



# An Assessment of E-document Retrieval Services in Turkey's Medical Libraries

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## Abstract

Electronic resources, particularly electronic databases, electronic articles, and electronic documents, are among the foremost resources used in making scientific information accessible to library users. Libraries and health institutions in Turkey have inevitably joined in a cooperative effort to facilitate the process of accessing medical information. Medical libraries are in cooperation with each other in providing information services and accessing articles in national and international publications. These joint efforts not only encompass systems in individual libraries but also facilitate document retrieval on the basis of a national network. ULAKBİM's TÜBESS and ANKOS's KİTS can be cited as two examples of these nation-wide document retrieval systems. The objective of the present study has been to obtain information on electronic retrieval services in medical libraries, a practice that has a direct impact on the quality of clinical and scientific research in Turkey. The study comprises a subject-based statistical analysis of e-journal types and article request figures for e-document retrieval services over the period 2006-2011 at two libraries in Istanbul that serve the nursing and dentistry schools of two universities.

**Keywords:** Medical librarianship, e-documents, e-journals, document retrieval, article request, ILL.

## Introduction

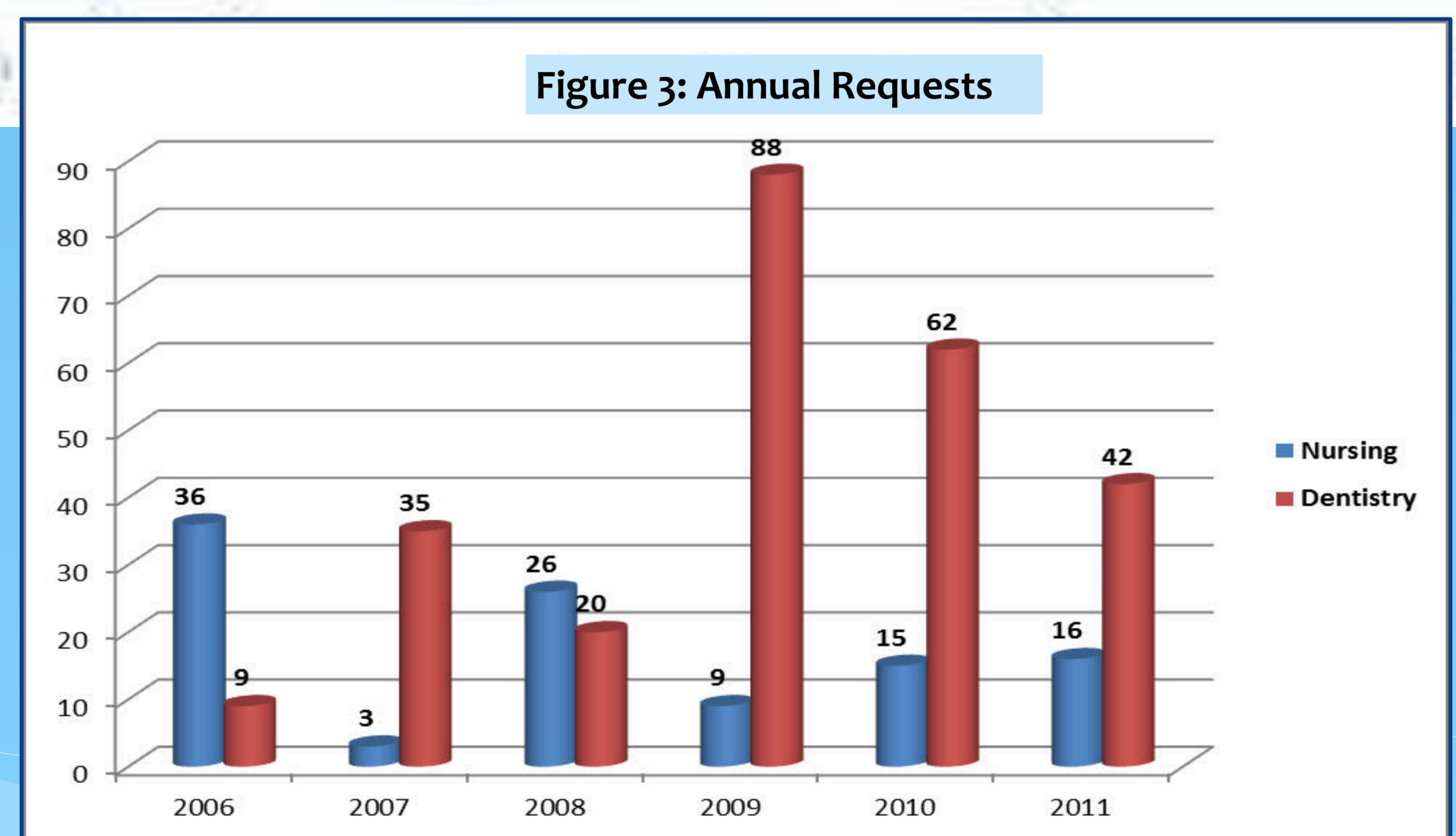
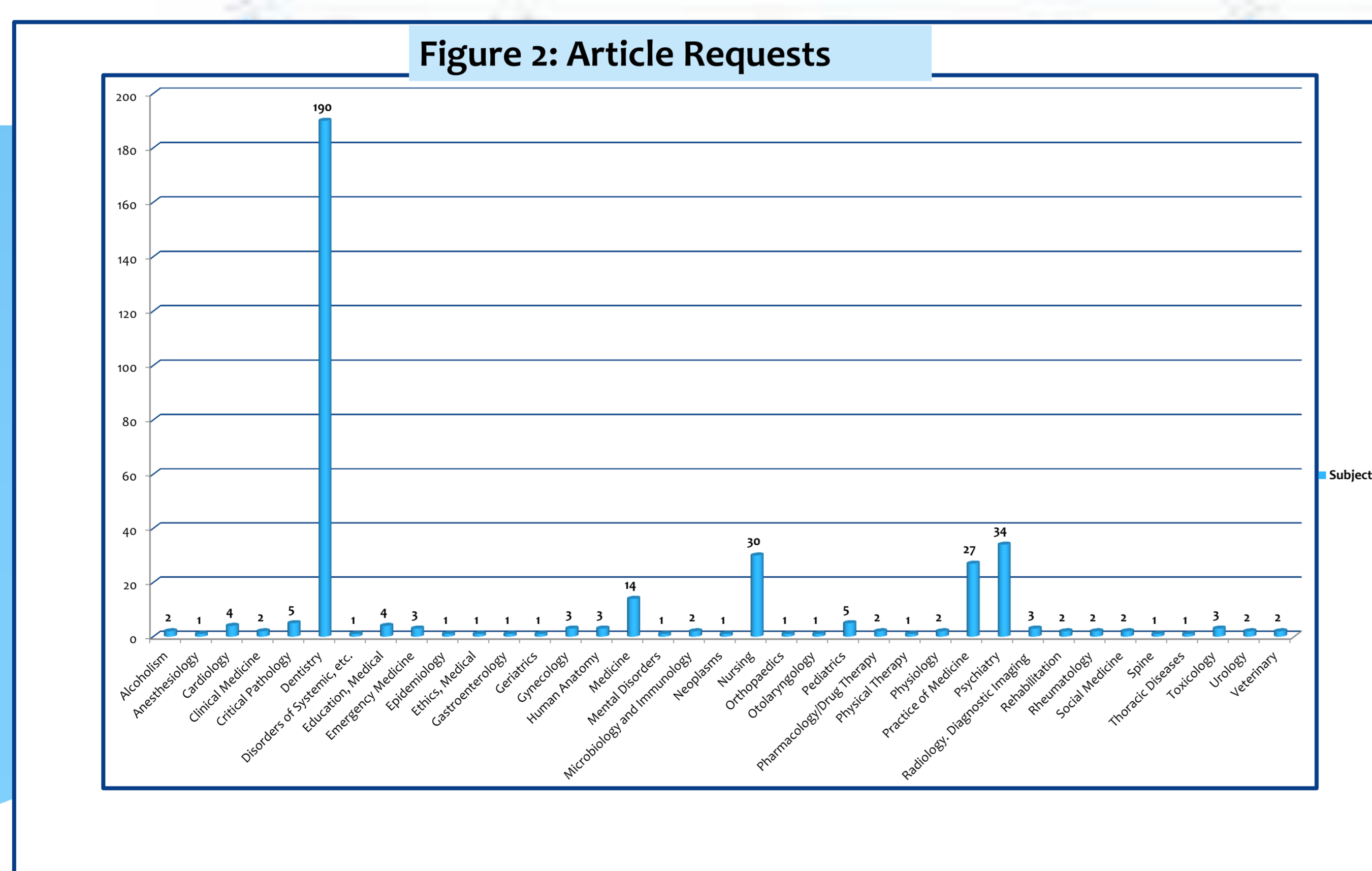
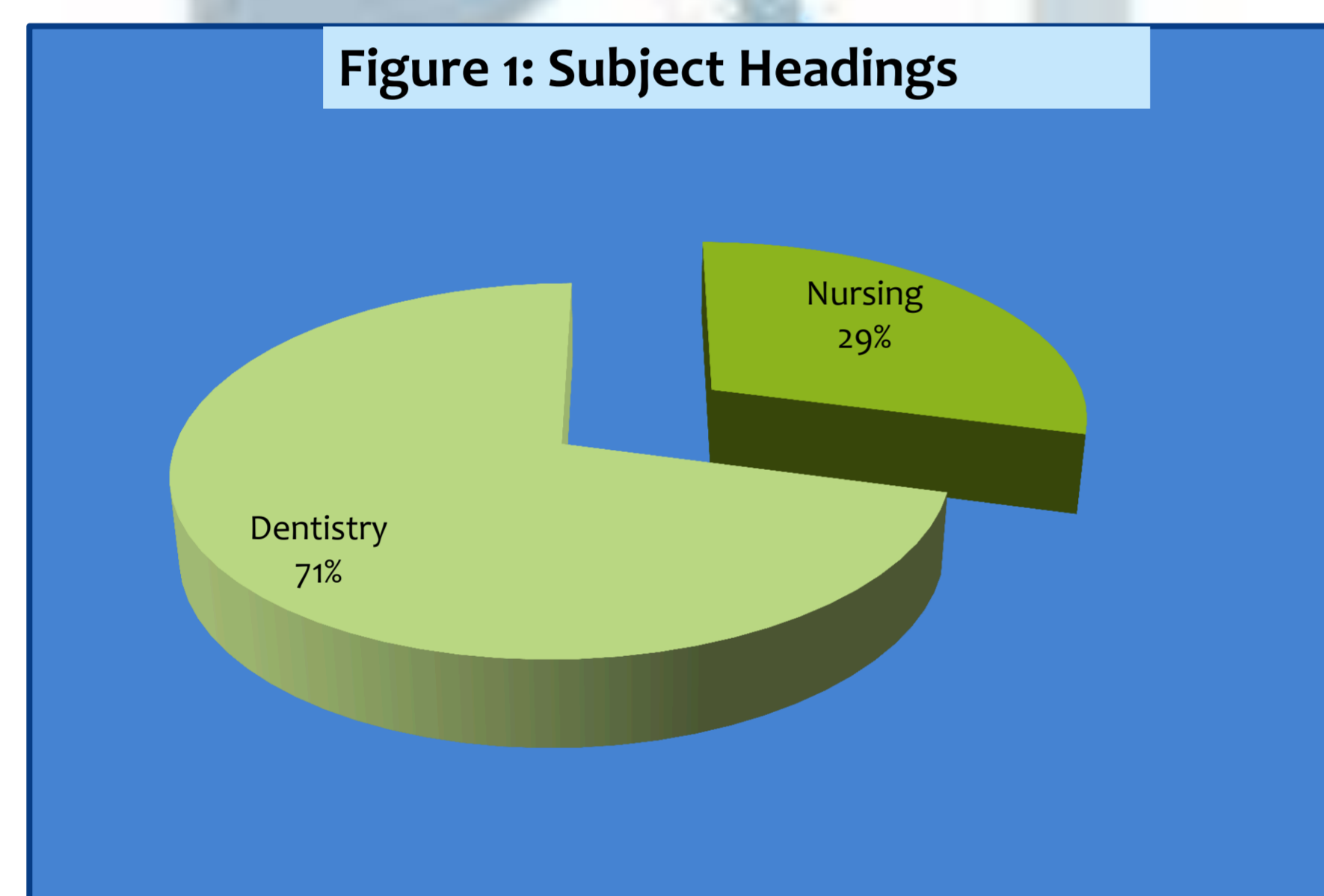
The medical libraries in Turkey cooperate among themselves and with the hospitals in document retrieval. There are two major organizations in Turkey that provide national document retrieval services. TÜBESS (TÜBESS, 2012) has the objective of meeting the demand of users for academic information, cooperating with other information centers in the country in an effort to share resources. The sharing of resources is carried out by providing photocopies or lending out resources via the information delivery unit of the information center that is part of TÜBESS. Another organization is KİTS (Inter-library Cooperative Tracking System), operated by the ANKOS Cooperative Research Group; this organization has been active since 2006 (KİTS, 2012). The aim of this organization is to carry out online tracking of resources shared by the libraries/information centers of Turkey's universities. The system is open to institutions that are ANKOS members and is completely free of charge. This study took the model of two libraries, one of a nursing school, the other of a dentistry school, and sought to analyze the documentation retrieval data available at these libraries.

## Method

This study benefited from the statistical information collected over the period 2006-2011 with regard to e-document delivery services at two university libraries in Istanbul—one a nursing school library and the other a dentistry school library. The content (subject headings) and the numbers of article requests were analyzed by year in the data evaluation. The data analysis of the research was carried out at the Istanbul University Dentistry Faculty Library and the Koç University Nursing School Library. In the evaluation of the data, frequency distribution and percentage values were examined numerically and in graphic form as descriptive statistics.

## Results

This study analyzed 256 article requests from the Istanbul University, Faculty of Dentistry Library, and 105 from the Koç University Nursing School Library. The articles were obtained from TÜBESS (Information Delivery System of Turkey). According to the data collected on e-document delivery, 71% of the e-documents provided from both libraries were in the field of dentistry and 29% in the field of nursing. An analysis of the subjects for which article requests were made showed that the majority of articles were requested in the field of dentistry (190), and the other larger groups of requests were in psychiatry (34), nursing (30), the practice of medicine (27), and medicine (14). The largest number of requests for e-document delivery from the dentistry library was recorded in 2009 and 2010. In the nursing library, an electronic information delivery service was used in the years 2006 and 2008 (Figure 1). According to the analysis of the subjects of the article requests, the majority of articles were requested in the field of dentistry (190), and the other larger groups of requests were in psychiatry (34), nursing (30), the practice of medicine (27), and medicine (14) (Figure 2). The largest number of requests for e-document delivery made from the dentistry library were recorded in 2009 and 2010; the least number of requests were seen in 2006. In the nursing library, electronic information delivery services were used the most in the years 2006 and 2008. The least number of requests were made in 2007 (Figure 3).



## Conclusion

Information and documents obtained from medical libraries must be of a quality that answers the medical needs of individuals, containing updated, accurate, meaningful and quickly accessible information, as well as new data on the latest developments in medicine and new diagnosis and treatment methods. Medical libraries provide their users with access to scientific information through the use of electronic resources, particularly electronic databases and electronic articles.

According to the data on e-document delivery services, the fields that particularly attracted requests of e-document retrieval in the libraries of a dentistry school and a nursing school at two Turkish universities were the following: alcoholism, anesthesiology, cardiology, clinical medicine, clinical pathology, dentistry, disorders of systemic, metabolic or environmental origin, etc., medical education, emergency medicine, epidemiology, medical ethics, gastroenterology, geriatrics, gynecology, human anatomy, medicine, mental disorders, microbiology & immunology, neoplasms, nursing, orthopedics, otolaryngology, pediatrics, pharmacology/drug therapy, physical therapy, physiology, practice of medicine, psychiatry, radiology, rehabilitation, rheumatology, social medicine, spine, thoracic diseases, toxicology, urology and veterinary medicine.

## References

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