

# Recent Trends in Marketing Research in Turkey

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to gain insights in the methodological issues and problems of marketing research in Turkey. This research provides information and recommendations for the research methodology of marketing papers published in Turkish National Marketing Congresses' Proceedings between 2007 and 2009. The evaluation of marketing papers is done with content analyses method, in terms of methodological process such as research type, research modeling and hypothesis development, sampling, data collection and data analysis.

The study indicates that there are significant problems regarding modeling and hypothesis development, sampling and data analysis stages of research process. The findings also show that, analyses are chosen on the basis of their popularity in most of the studies.

**Keywords:** Marketing, Research Methodology, Marketing Articles, Content Analysis.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

For the proper progress and development in science the methodology also has an important role. This research aims to understand the current situation in marketing research in Turkey and gain an understating about the methodological problems and recommend solutions for them.

The discussion of research methodology used in marketing publications has been going on for last three years [1] [2] [3] The outcome of reviews and evaluations of marketing publications varies due to the period it covers and are only limited with the proceedings which have been evaluated. Within the same context, marketing papers published in last three Turkish National Marketing Congresses' Proceedings are examined in the study. The sample consisted of 159 papers from 12<sup>th</sup> [4], 13<sup>th</sup> (there has been two different Turkish National Marketing Congresses in 2008 in Adana and Nevşehir) [5] [6] and the 14<sup>th</sup> [7] Turkish National Marketing Congresses.

The content analysis is used as a research technique to evaluate these 159 proceedings, for understanding, determining and analyzing the growth of the marketing discipline. Thus, the research aimed to determine methodological problems by analyzing marketing publications, in terms of content categories, research type, modeling and hypothesis, sampling, data collection and data analysis. Kurtuluş and Kurtuluş [2] have evaluated 236 marketing publications between 2003-2006 using similar methodological criteria [2] and research also continued in 2009 [3].

## 2. CONTENT CATEGORIES

In the first step of the content analysis, the proceedings are classified with the study subjects.

**Table 1:** Number of Publications by Content Categories (2007-2009)

Content Categories	Number	Frequency (%)
Consumer Behavior	44	27.67
Marketing Management	23	14.47
Tourism Management	22	13.84
Retailing	19	11.95
Product & Brand Management	11	6.92
Marketing Strategies	7	4.40
International Marketing	6	3.77
Marketing Ethics	6	3.77
Logistics Management	5	3.14
e-Marketing	4	2.52
Sales Management	3	1.89
Marketing Communication	2	1.26
Social Marketing	2	1.26
Services Marketing	2	1.26
Industrial Marketing	2	1.26
Marketing Research	1	0.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The research results show (Table 1.) that consumer behavior (44 proceedings, 27.67%) and marketing management (23 proceedings, 14.47%) are the main

categories for proceedings in this period. With general titles, there are; consumer behavior, marketing management, retailing, brand management, social marketing, services marketing, international marketing, marketing strategies, product management and logistics management categories.

### 3. RESEARCH TYPE

For the Turkish National Marketing Congresses, researchers are asked to classify their studies according to their research type. Table 2 shows the proportions of papers according to their research types for the period between 2007 and 2009. The papers are also classified by their research methodology as quantitative or qualitative (Table 3).

**Table 2:** Research versus Theory Based Papers (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Research based	123	77.35
Theory based	36	22.65
<b>Total</b>	159	100.00

Table 2 shows that the number of research based marketing publications is higher than the number of theory based ones. In theoretical papers, there is no significant contribution to the existing literature, only the current literature analysis and adaptation was made. It is also observed that, there is also some confusion in theoretical concepts translated from the literature.

**Table 3:** Quantitative versus Qualitative Research (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Quantitative Research	109	77.22
Qualitative Research	34	22.78
<b>Total</b>	143	100.00

Table 3 shows the research types namely quantitative research and qualitative research. There are 123 research papers in total and there are 20 proceedings paper using both of quantitative and qualitative research methods. It is obvious that, quantitative research dominates qualitative research in numbers. Lack of knowledge and expertise about qualitative research among marketing academicians may be the reason for quantitative research to be chosen.

### 4. RESEARCH MODELING and HYPOTHESIS

As it can be seen in Table 4, research models in proceeding papers between the years of 2007 to 2009 have shown different types of research models; exploratory (21.05%), descriptive-predictive (55.64%) and causal models (23.31%). 10 of the proceeding paper has both of exploratory and descriptive-predictive research models.

**Table 4:** Research Models (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Exploratory Model	28	21.05
Descriptive - Predictive Model	74	55.64
Causal Model	31	23.31
<b>Total</b>	133	100.00

Specific research design models are very important for a research paper. In order to understand the objective, hypothesis and relations between the variables, researchers are strongly recommended to design a proper research model for descriptive-predictive and causal researches. With this research it is observed that in most of the studies there is no specific research design based on the research purposes, showing the variables sets and their relations. Only 33.57 % of marketing publications had appropriate research designs while 41.08% of the papers do not have a research design even though it is needed.

**Table 5:** Specific Research Design Usage (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Design used	49	33.57
No design used	37	25.35
No design used although it must be used	60	41.08
<b>Total</b>	146	100.00

**Table 6:** Hypotheses Usage (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Hypotheses developed	55	34.60
No hypotheses developed	47	29.56
No hypotheses developed but they must be.	57	35.84
<b>Total</b>	159	100.00

In 34.60% of the studies, researchers have developed research hypotheses and tested these hypotheses. Even though the research model is descriptive-predictive and causal, some of the studies do not have any research hypothesis. Also it is observed that in some studies research hypotheses are developed incorrectly (null hypotheses versus alternative hypotheses) and in some cases wrong hypotheses are tested.

### 5. SAMPLING

Sampling is also a very critical issue in marketing research. It is observed that the convenience sampling is

the most preferred method with 88.89%. The other methods are very rare while in some of the papers sampling method or sample size is not even mentioned.

**Table 7:** Data Collection Methods (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Convenience Sampling	104	88.89
Systematic Sampling	7	5.99
Simple Random Sampling	4	3.41
Cluster Sampling	2	1.71
<b>Total</b>	117	100.00

**Table 8:** Sample Size (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
200 or less	43	35.54
201 - 400	40	33.05
401 - 600	22	18.18
601 - 800	6	4.97
801- 1000	5	4.13
1001 or more	5	4.13
<b>Total</b>	121	100.00

In a very large amount of the papers the sample size is not calculated, set by the researcher. Proceeding papers have sample size greater than 600 are very rare.

## 6. DATA COLLECTION

When the data collection processes are examined, it is seen that questionnaires are the mostly preferred ones, while focus groups are the most preferred qualitative method. Researches also sometimes use face-to-face interview, scenario and simulation techniques.

## 7. DATA ANALYSES

The proceeding papers are also evaluated by the data analyses. As it is shown on Table 9, the most commonly used statistical analyses are reliability–validity tests (16.83%), factor analysis (16.35%), regression analysis (12.50%), ANOVA (12.02%) and t test (10.58%).

The match between the research purpose, data structure and the used analyses were evaluated and noted that some researchers choose more popular analyses instead of the appropriate ones. Reliability and validity tests, factor and regression analyses seemed to be popular statistical analyses among Turkish marketing academicians. In some of the studies, the reliability of scales are lower than the generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach's Alpha, 70% [8]. Some of these analyses, the researchers have wrong applications. Data requirement assumptions are not commonly checked before applying

the analyses. It is also observed that the researchers do not use non-parametric analyses where they were appropriate.

Inappropriate or insufficient statistical analyses usage is another problem with the National Marketing Congresses' Proceeding papers. One of the example of this wrong usage is using t test, testing the differences between the mean values of two groups, testing the differences between the mean values of more than two groups instead of Anova [9]. There is also some serious problems in using factor, regression and discriminant analyses such as improper naming of factors, problems in selecting the appropriate method of regression analysis and in applying Morrison test in discriminant analysis.

**Table 9:** Data Analyses (2007-2009)

	Number	Frequency (%)
Reliability – Validity Tests	35	16.83
Factor Analysis	34	16.35
Regression Analysis	26	12.50
ANOVA	25	12.02
T test	22	10.58
Correlation Analysis	20	9.62
Chi-Square Test	16	7.69
Structural Equation Modeling	10	4.81
Content Analysis	6	2.88
Cluster Analysis	4	1.92
Discriminant Analysis	3	1.44
Analytical Hierarchy Process	2	0.96
Multi-Dimensional Scaling	2	0.96
Kruskal Wallis	2	0.96
META Analysis	1	0.48
<b>Total</b>	208	100.00

## 8. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, even with the positive trend in methodology there are some serious methodological problems in Turkish marketing researches. The most serious problem seems to be modeling, followed by hypothesis development, sampling and data analyses.

Although this sample is too small and specific with Turkish Marketing Congresses between the years of 2007 and 2009 to generalize, it would be a good start to discover the main problems. And hopefully could give a solid base for further research.

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