

The Change of Oral Presentations of National Anatomy Congresses Over the Years

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In this study, it is aimed to examine the characteristics and publication rates of oral presentations presented in national congresses.

Methods: The data about the oral presentations in national anatomy congresses (from 2016 to 2021), including the number of contributing institutions, the institutions that contributed the most oral presentations each year, and the publication rates of the oral presentations in the journals scanned in different indexes. In the study, the titles and the keywords were scanned using Google Scholar and Web of Science, and journal index details were noted.

Results: Of the national congresses we examined in our study, the most oral presentations (193) were the congress in 2019 and the least oral presentations (47) were the congress in 2017. The publication rate of oral presentations was highest in the papers of the congress in 2016 (42%) and at least in the papers of the congress in 2019 (13%). None of the oral presentations in the last congress held in 2021 were published until the time of our study. Large proportions (34%) of the papers that are accepted as oral presentations and published are radiological studies. 70% of the publications were published in journals indexed in Web of Science.

Conclusion: For both new and senior academics, congresses offer a useful and distinctive setting. Congress papers showcase the scientific opportunities and interests of various universities while also providing opportunities for collaboration. Attendance at a conference is significantly influenced by its location, timing, and financial situation.

Keywords: National anatomy congresses, oral presentation, publication rate

INTRODUCTION

Congresses and symposiums are unique and important academic platforms where individuals or groups present their experiences and studies establish a cooperation and communication network with different people and institutions discover innovations and developments in the field, and thus new working ideas and projects emerge.¹⁻³ In particular, national meetings in the mother tongue of the participants are the events where the interaction takes place the most and the mutual benefit is the highest. National congresses also have a great advantage due to the fact that they are less costly and troublesome (possible problems with travel, accommodation and nutrition) compared to international congresses.⁴

On the other hand, within the framework of our country's academic policies⁵⁻⁶, the higher scoring of international congresses, the increase in participation and accommodation fees due to the high cost of congresses held in the metropolitan cities of our country in recent years, the overlap of the dates of the congresses with the academic calendar or holidays, and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which has affected our country as well as

the whole world since March 2020, have adversely affected the participation to national congresses.⁷⁻⁸

Anatomical studies in Turkey have been examined bibliometrically in different researches before.⁹⁻¹⁰ Bibliometric analysis of congresses is very important in terms of reflecting the scientific productivity of congresses and the preferences of researchers as well as providing an idea about the scientific characteristics of the congresses. This study is a kind of bibliometric examination of national anatomy congresses and a complement to the study in which the publications in our national Anatomy journal were examined.⁹

The aim of this study was how the negative impact of participation in national congresses affected the rate at which the papers presented in the congress, which symbolized the effectiveness and quality of the congresses, became publications in refereed journals. In this context, in our study, the national anatomy congresses of the last six years, including the pandemic period, and the oral presentations presented in these congresses were examined.

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Table 1. National anatomy congresses and oral presentations held between 2016-2021.

Congresses	Place	Number of Oral Presentations
2016 (17th National)	Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Eskisehir	48
2017 (18th National)	Taksim International Abant Hotel, Bolu	47
2018 (19th National)	Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya	176
2019 (20th National)	İstanbul Medipol University, İstanbul	193
2020 (21st National)	Ankara University, Online	94
2021 (22nd National)	Gazi and Yuksek Ihtisas Universities, Online	51

METHODS

In our study, six national congresses held between 2016 and 2021 and 558 oral presentations presented in these congresses were included. Although previous studies have stated that it takes five years for papers to turn into publication¹, the average time to turn into publication in the same studies was found to be about twenty months. For this reason, congresses in 2020 and 2021 were also included in the study in order to examine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since an international congress (International Symposium of Morphological Sciences) was held in our country in 2015, the year 2016 was taken as the beginning because no national congress was held in 2015.

Each congress was evaluated in terms of accepted oral presentations and general characteristics (location, opportunities), and oral presentations were examined by factors such as field of study, publication rate, speed of return to publication and index of the journal in which it was published. We obtained the imprints of the papers presented in the congresses from the supplementary issues of *Anatomy*, an international journal of experimental and clinical anatomy, which is the publication organ of the Turkish Anatomy and Clinical Anatomy Association, and the ones for 2021 from the congress program.

Main Points:

- National congresses, where participation has decreased due to their low value in academic evaluations and the difficulties brought about by physical participation, can be re-popularized by internationalizing and conducting them online.
- The publication rate of oral presentations presented in Turkish National Anatomy congresses decreases every year. The fact that this is despite the increasing number of papers shows that academics should be encouraged to publish their work.
- The fact that 70% of the articles published after being presented in our national congresses are indexed in Web of Science shows that the studies are of high quality.

RESULTS

The national anatomy congresses we examined within the scope of our study and the number of oral presentations presented are given in Table 1. While approximately 48 oral presentations were included in the national congresses held in 2016 and 2017 in Table 1, the number of oral presentations increased two-and-a-half times due to the 1st International Mediterranean Congress of Anatomists held simultaneously with the national congress in 2018. In the congress held by Istanbul Medipol University in 2019, the highest number of oral presentations were seen with the acceptance of papers from clinical branches as well as facilities such as accommodation in student dormitories. Although the first congress of the pandemic period was held online within the framework of the measures, it was reduced by half compared to the previous congress, twice as many oral presentations were presented compared to our classical congresses (Table 1).

When the study areas of the oral presentations presented in national congresses were examined, it was seen that a large part (on average 30%) consisted of radiological studies (Figure 1). While radiological studies have maintained their popularity during the pandemic period, the rate of experimental studies has decreased from 27% to 5%. Reports on anatomy education reached 10% with the pandemic period (Figure 1).

Figure 1

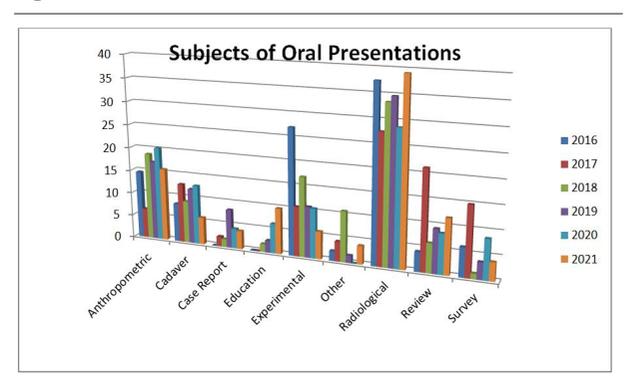


Table 2. Indices of the journals published by the oral presentations presented at the national anatomy congresses.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
SCI-E	15	8	23	16	14
ESCI	3	2	9	1	2
Turkish Citation Index	0	2	14	4	4
EBSCO-SCOP-US-Medline	0	2	3	1	4
Google Scholar-DOAJ-Cross-Ref	1	0	4	1	0
Index Copernicus	1	0	2	3	0
TOTAL	20	14	55	26	24

SCI-E, Science Citation Index Expanded; ESCI, Emerging Source Science Citation Index

The rate of publication of oral presentations presented at national anatomy congresses has declined greatly over the years (Figure 2). While 42% of the oral presentations in the first congress we examined (held in 2016) were published in journals, none of the presentations in the last congress were published until the time our study was carried out (taking place in 2021). In the congress in 2019, where the most papers were presented, the publication rate was lower (13%) compared to other years (around 30%).

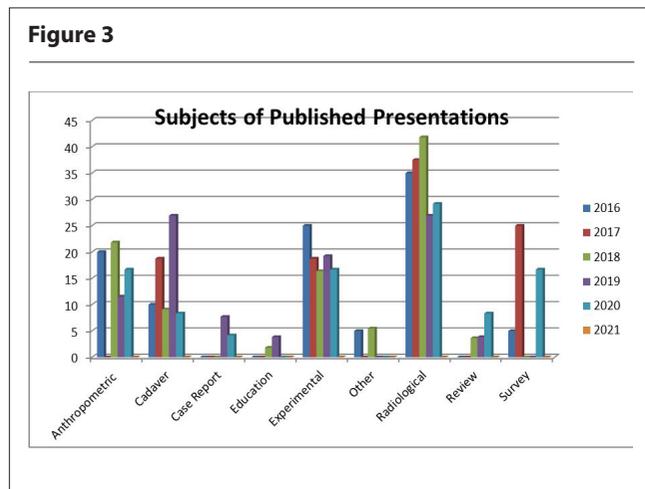
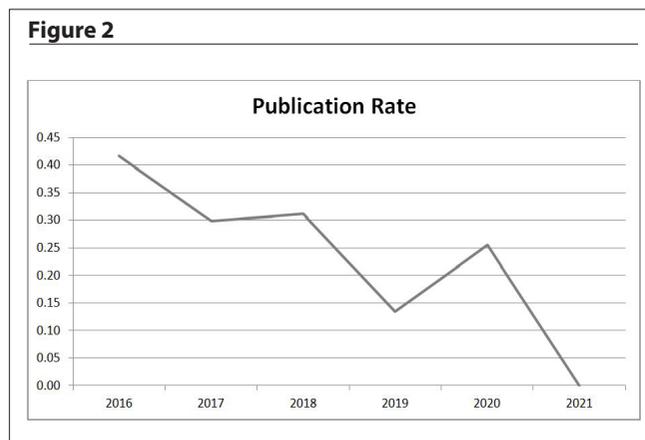


Table 3. The proportion of the indices (SCI) of the journals in which the papers presented at national congresses are published.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average
SCI-E(%)	75	57.1	41.8	61.5	58.3	58.8
SCI-E+ES-CI(%)	90	71.4	58.2	65.4	66.7	70.3

SCI-E, Science Citation Index Expanded; ESCI, Emerging Source Science Citation Index

When we examine the published oral presentations from the presented papers, radiological studies similarly constitute the vast majority (five-year average 34%). This was followed by experimental studies with an average of 19%, with the lowest rate of publication of educational studies (1.2%, Figure 3).

The indexes of the published papers and the journals in which they were published were examined and given in Table 2. It has been observed that most of the studies have been published in journals indexed in Science Citation Index –Expanded (SCI and SCI-E). Publication in Turkish Citation Index journals has become the second choice of authors.

When the proportions of the publications presented in the congresses and scanned in Web of Science were examined according to the years, it was seen that SCI-E journals had an average of approximately 59% and reached up to 70% with the Emerging Source Science Index (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

National congresses are unique and necessary environments for the sharing and development of academics who speak the same language. The quality of these congresses is determined by the quality of the papers presented in the congresses and, indirectly, by the transformation of these papers into publications in refereed journals. Gurses et al. (2017)¹ examined the national anatomy congresses held in 2007 and 2008, but it became necessary to carry out this study due to various developments in the intervening period and the limitations in the study.

Our study is also a complimentary work of Adanır et al.⁹ which examines the published articles in the Anatomy journal bibliometrically. They investigated the articles published in the regular issues of the journal while we examined the abstracts usually published in the special issues of the journal.

Especially as a result of the changes made in the Academic Incentive Practice⁵ that started in 2015, the preferences of academicians shifted to international congresses with the exclusion of national congresses from evaluation. In our study, it is seen in the “1st International Mediterranean Anatomy Congress” held simultaneously with the “19th National Anatomy Congress” held in Konya and the number of oral presentations increased from 47 in previous years to 176 (Table 1). As a result of the changes made by the Higher Education Institution in the criteria related to international congresses, it is not possible to continue international congresses for a certain field. As a result, academics have

found a solution in organizing and participating in international multidisciplinary congresses.¹¹

Another obstacle to the participation of Turkish academics in the congresses is economic reasons.¹¹ The fact that universities do not able to provide congress participation support, transportation opportunities to the place where the congress is held, travel and accommodation costs affect the participation in the congress. While the participation in the national congress held in Abant in 2017 and the number of oral presentations presented relatively were low, the fact that the number of oral presentations in the 20th National Anatomy Congress in Istanbul in 2019, where Medipol University provided accommodation and transportation facilities, was 193 shows the importance of these factors.

Another important aspect of our study is the online activities that started with the coronavirus pandemic, which emerged in China at the end of 2019 and caused restrictions and closures in Turkey in March 2020. These activities, which were carried out using digital platforms to prevent the spread of the epidemic, allowed to overcome elements such as time and space and also significantly reduced economic problems and carbon footprint.¹² We observed the impact of this at the first online national anatomy congress in 2020 (94 oral presentations). The likely reason we won't see it at the convention in 2021 is that remote work slows down or interrupts scientific research.¹³

The subject distribution rates of the oral presentations in the congresses we examined in our study are given in Figure 1 and it is seen that the majority of the congresses consisted of radiological studies. Case report type papers are usually presented as posters and are seen in very small numbers as oral presentations. While the number of studies on anatomy education was low in the first

years, it started to increase during the pandemic period. On the other hand, the number of papers of experimental studies has decreased over the years. The distribution in oral presentation rates was also parallel in the publications and the most publications came from the studies in the radiological field of study. When the rate of conversion of oral presentations into publications, which is the main purpose of our study, is examined, the decrease has started with 42% in 2016, contrary to the previous study, has shown a tendency to decrease over the years (Figure 2). This rate, which ranged from 34% to 75% in previous studies, was found to be an average of 24% in our study, and was found to be 28% on average in case of exclusion of this congress due to the fact that none of the 2021 papers were published (Table 4). The fact that the publication rate is so low can be interpreted as a decrease in the quality of the papers presented in the congress. On the other hand, as emphasized in previous studies, it was proposed to pass five years from the date of the congress to determine the rate of publication of the papers², but since the publication rate was 20.94 ± 16.66 months and the life of the scientific information was three years¹⁴, it is thought that sufficient time has passed, including the 2020 congress. If the congresses in 2016 and 2017 are taken as a basis, the publication rate has increased to 36% and it is still less than half of result of the observation of Gürses et al. (2017)¹. In our study, the publication time of the papers was found to be 18.04 ± 4.1 months and it was found to be faster compared to other studies.

When the indices of the journals in which the papers published in our study were examined, an average of 58.8% was found in Science Citation Index-Expanded journals and 70.3% when Emerging Source Science Index journals were included. This result shows that the studies carried out and published by our academicians are very valuable.

Table 4. Publication rates of papers presented in national congresses of different disciplines

	Number of meetings included	Number of abstracts presented	Publication rates	Reference
Psychiatry	5	187	34%	Kahve et al (2020) ¹⁵
Orthopaedics	1	770	44%	Yalcinkaya and Bagatur (2013) ¹⁶
Endocrinology	3	161	68.4%	Sahin Ersoy et al (2015) ¹⁷
Anatomy	2	342	75%	Gurses et al (2017) ¹
Anesthesiology and Reanimation	4	319	42.3%	Tok Cekmecelioglu (2019) ³
Present study (Anatomy)	6(5†)	558	24(28†)% (2016–2017, 36%‡)	

† Since oral presentations in 2021 have not been published, the recalculated average.

‡ According to Gursel et al. (2017), the average publication rate of oral presentations from congresses five years ago.

When we look at the constraints related to our study, at first there is the difficulty of classification due to the fact that the study areas are intertwined. In addition, the fact that the Abstract Book of the National Anatomy Congress in 2021, the second national congress in the pandemic period, has not been published has caused difficulty in researching the papers examined.

Our study is original and important in that it includes online national congresses held during the pandemic period and shows the current status of oral presentations presented in national anatomy congresses. On the other hand, since the publication of papers as an article is a time-consuming process, re-examination can be made in the following years.

CONCLUSION

Examination of abstracts presented in national congress and their publication in later period gives an insight to the organising committees and the reviewers of the congress about choosing abstracts for oral presentations. The findings of this study are important for improving the scientific quality of national Anatomy congress of Turkey.

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