, and to develop paradigms of public relations based on metatheoretical and philosophical foundations in response to the maturation of the field (p.30).

In this research, a coding sheet consisting of three categorical variables based on the existing literature were used. They are *introspective dissertations*, dissertations related to *practice and application of public relations*, and dissertations related to *theory development in public relations* and 36 subcategorical variables was drawn up based on the work of Sallot, Lyon, Acosta-Alzuru & Jones (2007), (and they added new categories) which uses content analysis to categorize the public relations body of knowledge. At the same time, this research has been used in Molleda & Laskin’s (2005) and Xifra & Castillo (2006) content analysis research of public relations body of knowledge. According to Sallot et al. (2007) the first scholar to study general theory development in the field was M.A. Ferguson who found to have contributed to theory development in public relations only 4 percent in 1984.

Having codified the theses and removed the sub-categorical variables that weren’t filled in, the introspective dissertation type included the following subcategories: Pedagogy/education, ethics, social responsibility, history, the profession, and international practice. The type of dissertation described as practice or application involved the following subcategories: Management/ decision-making /problem-solving, implementing programs and campaigns, organizational communication, social issues and issue management, new communication tech-

nology, legal issues, crisis communication, integrated marketing communication, contextualized research (one country and comparative), and image/reputation/impression management. Lastly, theory development dissertations were also classified into two subgroups: Grunig's models/excellence theory/ symmetrical communication, and general social science theory.

Other units of analysis were the title, the abstract (in those theses included in the Council of Higher Education Thesis Centrum database). The names of all thesis authors, genders, the universities (whether or not state and foundation universities) where they were written, the institutes, thesis types, total pages, languages, the year of the submission, supervisor's academic status, whether or not the supervisor had studied in public relations field, whether or not the public relations term took place in the thesis title and on which sector (public or private) the thesis was focused on were recorded.

Descriptive statistics, frequencies, timeline analysis, bibliometric analysis, and log-linear analysis were run to explore.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The content analysis includes a total of 673 dissertations. With a bibliometric analysis it is possible to say initial quantitative findings on the periods in which most theses were written, the most productive universities and supervisor's academic status, author's gender.

This research reveals that the year when the most research was submitted 60 MA theses in 2003 and 15 doctoral theses in 1999. At MA levels, one thesis has been prepared in 1984 but at doctorate degree, no thesis has been prepared between the years of 1984-1989. In total, it has been determined that in terms of prepared theses, the maximum number has been achieved in 2003, with 12,1% (n=74) and the minimum number was in 1984, with 0,2% (n=1). It can be observed a very big increase in terms of MA and doctorate thesis between the years of 1992-2007 with 93,2% (n=570). It has been ascertained that 468 (82,1%) of 570 MA theses and 102 (97,1%) of 105 doctoral dissertations have been prepared within this period. (However a dramatic decrease has been occurred at thesis

number prepared in 2005). We can show the name change of School of Journalism with the name of Communication Faculty and opening of public relations, interpersonal communication, advertising, and research methods branches affiliated to the departments in the faculties as the reason of abovementioned. Between the years of 1984-1991, 41 (6,8%) theses were prepared.

The rapid rise in the number of Communication Faculty and public relations departments which went from several in 1980's to 29 in 2007 is a further indicator of graduates' rising interest in undertaking MA and doctoral dissertations in public relations, but the demand for qualified faculty to teach in all public relations programs continues to grow every year. However, public relations doctorate programs are not opened in some of state and all foundation universities. Because in order to open doctorate programs, it is a necessity to have adequate number of academician. Currently some state and foundation universities cannot meet this necessity. Thus, none of the foundation universities' public relations doctorate program has been opened up and no thesis has been prepared as well until today. Only one MA thesis was prepared up to the date we carried out our survey.

Although the rise seen in recent years, to our minds Botan & Hazleton (2006) are right to bemoan the fact that the lack of doctoral degrees specializing in public relations affects the theory development of this subject. Consequently, it is not wrong to say that in Turkey this shortage of qualified doctoral degree programs leads to "spotty development in public relations teaching, theory and research" (Botan & Hazleton 2006: 3).

Marmara University is the first location for the submission of theses with 22,5% of the MA dissertations (n=114) coming from this university. Istanbul University is the second, making up 18,2% (n=92) of the MA dissertations written. The third university is Gazi University which is submission of the theses with 14% (n=71) of the MA dissertations. Fourth and fifth universities are Ankara 12,6% (n=64) and Ege University 9,5% (n=48) of the MA dissertations. From the points of view the doctoral

dissertations, Istanbul University is the first location for the submission of theses with 27,6 % of doctoral dissertation (n=29). Behind of Istanbul University, Marmara University is the second with 21,9% (n=23), and the third is Selçuk University with 17,1% (n=18) of the doctoral dissertations, respectively. These universities are in metropolises and some of them were the first to offer Communication Faculty (formerly, School of Journalism) in Turkey and the number of theses written is therefore coherent with the length of time these degrees have been available. At the same time these universities are the highest number of academicians and students in communication faculties.

It was come into view that in terms of MA theses, they have been prepared with professor at the rate of 46% (n=233), with associate professor at the rate of 27,7% (n=140), with assistant professor at the rate of 23,9% (n=121) and 2,4% of them is unknown, on the other hand in terms of doctoral dissertations, they were prepared with professors at the rate of 77,1% (n=81), with associate professor at the rate of 16,2% (n=17), with assistant professor at the rate of 5,7% (n=6) and 1% (n=1) of them is unknown. As you can see, major part of the theses has been prepared with professors. However from the point of whether or not the thesis supervisors have studied in the field of public relations and have published any book or article within this field, it has been observed that 69 academicians (65,7%) who are acting as doctorate supervisor and 345 academicians (68,2%) who are acting as MA thesis supervisor had not been in any study within this field. It would not be very accurate to expect these academicians with such a low degree of study within public relations field to guide and act as a supervisor to the theoretical and other studies which contributes to the public relations. Therefore, it is certainly true to say for public relations teaching in Turkey, pointed to Botan & Hazleton (2006: 3) "some 'professors' of public relations with zero academic training in the subject area". After the year of 1992, establishment of branches in the Communication Faculties had required the reconstruction of faculties and the academicians who had no involvement with the new established branches before has held place within this reconstruc-

tion. In conclusion this construction has affected the thesis quality.

All prepared doctorate theses and 99,6% of MA theses (n=504) were written in Turkish. Only 2 MA theses were written in English. In terms of quantity of thesis pages, they were varied between 50 pages to 400 pages. It was established that 36,6% (n=185) of MA thesis were in the range of 101-150 pages and 25,7% (n=27) of Ph.D. thesis were in the range of 150-199 pages. It is observed that the page quantity generally increases from the MA theses to doctorate theses. But it does not mean that the increasing of page quantity would affect the thesis quality.

This research reveals that both MA and Ph.D. programs in Turkey dominated by women, who account for 60,7% (n=307) of MA theses written compared to 39,3% (n=199) of men. In Ph.D. program women submitted 53,3% (n=56) of doctoral theses, and men submitted 46,7% (n=49) of theses. In terms of the comparison of prepared thesis quantity according to gender and preparation year, it was established that women were generally inferiority in numbers according to men only between the years of 1984-1988, 1991,1993 and 1996- 2005. As we take into account all prepared thesis quantity, we can observe that women conspicuously outperform men. This data suggest that the gradual feminization of MA and doctoral courses is a trend that corresponds to the same trend in professional field as, by 2000, 50% of top 100 companies' public relations professions were women in Turkish (Okay & Okay 2003).

With regard to the content analysis for the topic categorization of the MA and doctoral theses, the vast majority dealt with issues relating to the practice and application of public relations (MA 66,6%; n=337, Ph. 52,4%; n=55), far outweighing those codified as introspective (MA 3,6%; n=18, Ph. 7,7%; n=8), noexistence the theory building dissertation, and the others that can be examined communication sciences (MA 29,8% n=151, Ph. 40%; n=42), respectively. There is obviously preference for theses on applied public relations and there is not any dissertation about theory development of public relations (See Table 2).

Undergraduate and Graduate Public Relations Education in Turkey (5-14)

Table 2: MA and Doctoral Dissertations Sorted by Classes and Subcategories

| Categories | Number of MA dissertations | Percentage of MA dissertations | Number of Ph.D. dissertations | Percentage of Ph.D. dissertations |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Introspective | | | | |
| Pedagogy/education in public relations | 4 | 0,8 | 1 | 1 |
| Ethics and social responsibility | 3 | 0,6 | 2 | 1,9 |
| The history of public relations | 3 | 0,6 | 0 | 0 |
| The profession of public relations | 6 | 1,2 | 1 | 1 |
| International public relations practice | 1 | 0,2 | 2 | 1,9 |
| Evaluation in public relations | 1 | 0,2 | 2 | 1,9 |
| Total | 18 | 3,6 | 8 | 7,7 |
| Practice/application of public relations | | | | |
| Management in public relations/decision-making/problem solving | 14 | 2,8 | 3 | 2,9 |
| Implementing PR programs and campaigns | 235 | 46,4 | 40 | 38,1 |
| Organizational communication | 17 | 3,4 | 1 | 1 |
| Social issues and issue management in public relations | 8 | 1,6 | 2 | 1,9 |
| New communication technologies | 10 | 2 | 2 | 1,9 |
| Legal issues | 2 | 0,4 | 1 | 1 |
| Crisis response/crisis communication | 6 | 1,2 | 0 | 0 |
| Image/reputation/impression management | 20 | 4 | 2 | 1,9 |
| PR applications in multinational corporations | 3 | 0,6 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 337 | 66,6 | 55 | 52,4 |
| Theory development in public relations | | | | |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The others | | | | |
| Advertising | 35 | 6,9 | 12 | 11,4 |
| Interpersonal communication | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2,9 |
| Marketing | 11 | 2,2 | 1 | 1 |
| Marketing communication | 7 | 1,4 | 3 | 2,9 |
| Consumer behaviors | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Communication | 20 | 4 | 6 | 5,7 |
| Mass media | 12 | 2,4 | 8 | 7,6 |
| Total quality management | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Human resources | 7 | 1,4 | 1 | 1 |
| Press | 15 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Law | 1 | 0,2 | 0 | 0 |
| Political science | 7 | 1,4 | 6 | 5,7 |
| Publicity | 17 | 3,4 | 2 | 1,9 |
| Tourism | 6 | 1,2 | 0 | 0 |
| Business/management | 4 | 0,8 | 0 | 0 |
| Economy | 1 | 0,2 | 1 | 1 |
| Archive | 2 | 0,4 | 0 | 0 |
| Others | 8 | 1,6 | 2 | 1,9 |
| Total | | | | |

A more detailed analysis of titles and abstracts of MA and doctoral theses included in practice/application of public relations category demonstrate the considerable number of dissertations on the role of public relations in public institutions. In terms of all thesis (n=611), the rate handling public authorities of MA and doctorate theses were respectively 31,2% (n=158) and 28,6% (n=30). The rate handling private sector enterprises of MA and doctorate theses were respectively 21,3% (n=108), and 12,4% (n=13).

As we apply log-linear to the subject of whether or not the theses which were prepared by using of public relations expression in its title are aimed to public or private sector, a positive directional relation has been determined between public or private sector variant and existence of public relations expression in the title.

In terms of loglinear analysis of universities and thesis categories, no meaningful result has been determined. However, existence of a relation which is introspective in some universities in which thesis studies are made with a limited number and a reverse directional between the thesis categories handling public relations applications has been ascertained.

The prepared thesis types and introspective and public relations applications from the test categories have been found statically meaningful. Also there is a positive directional relation between MA theses with Introspective and public relations applications. Briefly, as the number of MA theses increases, the number of public relations applications will be increased too.

Public relations and history, two of the subcategories, are efficient and statically meaningful categories. Since their coefficients are marked as (-), they are effective to negative direction.

In has been determined that there is a positive directional interaction between women and public relations applications with respect to the log-linear evaluation realized between thesis categories and gender. Namely women have prepared more theses aimed to public relations applications. Furthermore, women with intro-

spective thesis categories as well as public relations applications out of gender and thesis categories are meaningful. Dispersion of men as to the thesis categories is not important.

It has been observed that there is no interactivity in terms of log-linear analysis between gender and subcategories. Only social responsibility and ethics as well as public relations applications are important.

It is possible that we can show both of the rareness of academician number who gives place to theory within the Turkish public relations literature and academicians in Turkey, as the reason of no study has been realized devoted to forming and developing thesis in public relations especially with doctorate theses until now. It would already be fallacy to anticipate such a thing from MA theses. Because the YÖK regulation has clearly given voice to expectations from MA thesis.

Regarding the lack of theory development in public relations, further reason for nonexistence of research compared to that carried out in other fields is the instrumental perception that many academics have of the discipline.

In this research, political communication, online/media relations, identity building, sponsorship, and marketing public relations theses were analyzed in implementing public relations programs and campaigns category.

The lack of theory building approach to public relations is related with the arguments used by authors in other countries. Botan & Taylor (2004: 646) stated that "Public relations scholarship has not been made widely available to communication/mass communication scholars, public relations is often understood only as a technical area... Therefore, public relations faculty are screened for technical skills but are often not expected to be researchers and theorists".

Of the 611 theses analyzed 58,1% (n=355) used the term "*public relations*" in the title. It is occurred that especially with respect to application theses, the studies are made by putting the word of public relations next to any word. E.g. public relations in construction

sector, public relations in political parties, public relations in librarianship, archive and public relations etc. This aspect has had its effect on the lack of public relations theory and its approach from a structural perspective, as the dearth of academic and verbal recognition for this discipline has meant infrequent description of its academic and scientific domain (Hutton 1999).

No doctoral dissertation has been undertaken in Turkey on such important issues for theory development in public relations as complexity theory, game theory, situational theory, role theory, rhetorical approach to public relations, contingency theory, rumor theory, dialogic theory, cognitive theory or social issues management, among others.

4. CONCLUSION

This research shows the situation of MA and doctoral dissertations on public relations in Turkey state and private foundation universities between 1984-2007 years.

A general increment has been occurred in terms of MA and doctoral dissertations after 1990's. However this increment was mainly emerged with the theses relating to public relations applications. This indicates that public relations is still rated as a application area and communication media and no doctorate thesis has been prepared regarding to theoretical development in public relations. Although introducing date of public relations into Turkey is coming across to 1960's, it is not possible the studies relating to other subjects of public (such as developing theory) exclusive of public relations application to be performed due to the increment of academic studies relating to this subject mostly in 1990's, rareness of educated academician on this subject, in spite of increasing the number of communication faculties, distribution of very limited number of lecturer between the faculties and increasing of their work loads. In consequence of these factors, theses concentrate on public relations applications. Practice and application dissertations are rather well-developed with a dominant focus on implementing specific programs and campaigns and a predominantly technical approach to public relations.

115 state and foundation universities have been in Turkey, but few offers MA or without thesis MA, and doctoral program in public relations, because the number of academician is insufficient. If field of public relations desired to be developed and the studies to become diversified, each university has to educate their own qualified personnel. Until this is the case, the general void in public relations research and diversity will continue. If qualified studies are desired to be realized, studies aimed to developing the academicians and public relations programs in the existing faculties in case of opening new communication faculties.

It was determined that MA and doctorate programs regarding to public relations had been prepared in the universities which don't have public relations MA and doctorate programs as well. And this issue appears as a matter which needs to be put emphasis on in terms of quality and contributions of theses which were directed by thesis supervisors that have not studied sufficiently about public relations and students that have not received any education on the subject of public relations.

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