

*Full Length Research Paper*

# **Examination of postgraduate theses on string instruments in Turkey**

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The amount of scientific researches is increasing steadily. In today's information age, parallel to technological advances, scientific research keeps pace with innovation and development. Recent research in social and humanities sheds light on many innovative approaches and guides. In this study, answers were sought with the help of the document analysis model for answering the "What is the distribution of postgraduate studies on string instruments in Turkey between 1993 and 2019 in terms of years, institute types, permission status, and university variables?" problem statement. With the research, it was intended to determine the frequency and percentage rates of postgraduate studies carried out under the name of "Stringed instruments" in the National Thesis Centre of Higher Education Institution between 1993 and 2019, to obtain answers to "How are the distributions by the university?" "How are the distributions by years?" "How are the distributions by postgraduate thesis type?" and "How is the distribution of the theses made according to the access status?" questions.

**Key words:** String instruments, string instruments research, string instruments graduate studies, music research, graduate music theses.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Scientific research progresses with the evolution of societies from the past to the present, and it is increasing rapidly day by day. As the diversity of research increases, its contribution to science, art, and social development is advancing at an equal rate. The number of scientific researches is increasing day by day in the country. In today's information age, parallel to technological advances, scientific research keeps pace with innovation and development. Recent studies in social and humanities

shed light on many new approaches and guides.

It can be stated that scientific research arises with requirements such as obtaining solutions to problems encountered in any subject, eliminating a problem, meeting a need in any field. Research is fundamentally a search, making the unknown known (Arılı and Nazik, 2003: 3) and begins with a felt difficulty (Karasar, 2009: 22). Presently, situations like completion of more than one study on the same or similar subjects in the

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corresponding fields have started prompting a need against the researches for the evaluation of the studies that have already been completed (Çeşit, 2015: 446). Scientific investigations in the field of music are carried out in related departments of universities, depending on postgraduate programs (Uçan, 1996: 111).

Although there are studies on many subjects, mostly sub-disciplines in various universities, institutes, and majors in the field of music, many scientific studies have been completed with the increase in interdisciplinary studies in recent years. The number of researches is increasing day by day in proportion with the increase in graduate programs. Accordingly, the need to evaluate previously completed studies in a particular area is also observed in music (Çeşit, 2015: 447).

Instrument education is an extremely fundamental dimension of vocational music education, causing positive changes in the individual's education. It brings a disciplined understanding parallel to the discipline brought by music education in his life (Tufan, 1997: 37).

String instruments art and education are a discipline representing two crucial cultural facts together and their artistic and scientific foundations. While the aesthetic concerns about the vocalization of the works form creative goals, the intellectual resource, and the motion techniques that will be effective in the emergence of the required style, the research, development, and application of these reveal the scientific foundations. In terms of scientific and artistic perspectives, research on a string instrument art and education has created its scientific literature with the utilization of scientific reporting techniques. In the scientific reporting tradition, thesis writing symbolizes the start of the scientific literature life for many researchers. Studies in the fields of string instrument art and education, fundamentally in the areas of master's degree, then doctorate and proficiency in art, constitute the first scientific reports of researchers working on these subjects (Tebiş and Okay, 2013: 11).

In this study, answers were sought with the help of the document analysis model for answering the "What is the distribution of postgraduate studies on string instruments in Turkey between 1993-2019 in terms of years, institute types, permission status, and university variables?" problem statement. With the research, it was intended to determine the frequency and percentage rates of postgraduate studies carried out under the name of "Stringed instruments" in the National Thesis Centre of the Higher Education Institution between 1993-2019, to obtain answers to "How are the distributions by the university?" "How are the distributions by years?" "How are the distributions by postgraduate thesis type?" and "How is the distribution of the theses made according to the access status?" questions. Besides, providing data for scientific research in string instruments and a source for postgraduate studies in string instruments is intended. The research has sought to reach the data regarding the following sub-objectives:

- (i) How is the distribution of the postgraduate studies constituting the sample group by thesis type?
- (ii) How is the distribution of the postgraduate studies constituting the sample group by years?
- (iii) How is the distribution of the postgraduate studies constituting the sample group by the university?
- (iv) How is the distribution of the postgraduate studies constituting the sample group by according to the permit status?
- (v) How is the distribution of the postgraduate studies that make up the sample group according to the institute types?

The study is significant in terms of shedding light on other studies in the field of string instruments in terms of the literature. Especially where the graduate studies on string instruments in Turkey are carried out intensively, which universities are performed, which institutions are primarily conducted in which institutes, and in which stages of graduate studies are held. This research,

- (i) Assumed that all postgraduate studies on string instruments in Turkey are registered in the Higher Education Institution, National Thesis Centre,
  - (ii) The method followed in the research is suitable for the solution of research questions,
  - (iii) The resources and the data obtained for the study are sufficient in the scope of the research.
- This research,
- (iv) Is limited to postgraduate theses in the Higher Education Institution National Thesis Centre records between 1993-2019,
  - (v) With the keyword "String Instruments" in the Higher Education Institution National Thesis Centre records,
  - (vi) Explores directly or indirectly through articles, papers, seminars, postgraduate studies and available resources,
  - (vii) Although Violin, Viola, Cello and Double bass instruments belong to the stringed instrument family, the keyword "Stringed Instruments" is used only in theses is limited,
  - (viii) And by the time allocated for research and the financial resources provided by the researcher.

## METHODOLOGY

This study aims to examine postgraduate studies about string instruments in Turkey between 1993-2019, in the document analysis model, one of the qualitative research methods. Qualitative research enables the current situation to be studied in depth. It requires trying to understand humans and their behaviour in the environment and in many ways (Karasar, 2009: 77). Document analysis, which is applied as a data collection method in scientific research, is a comprehensive analysis of the published written sources regarding the targeted events. In cases where techniques such as observation, test, and interview cannot be used, they are considered a research method alone. Document analysis is the examination of documents produced in a specific period on a problem situation or materials provided by many sources related to

**Table 1.** Distribution of theses forming the sample group by thesis type.

Thesis type	f	%
Master's degree	108	68
Doctorate	18	11
Proficiency in art	33	21
Total	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>

this problem situation and at various times based on a particular period (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013: 217).

Within the research scope, postgraduate studies on string instruments were scanned at the Higher Education Institution, National Thesis Centre using the keyword "string instruments," and 159 postgraduate studies were found. The research population is made in the field of music in Turkey and registered postgraduate studies at the Higher Education Institution National Thesis Centre. The research sample consists of postgraduate studies performed in the string instrument under the subtitle between 1993-2019 registered in the National Thesis Centre of the Higher Education Institution. The sample of the study is considered to represent the population.

The relevant literature, directly or indirectly, was examined to provide data for the research, and the necessary resources were provided for the research. The postgraduate theses conducted under the subtitle of string instruments between 1993-2019 registered in the National Thesis Centre of the Higher Education Institution were searched through the thesis scanning catalogue using the keywords "Stringed Instruments" and "1993-2019". Therefore, 159 postgraduate studies reached were determined to provide data within the scope of the research. During the data collection phase, the research was limited to the keyword "stringed Instruments" and "1993-2019" in scanning the Higher Education Institution National Data Centre. The scope of the research was examined using the keyword "String Instruments" obtained from the Higher Education Institution thesis screening Centre and limited to the years 1993-2019. The 159 postgraduate studies accessed have been grouped according to the thesis type, the years to which it belongs, the types of institutes, the universities to which it has been carried out, and the data obtained are given in tables and frequency and percentage distributions.

## RESULTS

According to Table 1, 159 graduate studies were determined as 68% as Master, 21% as Proficiency in Art, and 11% as Doctorate studies. While the study has been completed at the highest level (68%) at the Master level, this rate is at (11%) at the Doctorate level. Therefore, it can be assumed that most of the postgraduate studies scanned with the keyword "string instruments" are carried out at the Master's level.

According to Table 2, it was discovered that between 1993 and 1997, 13% graduate and 3% proficiency in arts postgraduate studies were carried out, while at the doctorate level, there was no postgraduate study. It has been discovered that between 1998-2002, 16% master's degree, 11% doctorate, and 24% art degree graduate studies were done between 2003-2007, 11% master's

degree, 11% doctorate level, and 3% art degree qualification studies were done. Between 2008 and 2012, it was concluded that the highest rates in the distribution of graduate studies by years, including 32% graduate, 44% doctorate, and 52% proficiency in art, were made between them. Between 2013 and 2017, 23% postgraduate, 28% doctorate, 18% postgraduate study findings at the level of proficiency in art was reached. Between 2018-2019, it was determined that there was no postgraduate study at the level of proficiency in art, while 5% postgraduate and 6% doctorate studies were conducted.

According to the findings obtained from Table 2, the highest rate was reached with a total of 60 graduate studies between 2008 and 2012, and the lowest rate was a total of six graduate studies between 2018 and 2019. Accordingly, it can be assumed that the most postgraduate studies at all levels were carried out between 1993-2019, and 2008-2012.

According to Table 3, it is concluded that at least one study has been completed in all universities except for Necmettin Erbakan University and Yaşar University. At the doctorate level, Dokuz Eylül University (11%), Ege University (11%), Gazi University (22%), İnönü University (17%), Istanbul Technical University (11%), Marmara University (22%) and Necmettin Erbakan University (6%) appear to have completed studies. At the Proficiency in Art level, Afyon Kocatepe University (3%), Anadolu University (15%), Dokuz Eylül University (6%), Hacettepe University (15%), Haliç University (3%), Istanbul Technical University (9%), Istanbul University (15%), Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University (22%), Trakya University (9%) and Yaşar University (3%) was found to have completed postgraduate studies.

When Table 3 is analyzed, it is observed that the highest degree of postgraduate studies with 13% at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University has been completed. Istanbul University is in second place with 11%, and Hacettepe University and Anadolu University are in third place with 10%. It is determined that a small number of graduate studies have been carried out in Afyon, Ankara, Cumhuriyet, Çukurova, Fırat, Kocaeli, Karadeniz Technical, Mersin, Necmettin Erbakan, Pamukkale, Selçuk, Yaşar and Yıldız Technical Universities with a rate of 1%.

According to Table 4, 73% of the postgraduate studies

**Table 2.** Distribution of theses forming the sample group by years.

Thesis year	Master's degree		Doctorate		Proficiency in Art		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1993-1997	14	13	-	-	1	03	15	09
1998 - 2002	17	16	2	11	8	24	27	17
2003-2007	12	11	2	11	1	03	15	09
2008-2012	35	32	8	44	17	52	60	38
2013-2017	25	23	5	28	6	18	36	22
2018-2019	5	05	1	06	-	-	6	04
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3.** Distribution of theses forming the sample group by University.

University name	Master's degree		Doctorate		Proficiency in Art		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Abant İzzet Baysal University	5	05	-	-	-	-	5	03
Afyon Kocatepe University	1	01	-	-	1	03	2	01
Anadolu University	11	10	-	-	5	15	16	10
Ankara University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Atatürk University	3	02	-	-	-	-	3	02
Cumhuriyet University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Çukurova University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Dokuz Eylül University	3	03	2	11	2	06	7	04
Ege University	2	02	2	11	-	-	4	02
Fırat University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Gazi University	4	04	4	22	-	-	8	05
Hacettepe University	12	11	-	-	5	15	17	10
Haliç University	4	04	-	-	1	03	5	03
İnönü University	1	01	3	17	-	-	4	02
Istanbul Technical University	6	05	2	11	3	09	11	07
Istanbul University	13	12	-	-	5	15	18	11
Karadeniz Technical University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Kocaeli University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Marmara University	4	04	4	22	-	-	8	05
Mersin University	2	02	-	-	-	-	2	01
Mimar Sinan University of Fine Arts	14	12	-	-	7	22	21	13
Necmettin Erbakan University	-	-	1	06	-	-	1	01
Pamukkale University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Selçuk University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
Trakya University	10	09	-	-	3	09	13	08
Uludağ University	4	04	-	-	-	-	4	02
Yaşar University	-	-	-	-	1	03	1	01
Yıldız Technical University	1	01	-	-	-	-	1	01
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>

are in the permission of Higher Education Institution, 26% are without authority, and 1% are partially authorized (limited). It is observed that 70% of the studies at the Master's level, 83% of the studies at the doctorate level, 76% of the studies at the Proficiency in Art level are

authorized. On the other hand, it was concluded that 29% of Master's level studies, 17% of Doctoral level studies, and 21% of Proficiency in Art studies are unauthorized. There are 1% Master's and 3% Proficiency in Art postgraduate studies with limited access. Accordingly, it

**Table 4.** Distribution of theses in the higher education institution's thesis catalog according to the permission status.

Permit status	Master's degree		Doctorate		Proficiency in art		Total	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
Permitted	76	70	15	83	25	76	116	73
Without permission	31	29	3	17	7	21	41	26
Restricted	1	01	-	-	1	03	2	01
Total	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5.** Distribution of theses forming the sample group according to institutes.

Institute	Master's degree		Doctorate		Proficiency in art		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Institute of Educational Sciences	9	08	10	55	-	-	19	12
Fine Arts Institute	18	17	-	-	4	12	22	14
Institute of Sciences	12	11	3	17	-	-	15	09
Institute of Social Sciences	69	64	5	28	29	88	103	65
Total	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100</b>

can be assumed that the Higher Education Institution permits a majority of postgraduate studies on string instruments. And that accessibility to the studies is provided without any restrictions.

From Table 5, the Institute of Social Sciences ranks first with 64% in studies at the Master's level. Then, the Fine Arts Institute with 17%, the Institute of Science with 11%, and the Institute of Educational Sciences with 8% come respectively. It has been discovered that 55% of the graduate studies at the doctoral level are completed in Educational Sciences Institutes, 28% in Social Sciences Institutes, and 17% in Science Institutes. It was discovered that there is no postgraduate study at the Fine Arts Institutes at the Doctorate level. It is concluded that the majority of the postgraduate studies at the Proficiency in Art level (88%) are completed at the Social Sciences Institutes and 12% at the Fine Arts Institutes. Accordingly, it was concluded that most of the postgraduate studies in the field of string instruments (88% Proficiency in Art, 64% Master) were completed within the Institute of Social Sciences. Besides, no postgraduate studies have been carried out in the Fine Arts Institutes at the doctorate level and in the Institute of Science at the Proficiency in Art level.

## DISCUSSION

For the research, 159 thesis studies completed in the field of string instruments were examined in terms of thesis type, university, year, institute, and permit status.

(i) When the studies are evaluated as thesis type; it is concluded that the majority of 159 postgraduate studies, which are scanned with the keyword "string Instruments,"

are carried out at the Master's level. In their research, Arıca (2017), Çeşit (2015), Tebiş and Okay (2013), and Sonsel (2018) obtained parallel results with their research. As a result of their study, they concluded that more graduate studies were carried out at the Master level. Yöndem (2015), his study is to examine postgraduate thesis completed on guitar in Turkey. He analyzed a total of 89 theses were investigated in terms of selected research topics, study participants, and methods for analysis. For the selection of the thesis included in this study three criteria were used; first, theses from 1990 (beginning time for first completed theses on guitar topic) to 2013 period, second, reaching the full text of theses, and third permission of author.

(ii) When the studies are evaluated by years; and the conclusion is that 159 studies between 1993-2019 were completed at the highest rate (38%) in 2008-2012. The lowest rate was accomplished in 2018-2019, with a total of 6 graduate studies. Similar results were obtained in the studies of Coşkun et al. (2014), Tebiş and Okay (2013), and the reviews of Çeşit (2015). Stevens and McPherson (2007), "Mapping Music Education Research in Australia" called study on the subject; They examined the studies in the field of music between 1972-2020 in Australia in qualitative and quantitative aspects, and scientific studies in the field of music education, Master's and doctoral dissertations and research articles have been revealed in detail.

(iii) When the studies are evaluated according to the universities; it is observed that the highest rate of studies has been completed at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University with 13%. It is concluded that at least 1% of graduate studies are completed in Afyon, Ankara, Cumhuriyet, Çukurova, Fırat, Kocaeli, Karadeniz Technical, Mersin,

Necmettin Erbakan, Pamukkale, Selçuk, Yaşar, and Yıldız Technical Universities. Similar results were included in the study of Toptaş (2013). Alueda (2012), "A Preliminary Bibliographical Guide to Doctoral Theses on Music in Nigeria (1990-2010)" in his research on examined the doctoral dissertations about topic of music made in Nigeria between 1990 and 2010 and revealed a research that could guide researchers. Alueda has classified doctoral dissertations on music according to their subjects, contents, educators, artists and composers. As a result of the author's research, it has revealed that the scientific studies carried out include musicology subjects rather than education.

(iv) When the distribution of graduate studies in string instruments under the institutes is evaluated; the majority of the studies (88% Proficiency in Art, 64% Master) are completed within the Institutes of Social Sciences, at the Doctoral level Fine Arts Institutes, and in the Proficiency in Art level at any Institute of Science. It is concluded that no graduate study has been done. Similar results are seen in the studies of Alyörük (2015), Kaptanoğlu and Çanakçı (2015) and Kurtaslan (2018). Parker (2001), Recent "South African Postgraduate Research in Music" in his research on examined the master theses accepted at African universities between 1990-1999. Parker examined the theses made in his study according to theoretical and musicology subjects, and also classified them according to African traditional music and European music.

(v) When considering the results was reached, similar studies can be conducted in other branches of music education in parallel with this study, where the graduate studies undertaken in Turkey are examined using the keyword 'string instruments.'

(vi) Considering that scientific research sheds light on new horizons in science, the information restriction detected in some postgraduate studies can be removed, and information can be shared.

(vii) As can be seen from the results gained from the research, it is achievable to start postgraduate programs lacking in some universities and provide new studies to lead scientific research in Turkey.

(viii) In light of the research results, postgraduate guidance, encouragement, and motivation can be improved for postgraduate studies at the Doctorate level to reduce the numerical shortage of postgraduate studies.

(ix) This study, which comprises the review of postgraduate studies on string instruments can be duplicated, shed light on similar studies, and set an example for other studies in the same format.

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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