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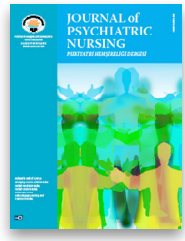

Original Article

The profile of psychiatric nurses in Turkey: Academic field*

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Abstract

Objectives: There is no current data on the number and qualifications of the academic nursing work force in the mental health and psychiatric field in Turkey. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to construct a profile of academics who are working in the field of mental health and psychiatric nursing in Turkey.

Methods: This descriptive and cross-sectional study was conducted between January–May 2018 via a digital questionnaire form. Of the 227 teaching staff with internet access who were invited to participate in the study, 177 filled out the questionnaires. The questionnaire consists of 42 questions about personal and professional experience. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of the data.

Results: Among the participants, 5.6% were professors; 16.9% were associate professors; 31.3% were doctoral faculty members, 14.6% were faculty members and 31.6% were research assistants. The percentage of those with master of science degrees in Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing was 73.4%, while those with a doctorate in this field was 55.4%. It was further found that 89.8% of the participants worked full time, 34.5% had 1–5 years of academic experience, 45.2% taught outside the field of mental health, 20.9% had clinical experience in the field of mental health and 12.4% had never worked in a clinical area before. Finally, 34.5% stated that they had visited or studied in an institution abroad and 63.8% had participated in congresses abroad, with the mean number of international congresses attended being 3.92 (Max:43).

Conclusion: The fact that about one-third of the academics were at the beginning of their academic experience and that half had no doctorate degree can be seen as characteristics posing possible risks to reaching goals. In contrast, the high number of those with clinical experience in the field of mental health can be viewed as a strong quality of the academic profile.

Keywords: Mental health; psychiatric nursing; Turkey.

The number of nursing departments in Turkey increases in line with the increase in the number of universities each year. While there were around 10 universities providing undergraduate nursing education in the 1990s, by 2018, according to the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) information system, there were 135 departments providing undergraduate nursing education.[1,2] In addition, on account of the shortages in the national nursing workforce, student admission quotas of these departments have also increased over the years. In the Nursing Undergraduate Education Workshop organized in 2017,[3] quantitative data related to this problem was presented, showing that in the previous two years, while nursing undergraduate student quotas had been increased six-fold (6.2 times), the number of nurse academics had only increased just over one-fold (1.5 times).

In conducting a needs analysis for nursing academic instruc-

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What is known on this subject?

- While the number of students in nursing undergraduate departments in Turkey has significantly increased in recent years, there has not been a proportionate increase in the number of academic instructors to meet this rise in student number. The determination of quality and quantity of academic staff is important for purposes of future planning. It is remarkable that to date there has been no detailed study on academic staff in the psychiatric nursing field conducted on a countrywide basis.

What is the contribution of this paper?

- Indicate that the number of academic staff in the psychiatric nursing field does not comply with international standards, that this staff is tasked with performing course instruction on subjects outside of their fields of specialty; that one third of them are at the beginning of their academic career, and that half of them have not yet earned a doctorate degree.
- Bring to light several strong aspects of this field, such as, finding that one third of the academics who work in the psychiatric nursing field have academic work experience of at least 21 years, almost half of them have graduated from a mental health and psychiatric nursing doctorate program, one third have coordinated research projects, and the majority have published a paper for a journal indexed in the SSCI.
- Indicate that ability to read in a foreign language is related with attendance to scientific events abroad and number of academic papers published.

What is its contribution to the practice?

- There has been no status analysis conducted for the academic profile in Turkey. This study, therefore, can also be a model for other nursing areas and provide a basis for planning student quotas and evaluating academic staff. In addition, the outcomes of the study will contribute to providing the grounds for comparing the developments for purposes of informing future education and research in the psychiatric nursing field.

tors in terms of quality and quantity, it is important to address the education needs of the increasing number of students and to conduct human resources planning accordingly, in order to maintain a high quality of education. The sustainability of the quality of nursing services, which has direct effects on social healthcare parameters, is directly related with the quality of nursing education. In addition, the need for qualified and specialized nursing services rises in line with the increase in the demands of nurses, which are based on the rapidly changing and developing global healthcare policies and new service areas.

The framework for the expected and targeted regulations in the mental health field in Turkey was determined with the National Mental Health Policy (2006) and the National Mental Health Action Plan[4] (NMHAP-2011). One of the objectives included in the NMHP is to increase both the number and quality of trained professionals at all levels in the mental health system. Nursing personnel constitute a significant part of the labor force providing mental health services, and psychiatric nursing was defined by the NMHAP as a newly developing nursing branch. It was noted that in Turkey the number of nurses who have received education in this field was quite low, and the report recommended that specialization in this field should be promoted. In 2017, the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) also declared that mental health and psychiatric nursing should be one of the primary areas covered in doctoral studies for the training of academic personnel.[3–5]

Psychiatric-mental health nursing is defined by the International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses (ISPN) as a nursing field that combines neuroscientific and psychopharmacological knowledge with nursing care knowledge to provide effective and reliable care to patients and to protect and improve their mental health.[6–8] The American Nurses Association (ANA) describes a psychiatric-mental health nurse as a mental health professional who focuses on the self for therapeutic purposes and performs and provides nursing services based on psychosocial and neurobiological theories and research findings.[6,9] In Turkey, the title of "psychiatric nursing" is earned by completing an undergraduate nursing program and graduate level education in the branch of Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing.[5,10] The majority of those with graduate degrees in this field work as academics in Turkey.

The prerequisite for educating qualified professionals is the presence of qualified academic staff. Academic staff constitute the main source for sustaining basic professional education as well as for fostering new academic staff and developing science and technology in Turkey. As key elements of universities, academics/instructors play significant roles in terms of the research they conduct, the application and teaching and dissemination of knowledge, and the training of a qualified academic workforce.[11] In this context, the responsibilities of nursing educators and nursing education institutions are described as producing graduates with required competencies, providing competent and ethical nursing care in various areas, and preparing nursing education programs in a flexible and accessible format.[12]

In Turkey, academic studies on psychiatric nursing started in the 1960s, and the first title of associate professor in this field was applied in 1972.[13] Since then, with the increase in the number of universities providing undergraduate education in nursing and in the number of graduate education programs in nursing, the quantity and quality of the academic staff responsible for executing these programs have become subject to study. However, in examining the studies conducted within this scope, it was seen that there are only a limited number of studies that focus on the instructors working at the universities, particularly in terms of the sociodemographic and characteristics of instructors and their course descriptions, their relation with performance,[14] the profile of academic members and research assistants,[12,15] their use of foreign language,[16] their scientific studies and problems in this area,[17–19] problems they encounter, their attitudes toward work life,[20] their work satisfaction,[21–24] quality of master and doctorate thesis and their publication status,[19,25–27] and difficulties and obstacles in conducting research.[19] It was remarkable that there was a very low number of studies on human resources planning.

Knowing the quantity and quality of academic instructors in a field is a significant issue as it regards shaping education and sustaining it in a qualified way, and developing academic knowledge. The efficient and productive use of resources in reaching objectives can only be accomplished through strong human resources planning. Human resources planning involves examining existing employment issues, estimating work force needs for the future, and defining the ways to procure these needs. In other words, to effectively carry out planning, it

is of primary importance to understand the quality and quantity of the existing work force. Human resources planning and service planning for the future can be shaped through information derived from valid scientific data regarding the current quality and quantity of the working personnel. [28–31]

Although "Psychiatric Nursing" was explained by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) as one of the priority areas, there has been no comprehensive countrywide study conducted on academic staff. This study, therefore, aims to present the quality of the academics responsible for preparing the future psychiatric nursing workforce, focusing specifically on increasing knowledge generation and the service quality provided to the individual and society, and also to contribute valuable data to strategy development for future planning. The data obtained will constitute a significant resource for developing education and management policies and for maintaining high healthcare quality in the mental health area. In this context, this research shall serve to present a profile of the academics working in the field of mental health and psychiatric nursing in Turkey.

The sub-objectives of the research:

- To define the demographic and professional education and experience profile of the academics working in the field of psychiatric nursing,
- To define the educational and scientific activities profile of the academics working in the field of psychiatric nursing.

Materials and Method

Type of Research

The study was designed as a descriptive and cross-sectional study.

The Population and the Sample

The research population was determined by examining the undergraduate nursing departments included in the 2018 Centre for Assessment, Selection and Placement (ÖSYM guideline and the universities on the CoHE website.

Statistics published by the CoHE (2018) indicate that 135 universities have nursing departments. Among these, 68 state universities have 213 academics in the Department of Mental Health and/or Psychiatric Nursing under the Faculty of Nursing or Health Sciences; and although the exact numbers could not be officially determined, it was calculated that approximately 20 academics work at 25 foundation universities.[2]

Sample selection was not performed in this study. During the research process, an attempt was made to reach all academic staff in the field of psychiatric nursing in the state and foundation universities included on the CoHE list, and well as the academic instructors who work on a per course fee basis or who have been assigned to other faculties. In total, 227 teaching staff members (full-time, part-time, and paid per course) who had internet access were invited to participate in the study. The study sample included 177 of the 227 (response rate was 75.9%) people who filled out the digital questionnaire sent between the dates of January-May 2018. There were no exclusion criteria applied in this study.

Data Collection Tool

The digital questionnaire form used in this study was created in line with the literature.[20,32,33] The questionnaire consists of a total of 42 questions arranged under three main sections. The first section includes questions on the sociodemographic (age, title, academic degree/doctorate program, etc.) characteristics of the academics; the second section includes questions on their work experience (working years, course instruction administrative authority, and total course hours in their working institutions, etc.), and the third section includes questions on their foreign language knowledge and their international/domestic credentials (foreign language knowledge level, the number of indexed papers, the number of projects, etc.). The questionnaire form was prepared and sent to five experts prior to the study, and their suggested changes to the questionnaire were performed.

Data Collection Process

The institutions of all of the academics who worked in the mental health and psychiatric nursing field were reached via the internet, from which the link address of the digital questionnaire form was sent to the individuals' e-mail addresses to invite them to participate in the study. In addition, to ensure that the total population was reached, the link address of the digital questionnaire form was sent to the department head/faculty of nursing, who was asked to forward it to the academics within their departments who were interested in participating in the research. In the first section of the digital questionnaire form, the purpose of the study was explained, and the consent of all participants was received in the digital environment without asking for their identity information. Participants were only able to see the questions after their consent to participate was received. The participants were informed that they had the right to not complete the questionnaire once they got started on it. The questionnaire responses made in the digital environment were transferred to the SPSS program.

Data Analysis

The data was evaluated using SPSS 26 software. Descriptive statistics were shown as frequency, percentages, and arithmetic mean, and the parametric Chi-square test, Pearson correlation analysis, and One-way variance analysis were used to perform comparisons.

Ethical Dimension

Ethical approval to perform the study was obtained (Koç University; No:2017.150.IRB3.076). The study was conducted in conformity with the Helsinki Declaration Principles, and the

participants' consents to voluntarily participate in the study were received at the beginning of the questionnaire form in the digital environment. Only those academics who volunteered to participate in the study filled out the questionnaire forms.

Limitations

The research population was determined by reviewing the universities on the CoHE website and in the ÖSYM guideline. For new universities that were opened during the research process and for the departments where psychiatric nursing was not presented on the web sites, assistance was requested from the department heads, and the individuals that the department heads notified were included in the research.

Results

The mean age of the participants was 37.71±8.71 (Min 23–Max 66), and the majority of them were female. As for their degrees, 73.4% had Master of Science degrees in Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing 55.4% had a doctorate in this field. In terms of academic titles, 5.6% were professors; 16.9% were associate professors; 31.3% were doctoral faculty members, 14.6% were faculty members and 31.6% were research assistants. Furthermore, 52% worked in the Faculty of Health Sciences, 29.4% worked in the Nursing Faculty, and 12.4% worked in the Faculty of Nursing and/or Health (Table 1).

Regarding their previous work experiences, it was found that, 20.9% of the participants had work experience in the mental

Table 1. Sociodemographic and education characteristics of the academics (n=177)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Age	23	66	37.71	8.71
	n		%	
Gender				
Female	171		96.6	
Male	6		3.4	
The completed master's degree program				
Mental health and psychiatric nursing	130		73.4	
Nursing management	36		20.3	
Other (pediatrics, internal diseases, fundamentals of nursing, women's health and gynecological diseases, the anatomy of public health, instruction, midwifery, social psychiatry)	11		6.3	
The completed doctorate program				
Mental health and psychiatric nursing	98		55.4	
Doctorate program in nursing	16		9.0	
Not a graduate from a doctorate program	61		34.5	
Other*	2		1.2	
Title				
Associate professor	10		5.6	
Doçent	30		16.9	
Doctorate faculty member	55		31.1	
Instructor/Dr.	26		14.7	
Research assistant/lecturer	56		31.6	
The institution of employment				
Nursing faculty	52		29.4	
Faculty of health sciences	92		52.0	
School of nursing	6		3.4	
Health school	16		9.0	
Other (vocational health high school, graduate school of health sciences, medical faculty hospital)	11		6.2	
Prior work experience				
No work experience in clinical area	22		12.4	
Have work experience in the mental health field	37		20.9	
Have work experience in field other than that of mental health	118		66.6	

*Non-thesis/Evening education/Multiple programs.

Table 2. The comparison of clinical work experience of the participants by their academic positions (n=177)

Title/clinical experience		Instructor		Faculty member		X^2	p
		n	%	n	%		
Having clinical experience	No work experience in a clinical area	7	8.5	15	15.8	8.931	0.011
	Have work experience in the mental health field	11	13.4	26	27.4		
	Have work experience in field other than that of mental health	64	78.0	54	56.8		

X^2: Chi-square.

Table 3. Academic work experience characteristics of the participants (n=177)

	n	%
Academic work experience		
1 month–5 years	66	37.3
6–10 years	33	18.6
11–15 years	24	13.6
16–20 years	29	16.4
21 years and over	25	14.1
Employment status		
Full time	159	89.8
Full-time and/or paid per course hour	16	9.6
Master's degree program education in their institution		
No master's degree education	39	22.0
Mental health and psychiatric nursing	48	27.1
Master's degree program in nursing	59	33.3
*Other	31	17.8
Doctorate program education in their institution		
No doctorate education	79	44.6
Mental health and psychiatric nursing	46	26.0
Doctorate program in nursing	45	25.4
*Other	7	4.0
Assigned to the graduate program as an instructor		
No education program	35	19.8
Not assigned	67	37.9
Only assigned to the master's degree program	35	19.8
Only assigned to the doctorate program	4	2.3
Assigned to both the master's degree and the doctorate program	33	18.6
Assigned to other programs (other than midwifery and nursing)	3	1.7
Offer courses other than mental health and psychiatric nursing		
Yes	87	49.2
No	90	50.8

*Non-thesis/evening education/multiple programs.

health field, 66.6% had work experience outside of the mental health field, and 12.4% did not have previous work experience in any clinical fields (Table 1). It was further seen that 84.2% of the faculty members and 91.4% of the instructors had clinical work experience before they became academics, and that 27.4% of the faculty members and 13.4% of the instructors had work experience in psychiatric departments. A significant statistical difference regarding the clinical work experience was seen between the instructors and faculty members (X^2=8,931; p=0,011; Table 2).

The participants' academic work experiences are presented in Table 3, where it shows that 37.3% of the participants had 1-5 years of academic experience, and 89.8% worked full time and 44.1% had at least 11 years of academic work experience. Among the participants with at least 21 years of work experience, 52% were associate professors and 28% were full professors (Table 4). In examining the graduate programs offered by the institutions, 22% of the participants stated that there was no master's degree program in their respective institutions, 44.6% stated that there was no doctorate education program in their respective institutions, and 37.9% stated that they were not assigned as an instructor in any of the graduate programs. It was further found that 49.2% of the instructors lectured in a field outside of Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing (Table 3).

Table 5 presents the distribution of foreign language knowledge and the international/domestic credentials of the academics. In terms of the foreign language levels of the academics, 22% stated that they were good at speaking another language, 39% stated that they were good at writing in another language, and 63.3% stated that they were good at reading in another language. It was also recorded that 34.5% of the participants had visited or studied in an institution abroad for various purposes (to take courses, give lectures, conduct a project), and 63.8% had participated in congresses abroad. The average number of international congress attended was determined to be 3.92±5.31 (Min.1- Max.43; Median: 2). Examining their publishing credentials, it was found that 64% had papers that could be found in the Social Sciences Citation Index/Science Citation Index-Expanded (SSCI/SCI-E), and the average number of papers published was 5.85±5.25 (Min.1-

Table 4. The distribution of work experience of the participants by their titles (n=177)

Title/work experience		Res. Assist./ Lecturer		Dr.		Instructor		Dr. Faculty Member		Associate Professor		Professor	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Working years	1–5 years	44	66.7	1	1.5	12	18.2	9	13.6	0	0	0	0
	6–10 years	9	27.3	6	18.2	3	9.1	12	36.4	3	9.1	0	0
	11–15 years	0	0	2	8.3	0	0	18	75.0	3	12.5	1	4.2
	16–20 years	0	0	1	3.4	3	10.3	12	41.4	11	37.9	2	6.9
	21 years and over	0	0	0	0	1	4.0	4	16.0	13	52.0	7	28.0

*Percentages calculated by row

Table 5. Foreign language knowledge of academics and their domestic/international credentials (n=177)

	n	%
Speaking in foreign language		
Very good	5	2.8
Good	39	22.0
Fair	106	59.9
Poor	25	14.1
Writing in foreign language		
Very good	6	3.4
Good	69	39.0
Fair	80	45.2
Poor	21	11.9
Reading in foreign language		
Very good	25	14.1
Good	112	63.3
Fair	37	20.9
Poor	2	1.1
Attendance to an Education Program Abroad (Take or give courses, ERASMUS, work on a project)		
Yes	61	34.5
No	116	65.6
Congress Attendance Abroad (Min:1-Max:43; Mean: 3.92 ± 5.31)		
Yes	112	63.3
No	65	36.7
SSCI/SSCI-E Papers (Min:1-Max:22; Mean: 5.85 ± 5.25)		
Yes	114	64.4
No	63	35.6
*Served as project coordinator		
Yes	53	29.9
No	124	71.1
*Served as project researcher		
Yes	79	44.6
No	98	55.4

*The European Union, TÜBİTAK, Development Agency, SRP and Municipality supported project

Max. 22, Median: 5). In addition, the data showed that 29.9% had experience being project coordinators, while 44.6% had experience being project researchers (Table 5).

Table 6 presents the participants' academic titles attached to the SSCI/SCI-E papers they had published and the number of congresses they attended abroad, along with comparisons. In examining the number of academic papers and the number of congresses attended abroad according to the research participants, it was seen that those who held a professorship had a greater number of academic papers published ($p<0.01$). The average number of papers published by associate professors and full professors was 10. In dividing the participants into two groups, a faculty member group and an instructor group, a significant difference was seen between the average number of papers published by faculty members and by instructors. Reading in a foreign language, congress attendance and the number of papers published were compared using one-way variance analysis, with the results showing that there was a difference between reading in a foreign language, congress attendance ($F=3.63$–$p=0.015$) and the number of papers ($F=3.25$–$p=0.042$) (Table 6).

There was no difference among the working institutions (NF, FoHS, FoN, etc.) in terms of the number of papers published ($F=1.207$; $p=0.312$) and congress attendance ($F=0.909$; $p=0.462$). A medium positive correlation was found between the mean number of years of academic work experience and the mean number of papers published ($r=0.48$; $p<0.01$) and a weak positive correlation mean the mean number of years of academic work and mean number of congresses attended ($r=0.24$; $p=0.010$).

Table 7 presents the comparisons of the academic positions of the participants at their universities and their assignment status in either a master's degree program or doctorate program. This table indicates that 32.7% of the doctoral faculty members and 20% of the associate professors were not assigned to either a master's degree or doctorate program. Furthermore, the table shows that 24% of the academic members were not assigned to graduate programs, and that 4.1% of the instructors were assigned to these programs. The difference among these two groups was determined to be statistically significant ($p<0.001$).

Table 6. Comparison of academic title and proficiency in reading in a foreign language with the numbers of SSCI/SSCI-E papers and the congresses attended abroad (n=177)

	The number of SSCI/SSCI-E papers		The number of congresses participated in abroad	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Title				
Res. Assist./Lecturer	1.80	1.61	1.57	0.81
Dr.	4.00	3.39	3.75	2.86
Instructor	2.37	2.55	1.40	0.54
Doctoral faculty member	3.57	2.37	3.32	3.53
Associate Professor	10.79	5.21	4.89	4.89
Professor	12.22	5.35	10.55	12.63
	F=25.58	p=0.001	F=4.957	p=0.001
Sufficiency in reading in a foreign language				
Very good	7.15	5.93	7.21	9.25
Good	6.22	5.06	3.59	4.17
Fair	3.30	4.63	2.1	1.25
	F=3.25	p=0.042	F=3.63	p=0.015
Position				
Instructor	2.35	2.32	2.05	1.75
Faculty member	7.03	5.44	4.74	6.05
	F=-6.30	p=0.001	F=6.42	p=0.013

F: One-Way ANOVA (one-way variance analysis).

Table 7. Comparison of academic position and being assigned to a either a master's degree or doctorate program (n=177)

Being assigned to a master's degree/ doctorate program	Yes		No		Total**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Title/ Position						
Res. Assist./Lecturer	0	0	53	100	53	29.9
Dr.	0	0	10	9.5	10	5.6
Academic	2	10.5	17	89.5	19	10.7
Doctoral Faculty Member	37	67.3	18	32.7	55	31.3
Associate Professor	24	80	6	20	30	16.9
Professor	9	90	1	10	10	5.6
Total	72	40.6	105	59.4	177	100
					X^2	p
Instructor*	3	4.1	79	95.9	86.766	0.001
Faculty member	69	76.0	26	24.0		

X^2: Chi-square. *Doctor, instructor, research assistant and lecturer ** percentages by column.

Discussion

To increase the quality and quantity of scientific studies at universities and to raise a qualified academic workforce in Turkey, creating a database for the existing staff in each area is a pre-condition to conducting strategic planning, in both educational and scientific development terms. With this understanding, the demographic and academic characteristics of the mental health and psychiatric nursing academics who work in state and foundation universities operating under the CoHE were examined in this study.

The majority of the research participants (psychiatric nursing academics) were female, and their mean age was 37.7 (Min. 23–Max. 66). Working as an academic in Turkey starts after the completion of the undergraduate program and usually continues until retirement. Individuals cannot be assigned as faculty members before first completing their undergraduate education, earning a master's degree (min. 2 years) and then a doctorate (min. 4 years). Typically, academics do not become associate professors until they are in their middle to late thirties. The fact that the mean age of the academics in the field of psychiatric nursing was found to be 37 indicates that this academic group

follows the standard process of academic advancement. It was found that females constituted the majority of instructors, yet this is understandable when considering that it was not until 2007 that men were accepted in undergraduate nursing education and male health officers were recruited to nursing staffs. In various studies, the comparative analysis findings of academics' sociodemographic characteristics have been similar.[1,12,19,34]

Out of the 135 nursing undergraduate departments in Turkey, psychiatric nursing, which is one of the basic associate professorship areas, has 18 professors, 30 associate professors, and 72 doctorate faculty members.[2] These numbers are not only very low but they also are not equally distributed throughout the country. All of these negativities (high student numbers and excess work burden) may bring the risk of decreasing interest in and motivation for this field.

In Turkey, for the 2017–2018 academic year, the total registered number of undergraduate nursing students was 71,538, while the total number of nursing academics was 2,316.[2] This means that the ratio of students to academics was around 31 to 1. At least half of the total number of nursing academics are not yet faculty members. The Nursing Undergraduate Education Workshop report (2017) stated the number of students per academic to be 113.[3] Considering these numbers in terms of psychiatric nursing, the figure grows to 323 students per instructor, and 650 students per faculty member. Current numbers indicate that education is being carried out far above the academic-student ratio sub-limit (1:10) determined by the WHO for 2020 nursing education.[35,36] Moreover, it should also be remembered that in addition to the undergraduate programs, the same academic staff is expected to carry out graduate programs as well. According to the Nursing Undergraduate Education Workshop data, there are 6,157 master degree students and 1,359 doctorate students enrolled in nursing graduate programs.[3,37,38] In this regard, the data derived from this study provide supporting data for the recommendations reported in the Workshop[3] outcome report, namely, "that quota increases should be planned by taking into account the number of instructors, the number of graduate students, and the research burden, and that these numbers should be compatible with the global standard for instructor/student ratios".

Nursing education in Turkey was designed to be compatible with the European Union in terms of its duration and content, and at least half of the 4600 total hours of undergraduate education is devoted to practical training.[39] Therefore, in addition to taking into account the number of instructors necessary for practice, the needs of the instructors in nursing education should also be considered. Unlike other professional fields, nursing practice is applied on a full-time (8-hours) basis, where the instructor in charge of the practice remains with the students for the whole day at the practice site. This increases the work burden of the instructors, which in turn makes it harder for them to conduct scientific studies.

Half of the academics who participated in this research work in the Faculty of Health Sciences, while the majority of others work in the Faculty of Nursing. Although nursing undergraduate education in Turkey is carried out under five different structures/names (Faculty of Nursing, School of Health Sciences, School of Nursing, Faculty of Health, School of Health), particular attention is given to ensuring minimum standards within the framework of the recommendations of the National Core Nursing Education Program (HUÇEP) Commission, the principles published by the CoHE and the "European Union Criteria". However, in departments where the structure has not yet been established, the workload is higher and teaching is predominant, since there are generally fewer instructors in the discipline.[30,36,40]

Among the participants, 55.4% were graduates of a doctorate program specialized in psychiatric nursing. It was encouraging to find that more than half of the participants were specialized in their own academic area. In a study conducted by Özkütük et al.[38] (2018), it was reported that 6% of the nursing instructors did not have a nursing profession background. Among the instructors who participated in this study, 34.5% had not yet completed their doctorate education. Koçak et al.[33] (2017) conducted a study on midwifery and stated that one-third of the instructors did not have doctorate degrees. In a study by Darawad et al.[19] (2018) with nurse academics, it was found that 41.9% had a master's degree, 27.4% had a doctorate degree, and 21% had an undergraduate degree.

Prior work experience in the nursing academic profession is considered to be a major issue in Turkey, and only 12.4% of the instructors who participated in this study did not have any prior work experience in the clinical area. Of the participants who had work experience, 39% had work experience in the field of psychiatry. One of the main principles adopted in the WHO's report titled, "Basic Standards for Nursing and Midwifery Education", is to fill the nursing or midwifery faculty with individuals who have relevant expertise in the subject matter and who have at least two years of work experience in the related area. In what can be considered strong indicators in terms of providing a high-quality education, 20.9% of the instructors in the present study had prior work experience in the psychiatric field, and 66.6% had prior work experience in other clinical areas.[30,36]

In examining the findings on the academic work experience of the participants, it was found that more than one-third of the participants were at the beginning of their academic career (1 month - 5 years). It can be assumed that the majority of this group are research assistants who were in the process of continuing their academic education (master's degree, doctorate). Another remarkable finding was that the majority of professors and associate professors had more than 16 years of working experience Considering the average working years in Turkey, this figure of 16 years or more suggests that in order to prevent greater gaps in the future, importance should be given to raising academics who can serve in the psychiatric nursing field in Turkey. A large majority of the academics worked full-time, and almost half of the psychiatric nursing academics lectured in fields outside of the mental health field, which indicates that besides the psychiatric nursing field there is also an instructor shortage in nursing in general. In today's world, where specialization in the field of health is gaining importance, the fact that there are educators who lecture outside their area of specialty may negatively affect the healthcare service provided in the fu-

ture, society's health, as well as the quality of education.

Reporting the data obtained from research conducted and publishing these in academic and scientific journals, and/or presenting them at different venues, like congresses and symposiums, are highly important in terms of accessibility and usability of information, and this reporting of data qualifies as one of the main activities expected from academics.[25] In this regard, among the academics who participated in this study, 64% had at least one SSCI/SCI-E paper. The average number of papers published by associate professors and professors was more than 10. These numbers are higher than the numbers reported in the study by Kuzu-Kurban and Ulusoy (2008), where they examined the papers published by academic members.[41] Considering the number of papers published by academic members according to the study by Demir et al.[34] (2017), the recently established paper publishing criteria for being an associate professor can explain the increase in paper publishing motivation.

Although the instructor quotas and graduate education quotas in nursing have been increased in Turkey, the number of research papers published is not at desired ratios. In the studies conducted, it is reported that the obstacles to conducting research in nursing include lack of/ insufficient financial support, heavy course burden, increase in the number of students per instructor, lack of research opportunities, insufficient information on and skills in research, and inconsistency among the needs of individuals and institutions.[14,18,26] In the study conducted by Alzahrani[18] (2011), it was reported that the number of academic papers for each age group of participants was at most between 1-3 and 4-8, with the highest number of papers belonging to the associate professors (4–8 papers). In the study conducted by Darawad et al.[19] (2018), the mean number of papers of the instructors in the nursing faculty was found to be 3.39±5.51.

In examining whether the academics in the present study were assigned to graduate programs, it was found that while 24% were part of the faculty member staff, they were not included in these programs. This subject is in need of further investigation. The necessary conditions to open a master's and doctorate program cannot be met by some of the universities. In Turkey, the CoHE imposed the condition that there must be at least three academic members to open a master's degree program and six academic members to open a doctorate program.[42] The number of universities capable of meeting these necessary conditions to open a doctorate program in mental health and psychiatric nursing is very limited in Turkey. The reason behind the fact that academic members are not assigned to these programs could be attributed to the likelihood that these members work at universities which do not have any graduate programs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The psychiatric nursing staff needs to be qualitatively and quantitatively improved. Considering the increasing number of students and the fact that psychiatric nursing is an applied science, this study concluded that under current circumstances, the education needs of this field cannot be met on the basis of the existing numbers and scientific studies cannot be strengthened. To have high quality education and scientific development, strategic planning should be done to reach international standards in the student/academic ratios. More research examining barriers to academic staff research and scientific visibility needs to be undertaken. Considering the high working years duration of the academics, it is important that this issue remains a top priority in order to avoid gaps in faculty capacity.

Standardization of the field of mental health and psychiatric nursing is important for data security. Additionally, as stated by Tuna (2015),[30] it is important, in terms of shaping the future, to take proper measures to develop the nursing areas in the structure of the department and to ensure that post graduate education is provided at the universities that meet these criteria in the shaping of the future.

This study did not make any distinction in terms of state or foundation universities nor did it aim to list the numbers according to the universities. However, of the participants, 10 were professors, 30 were associate professors, 55 were doctorate faculty members, 26 were instructors, and 56 were research assistants. Based on the data put out by the CoHE (January 2019), it can be stated that the research data was obtained by using a certain number of participants to represent each grade of academic staff working in the Department of Mental Health and/or Psychiatric Nursing in the faculties of nursing or health sciences of state universities; this was considered to be one of the strengths of the research.

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