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Index

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Directory of Research Journals Indexing

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Misconduct and unethical behavior may be identified and brought to the attention of the editor or publisher at any time, by anyone.

Whoever informs the editor or publisher of such conduct should provide sufficient information and evidence in order for an investigation to be initiated. All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in the same way, until a decision or conclusion is reached.

Investigation

An initial decision should be taken by the editor, who should consult with or seek advice from the Editorial board or the publisher, if appropriate.

Evidence should be gathered, while avoiding spreading any allegations beyond those who need to know.

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Minor misconduct might be dealt with between the editor and the author, without the need to consult more widely. In any event, the author should be given the opportunity to respond to any allegations. If the author responds and is willing to correct the misconduct, the review process may continue.

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In case of serious misconduct, the editor should notify the author, and withdraw the paper from the further procedure of the review process. If the paper is already published, the withdrawal notification should be published at the web page of the journal, sent to author, and in some serious cases the employers of the accused should be notified. The editor, in consultation with the Editorial board or the publisher, should make the decision whether or not to involve the employers, either by examining the available evidence themselves or by further consultation with a limited number of experts.

ALPHANUMERIC JOURNAL

Volume 8, Issue 1, 2020

CONTENTS

Evaluating the Performance of the Production Line with Simulation Approach in Meat Processing Industry: A Case from Turkey	1-16
Sinem Büyüksaatçi Kiriş, Merve Ünal	Research Article
The Relationship between Unemployment Rates and Renewable Energy Consumption: Evidence from Fourier ADL Cointegration Test	17-28
Veli Yılandı, Emel İslamoğlu, Sinem Yıldırım, Gökçe Candan	Research Article
Investigation of Causality Relationships among COVID-19 Cases, ISE100 Index, Dollar, Euro, Gram Gold Prices and 2 Years Bond Rates: The Case of Turkey	29-42
Yüksel Akay Ünvan	Research Article
Machine Coded Compact Genetic Algorithms for Real Parameter Optimization Problems	43-58
Mehmet Hakan Satman, Emre Akadal	Research Article
Modeling of Energy Consumption Forecast with Economic Indicators Using Particle Swarm Optimization and Genetic Algorithm: An Application in Turkey between 1979 and 2050	59-78
Emre Yakut, Ezel Özkan	Research Article
Global Criterion Approach for the Solution of Multiple Criteria Data Envelopment Analysis Model: An Application at Packaging Waste Collection and Separation Facilities	79-96
Talip Arsu, Nurullah Umarusman	Research Article
Sustainable Warehousing: Selecting The Best Warehouse for Solar Transformation	97-110
Rasih Boztepe, Onur Çetin	Research Article
Clustering Countries by K-Means Method According to Causes of Death	111-130
Ölüm Nedenlerine Göre K-Ortalamlar Yöntemi İle Ülkelerin Kümelenmesi	
Cem Gürler, Mehmet Çağlar, Onur Önay	Research Article
A Comparison of Economic Expectations In Germany and Turkey: An Analysis of ZEW and Economic Trust Index Sentiment Indicators	131-142
Almanya ve Türkiye Ekonomik Beklentilerinin Karşılaştırılması: ZEW Ve Ekonomik Güven Endeksi Duyarlılık Göstergelerinin Analizi	
Hakan Eryüzlü, Sertaç Hopoğlu	Research Article
Mediation Role of Anxiety in the Effect of Employee Perceptions of Job Insecurity on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors	143-162
Çalışanların İş Güvencesizliğine Yönelik Algılarının Örgütsel Vatandaşlık Davranışlarına Etkisinde Kaygının Aracı Rolü	
Seda Mumlu Karanfil, Altan Doğan	Research Article