| Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi|

Distance Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic: What is Happening at Home?

COVID-19 Salgını Sırasında Uzaktan Eğitim: Evde Neler Oluyor?

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the research is to reveal the status of distance education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic by consulting students and parents.

Design/Methodology/Approach: "Case study model", one of the qualitative research models, was used in the study. The study group consisted of 32 primary school students and 31 parents. Data were collected through interviews with parents and students. Content analysis was applied in the process of examining the student and parent interview recordings. The analysis of data was done using the NVivo qualitative analysis program.

Findings: The answers of students and parent were grouped under six main themes as; "Educational Process, Family Support, School, Roots of the Problems, School or Distance Education?, Request-Suggestion".

Highlights: Distance learning devices and rooms are shared or used alternately when there is more than one student at home. It is understood that the responsibilities of parents on the education of their children have increased during the distance education process and this situation also puts a strain on the parents. During the distance education process it has been understood that problem in accessing (Education Information Network) EBA and disconnecting from EBA and Zoom during the lesson, not being able to enter the system due to the high number of users logged in at the same time, video and sound problems and lack of technological equipment.

Öz

Çalışmanın amacı: Araştırmanın amacı; COVID-19 salgını sürecinde ilkokullardaki uzaktan eğitimin durumunu öğrenci ve veli görüşlerine başvurarak ortaya koymaktır.

Materyal ve Yöntem: Araştırmada nitel araştırma modellerinden ''durum çalışması modeli'' kullanılmıştır. Çalışma grubu 32 ilkokul öğrencisi ve 31 veliden oluşmaktadır. Veriler veli ve öğrencilerle yapılan görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Öğrenci ve veli görüşme kayıtlarının incelenmesi sürecinde içerik analizi uygulanmıştır. Verilerin analizi NVivo nitel analiz programı kullanılarak yapılmıştır.

Bulgular: Öğrencilerin ve velilerin cevapları; "Eğitim Süreci, Aile Desteği, Okul, Sorunların Kaynakları, Okul mu Uzaktan Eğitim mi?, İstek-Öneri" olmak üzere altı ana tema altında toplanmıştır.

Önemli Vurgular: Evde birden fazla öğrenci olduğunda odalar paylaşılmakta veya dönüşümlü kullanılmaktadır. Uzaktan eğitim sürecinde velilerin çocuklarının eğitimi üzerindeki sorumluluklarının arttığı ve bu durumun velileri de zorladığı anlaşılmaktadır. Uzaktan eğitim sürecinde en çok internetin çekmemesi veya kopması, EBA'ya erişememe, ders esnasında EBA (Eğitim Bilişim Ağı) ve Zoom'da yaşanan kopmalar, yoğunluktan dolayı sisteme girememe, görüntü ve ses bozukluğu, teknolojik araç-gereç eksikliği gibi problemler yaşandığı anlaşılmaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

Distance education processes in the world have come up today as supportive of traditional education or as an alternative to traditional education. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which started in China at the end of 2019 and affected the whole world in 2020, distance education became a necessity, not an option, when schools were closed. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 as a "Pandemic" on March 11, 2020. The pandemic affected the whole world in terms of education as well as health, economic, political and social aspects. In this context, the idea of closing schools to reduce the spread of the pandemic has been implemented worldwide (UNESCO, 2020; UNICEF, 2020).

The education of students suffered cuts all over the world together with the closure of schools, so the education system in Türkiye was also affected by this situation. The total number of students affected by the interruption of education has been about 26 million in Türkiye and the number of students affected at primary and secondary levels were about 18 million (Higher Education Council, 2020; Ministry of Education, 2020a). Along with the closure of schools, distance education activities have been put to work to ensure the continuity of education in Türkiye.

In this process, schools were first closed on March 16, 2020 in Türkiye. Schools were not attended in any ways during the times when they were closed. Within the scope of face-to-face and distance education practices at primary, secondary and high school levels, it has been decided to continue education through 3 TV channels (TRT EBA TV) and Education Information Network (EBA) (Ministry of Education, 2020b). EBA is an interactive education site used by the Ministry of Education in the distance education process. In this process, it was decided to provide gradual and diluted face-to-face education at some grades (preschool, 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12th grades). During this period when schools were closed, including the practices of face-to-face education, students continued their education through distance education. Within the scope of the education provided by TRT EBA TV channels, lecture broadcasts for primary, secondary and high schools last all day, with an average of 25 minutes per lesson (EBA, 2020). In this context, a total of 1000 volunteer teachers from 112 different branches took part in the preparation of course publications. In this process, approximately 9,000 lecture videos were prepared for broadcast, while 722 extracurricular activity videos were made available to students (Ministry of Education, 2020c). At the same time, teachers continued their live lessons with their students through platforms such as Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, Microsoft Teams, as well as TRT EBA TV and EBA system.

The Ministry of National Education, teachers, students, parents and all stakeholders have endeavor to carry out distance education processes with maximum efficiency. However, distance education also has some limitations as well as many useful aspects for teachers and students. The important thing is to follow how this process works and reveal the problems experienced by students and parents in the distance education process. Identifying the problems experienced in the distance education process and developing solutions quickly will help the process to proceed properly. Determining the technical problems experienced in the distance education process, the problems caused by the school administration, teachers, parents and students and developing solutions in this direction will contribute to the improvement of the distance education infrastructure and distance education processes.

When the literature is examined, one can see that studies have been done on the attitudes of academicians, teachers, teacher candidates, students and parents towards distance education (Kocayiğit & Uşun, 2020; Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020; Yıldız, Çengel & Alkan; 2021) and the opinions of education stakeholders on the functioning of distance education (Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020; Gören et al., 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020; Kaynar et al., 2020; Keskin & Özer Kaya, 2020; Öz Ceviz et al., 2020; Serçemeli & Kurnaz, 2020; Şeren et al., 2020; Tarlakazan & Tarlakazan, 2020; Yurtbakan & Akyıldız, 2020), the problems encountered in the distance education process (Erzen & Ceylan, 2020; Gök & Akcan, 2022), the effectiveness of distance education (Başaran et al., 2020), disadvantaged groups in the distance education process (Sirem & Baş, 2020), the suitability of the education programs for distance education (Koç, 2021), EBA activities in the distance education process (Doğan & Koçak, 2020), steps taken by the Ministry of Education in the distance education process (Özer, 2020a), vocational and technical education in the distance education process (Özer, 2020b).

Many researchers showed rapid reflexes and conducted research on the state of distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, because the process is quite dynamic and variable and to reveal the situation of distance education at home new research is always needed. One of these dimensions is what is the status of home education processes during the distance education period? When the studies are examined, few studies have been found that reveal the situation of distance education at home. At the same time, studies on the determination of the problems experienced by students and parents are also limited. In this respect, it is thought that our study will fill the gap in the field.

For the first time, many unexperienced issues have come to light as the education-teaching processes continue from home using completely distance education methods. Especially for parents and children, this process has presented a very different situation. More than ever before, parents have assumed the role of teachers. Students set up the classroom environment through online tools without their teachers and friends. Students who started the first grade of primary school continued their school life for a long time without seeing their classes, teachers and friends. Students continued most of the pandemic process with distance education processes from home.

In this context, the purpose of the research is to reveal the status of distance education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic by consulting students and parents. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the study:

1. What are the opinions of primary school students regarding the distance education activities implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What are the parents' opinions regarding the distance education activities implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic?

METHOD/MATERIALS

This research is a qualitative study that aims to reveal the status of distance education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Case study model", one of the qualitative research models, was used in the study. Case study is a method in which one or more events, individual, setting, program, social group or other interconnected systems are examined in depth in their natural context (McMillan, 2008). Since there is more than one unit of analysis selected in the study, 'nested multiple case pattern' was used among case study designs (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Study Group

32 primary school students studying in Türkiye's province of Zonguldak and 31 parents who have students at primary school constitute the study group. The people in the study group do not have kinship relations. The reason for this preference is to reach more information about different home environments. Participants in the study group were selected on a voluntary basis. At the stage of determining the students and parents to be interviewed, the maximum diversity sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used. While determining the sample, it was tried to diversify the characteristics of the people as much as possible. Students were selected from 9 different primary schools. Parents were selected from 11 different primary schools. In the selection of students and parents, it is aimed that the numbers of male and female are close to each other. Information on the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Students and Parents Interviewed

Grade level	Students		Parents	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1th grade	4	5	6	2
2th grade	4	3	4	3
3th grade	6	3	6	2
4th grade	4	3	5	3
Total	32		31	

Data Collection Tools

Parent-student interview form

A semi-structured interview forms was prepared by the researcher to collect interview data. Separate forms have been developed for both parents and students (Appendix-1, Appendix-2). With the help of this forms, it is aimed to get the opinions of students and parents about the status of distance education at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the development of student and parent interview forms, a question pool was created by examining the literature first. Then, the questions were studied and the final version of the interview forms was obtained by taking expert opinions. While creating the forms, the opinions of two academicians (1 Asst. Prof. Dr, 1 Dr.) working in the field of classroom education was consulted. The forms consist of two parts. In the first part, there is demographic information of students and parents, and in the second part, there are 7 different open-ended questions for students and parents about distance education processes. For the pilot application of the interview forms, interviews were held with 3 students and 3 parents, and it was tested whether the questions were understood correctly and whether they were suitable for the purpose of the research.

Voice recordings

The researcher tried to prevent data loss and increase the validity and reliability by recording the interviews with students and parents with a voice recorder during the data collection process. The sound recordings were made with the consent permission of the participants.

Data Collection

The research data were collected by the researcher through interviews with parents and students during the 2020-2021 fall semester. Using the semi-structured interview method in the study, interviews about the status of distance education processes were done with primary school students and the parents who have students in primary school by using telephone and online tools. During the interviews, the interviews were recorded with a tape recorder with the permission of the participants. The data obtained as a result of the interviews were classified using computer and made ready to be analyzed.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used in the process of examining the student and parent interview recordings. The analysis of the interview data was done using the NVivo qualitative analysis program. Within this framework, firstly, data sets were read with an inductive approach and then they were codified. After coding, themes were created and reliability and validity were tried to be increased by checking codes and themes.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher transcribed the voice recordings twice in order to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data sets. In addition, accuracy of voice recordings were listened to and checked by a graduate student. The researcher made the content analysis by spreading the process to a longer period and repeating this process to ensure coding accuracy and reliability. At the same time, the researcher tried to increase the code and theme accuracy by constantly checking the codes and the themes. In addition, the accuracy and reliability of the codes and themes created were tried to be increased by obtaining expert opinions. The expert, whose opinion was taken, works in the education faculty of a state university in Türkiye. The percentage of agreement between the encoders for the interview data was calculated as %87.83. Considering the data obtained, it is seen that the percentage of agreement is at a valid level (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The author has declared that he complies with all ethical rules. Ethical permission was obtained for this research from the Human Research Ethics Committee of Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University (10/11/2020-916).

FINDINGS

Findings Regarding the Interviews with the Students

The answers given by the students to the interview questions were analyzed and the findings obtained were presented under this heading. As can be seen in Figure 1; 'Education Process, Family Support, School, the Roots of the Problems, School or Distance Education?, Request-Suggestion' the data are grouped under six main themes according to the analyses done.
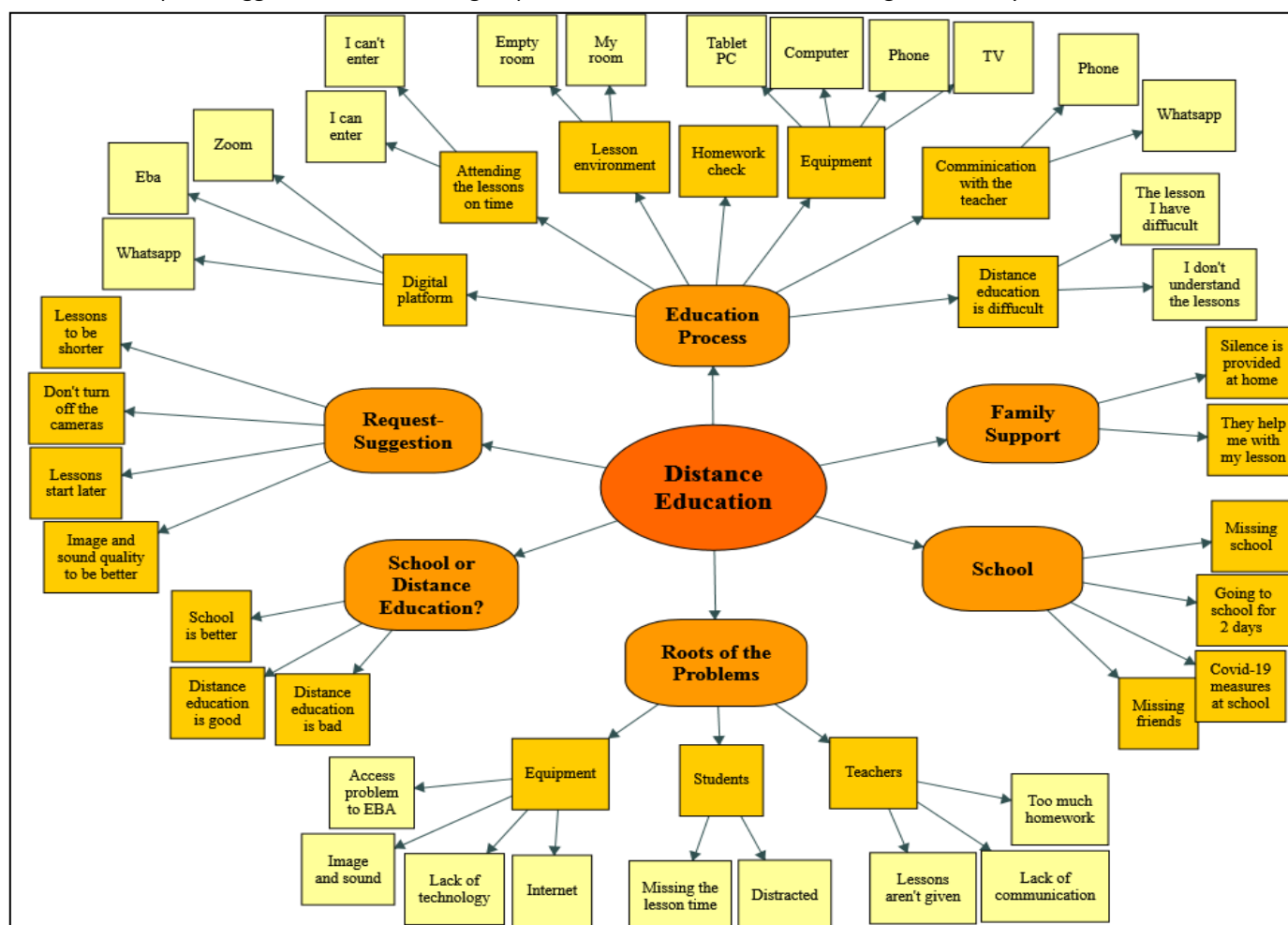

Figure 1. Themes and Sub-Themes Created According to Students' Answers

Interviewed students stated that they accessed the courses in the distance education process by using platforms such as TRT EBA TV, EBA, Zoom, Whatsapp regarding the sub-theme of 'digital platform'. Interviewed students stated that they were able to

attend their classes on time with the support of their families during the distance education process regarding the sub-theme of 'on time course entry'. Some students, on the other hand, stated that they could not attend the classes on time due to reasons such as forgetting the time of the lesson, falling asleep, and internet and infrastructure problems. Interviewed students stated that they sometimes give their lessons in their own rooms and sometimes in an empty room, depending on the conditions of the home environment, regarding the sub-theme of the 'lesson environment'. Interviewed students stated that they sent their homework to their teachers via platforms such as Whatsapp and Zoom regarding the 'homework check' sub-theme. The students who were interviewed regarding the sub-theme of 'equipment' stated that they had access to their lessons in the distance education process via computer, phone, tablet and TV. Interviewed students stated that they communicated with their teachers over the phone and Whatsapp application regarding the sub-theme of 'communication with the teacher'. Interviewed students stated that they had difficulties in courses such as Mathematics, English, Life Sciences, and Science in the distance education process related to the sub-theme of 'difficult distance education'. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S5: ''…The most difficult lesson for me is English…''

S11: ''…The teacher assign homework on Whatsapp and we show it to the teacher on Zoom…''

S16: ''…My brother is very young; he cries a lot. That's why I go to the living room and close the door. I listen to my teacher on the sofa…''

S18: ''…I attend EBA TV on television and live lessons on my tablet…''

S21: ''…Yes, my mother wakes me up, I can attend at 9-10…''

S24: ''…During the pandemic, the teacher sends photos on Whatsapp and we do it from there…''

S25: ''…I am using my mother's phone. I have no other devices other than that…''

Family Support Theme, 'silence is provided at home' and 'they help me with my lessons' subthemes were included. Regarding the sub-theme 'silence is maintained at home', the interviewed students stated that they attend the classes in a quiet environment in order not to be distracted during class times, and they said that family members turn off the television during class time and ensure silence at home. Interviewed students stated that they received support from their family members regarding the sub-theme 'they help with my lessons' during the distance education process, at points they could not understand about their lessons and for their homework. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S4: ''…They help. The television is turned off…''

S13: ''…Quietly, my mother knocks the door and enters. But she doesn't make any noise…''

S18: ''…I am doing my homework with my father. I only do homework with my mom on Thursdays…''

Within the School Theme, the sub-themes of 'missing friends, missing school, going to school for 2 days, COVID-19 measures at school' were included. Regarding the sub-theme of 'longing for friends', the interviewed students stated that they missed their friends during the distance education process, they had a good time playing games at school, and they were bored because they could not reach them. Interviewed students stated that they miss school and want to go to school regarding the sub-theme of 'longing for school'. Interviewed students stated that they went to school during the period when most of the schools were partially opened regarding the sub-theme of 'going to school for 2 days'. Interviewed students said that, regarding the sub-theme of 'COVID-19 measures at school', mask, distance and cleaning rules are generally observed at the school entrance and during their stay at the school, however, some students do not follow the rules. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S16: ''…I want to go to school, I used to have a good time with my friends, but now I am very sorry that the schools are closed…''

S17: ''…Sometimes I get bored when I don't have friends around. After I finish my homework, I think about the school. I cannot spare the time we played for myself…''

S19: ''…Going to school made me very happy. Seeing my teacher and my friends two days a week makes me happier…''

S20: ''…I would like to go to school for more days…''

S27: ''…We played distant games. Distant games, without touching each other…''

Within the Roots of the Problems Theme, sub-themes of 'equipment, students and teachers' were included. Interviewed students stated that they had problems related to the sub-theme of 'tools and equipment', such as the problem of not receiving the internet during the distance education process, EBA being kicked out of the system, visual and sound disorders, not being able to enter the system due to busyness, and lack of technological tools and equipment. The interviewed students stated that they forgot to attend the classes, missed the classes because they fell asleep, and could not attend the class on time regarding the sub-theme of 'student'. Interviewed students stated that they could not communicate with their teachers, teachers gave a lot of homework, and their teachers made the live lesson very short or not. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S9: ''…I have difficulties in doing and handing in all my homework because teachers send too much homework…''

S19: ''…Internet cuts out sometimes. For example, EBA is sometimes not accessible. The system logs us out a lot…''

S25: ''…I could not attend classes because I did not have a computer or a tablet and I fell behind…''

S27: ''…I want my friends not to make a noise in distance education. When they do so, I do not understand the topics…''

Within School or Distance Education? Theme, sub-themes of 'school is better, distance education is good, distance education is bad' were included. Interviewed students stated that the school is better because of the sub-theme 'school is better' because they can better understand the lessons at school and their communication with their teachers is easy. Interviewed students stated that distance education is good, their friends do not comply with pandemic rules, and they support distance education by stating that there is a risk of transmission of the disease regarding the sub-theme of 'distance education is good'. Interviewed students stated that distance education is bad by saying that they are bored in distance education, they do not like to teach in distance education, and they do not understand anything about the sub-theme of 'bad distance education'. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S5: ''…It is too bad and what I found there was boredom…''

S9: ''…I think it is nice. Because when we are face to face, the virus can be transmitted to us…''

S21: ''…I think the school is better than connecting on Zoom. After all, we could see our friends then…''

S27: ''…It is much better when we are at school. We take turns by raising hands. Then we understand subjects better. We cannot take turns in distance education…''

Regarding the Request-Suggestion Theme, the interviewed students want the cameras not to be turned off during the distance education process, shorter live lesson durations, lessons starting later, and better image and sound quality. In this context, the students' views are as follows:

S5: ''…They should take the lessons to a later time…''

S13: ''…I would like the lessons to be shortened…''

S29: ''…I think the cameras and sound in distance education should always be on. Because some students never respond. There are very few people who participate…''

Findings Regarding the Interviews with the Parents

The answers given by the parents to the interview questions were analyzed and the findings obtained were presented under this heading. As can be seen in Figure 2 'Education Process, Family Support, School, the Roots of the Problems, School or Distance Education?, Request-Suggestions, the data are grouped under six main themes according to the analyses done.
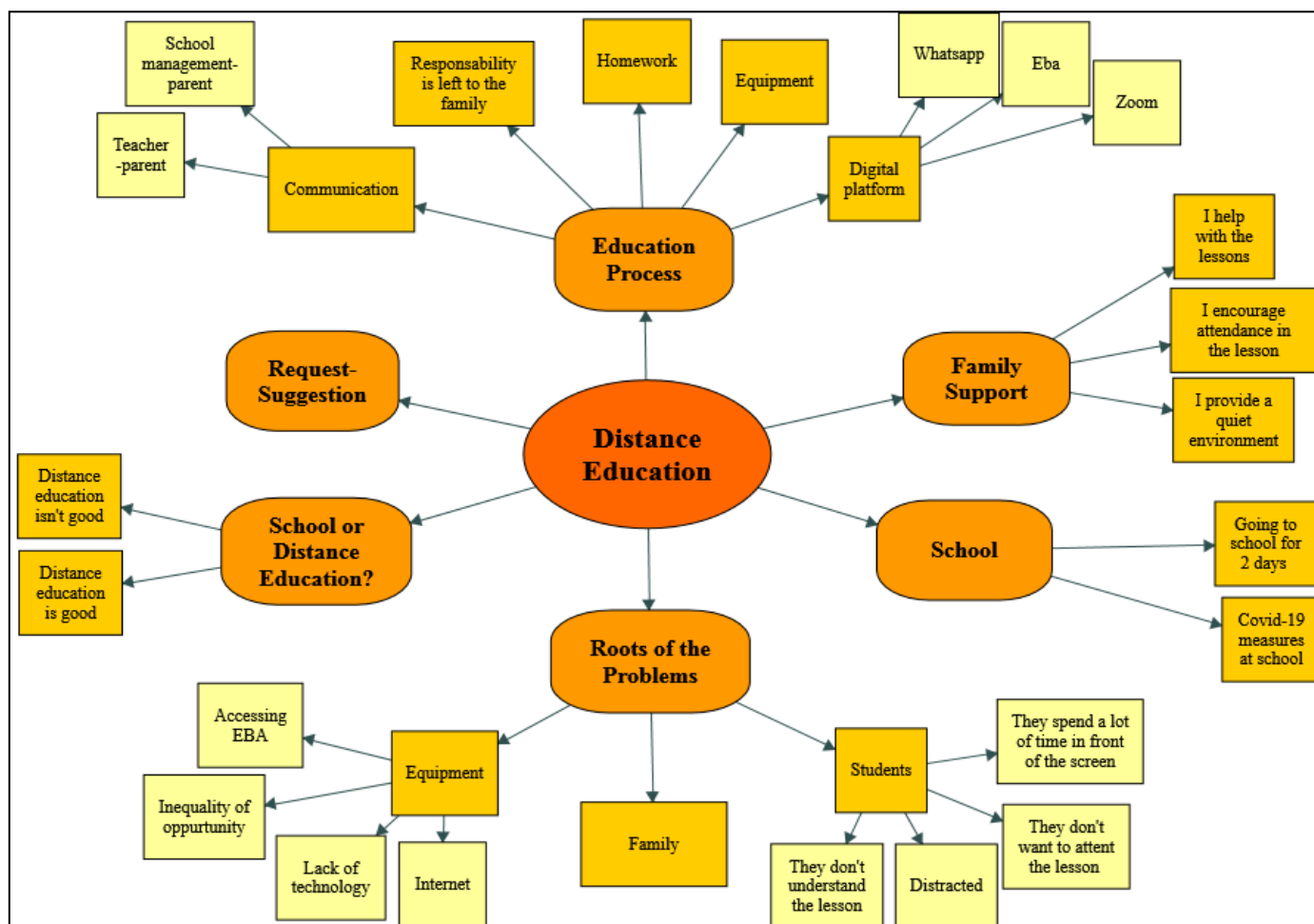

Figure 2. Themes and Sub-Themes Created According to Parents' Answers

Within the Education Process Theme, 'communication, responsibility is left to the family, homework, digital platform, equipment' sub-themes were included. The interviewed parents stated that the school administration did not communicate with them regarding the sub-theme of 'communication', while some stated that the school administration communicated with them. It is stated that teacher-parent communication is generally good in the distance education process. Interviewed parents, regarding the sub-theme of 'responsibility' is left to the family, stated that their responsibilities in the education of their children increased during the distance education process, and this situation puts a strain on the parents. The parents interviewed stated that regarding the sub-theme of 'homeworks', the teachers gave homework during the distance education process and the control of the homework was provided through the Whatsapp application. The interviewed parents stated that the sub-theme of 'digital platform', during the distance education process, the courses are held through platforms such as EBA, Zoom, Whatsapp. Interviewed parents stated that tools such as phones, computers, tablets and TVs are used in the distance education process regarding the sub-theme of 'equipment'. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P6: ''…We had to buy a computer because we had trouble with the phone…''

P7: ''…There was no communication regarding the distance education. Only the classroom teacher gave brief information. Our communication is carried out through the Whatsapp group…''

P19: ''…I am trying to be involved in this process since they do not have any teachers with them. But I cannot say that I am as good as a teacher…''

P18: ''…Too much homework is given. My child cannot keep up with the homework given by both EBA and the teacher. There should be a little bit of less homework maybe…''

P9: ''…We attend the lessons by phone, EBA or Zoom…''

The sub-themes of 'I encourage attendance in the lesson, I help with the lessons, I provide a quiet environment' were included in the Family Support Theme. Parents who were interviewed stated that, regarding the sub-theme I encourage attendance in the lesson, they follow the course hours, ensure that the students attend the course on time, monitor and motivate them to attend the courses in order to ensure their attendance during the distance education process. Interviewed parents stated that they try to help their children with their lessons, help with their homework, and buy reference books regarding the sub-theme 'I help with their lessons'. Parents who were interviewed stated that they try to provide a quiet environment to the students, even if they have difficulties in case of having more than one student at home, regarding the sub-theme 'I provide a quiet environment'. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P8: ''…We usually try to follow the lesson times and the course schedules. We try to check if he attends the lessons as much as possible…''

P12: ''…In the distance education process, we only have controls on how the homework is done, whether it is done correctly, and whether it is done or not…''

P15: ''…When my three children attended classes at the same time, it was a problem to locate them in the house. I was placing one of my child in the room, one at one end of the room and one at the other…''

'COVID-19 measures at school, going to school for 2 days' included in the School Theme. Interviewed parents stated that, regarding the sub-theme of 'COVID-19 measures at school', mask, distance and cleaning rules are generally observed during school entrances and exits and during their stay at school. Regarding the sub-theme of 'going to school for 2 days', some of the interviewed parents stated that they send their children to schools that are open 2 days a week because the school is more efficient and the children can acquire life skills at school better. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P2: ''…Parents were not allowed to enter the school. Disinfectant, masks, dividing the classes into two groups; these were implemented properly at school…''

P14: ''…I don't think education at home progresses very efficiently. Therefore, I think that our children should continue going to school by taking the necessary measures…''

Within the Roots of the Problem Theme, 'student, family and equipment' sub-themes were included. Interviewed parents, regarding the sub-theme of 'student', state that students cannot focus on their lessons and experience distraction during the distance education process. Interviewed parents stated that the lessons were inefficient due to the indifferent family attitude regarding the sub-theme of 'family'. Interviewed parents stated that they encountered problems related to the sub-theme of equipment, such as internet disconnection or disconnection during the distance education process, problems in accessing EBA, and disconnections in EBA and Zoom during the lesson. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P1: ''…He cannot focus too much on lessons, study or get much efficiency…''

P4: ''…I currently have a computer and a tablet at my house. I do not have a problem with that. But there are children who can't have them. They need to make necessary arrangements to make these available…''

P6: ''…Since I am concerned, I want other parents to be concerned as well. Because some children are constantly on the move at home. They are constantly asking questions that do not relate to the lesson content to the teacher…''

P25: ''…In this distance education process, children have become screen addicts. We encountered attention deficiency problems. The atmosphere in the house is not suitable for education…''

Within School or Distance Education? Theme, 'distance education is good' and 'distance education is not good' sub-themes were included. The interviewed parents have a positive approach to the distance education process regarding the sub-theme of 'distance education is good', because the distance education process keeps students away from illness, ensures that they do not fall behind in their lessons, and does not interrupt education-training. Parents who were interviewed stated that they encountered many difficulties in the courses in the distance education process regarding the sub-theme 'distance education is not good', that distance education is not effective and efficient, and that students do not accept distance education as education. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P3: ''…Let's say distance education is the best of the bad. The children could have completely fallen behind with the lessons. At least, the government is trying to give an education in an indirect way. That's nice if we think from that aspect…''

P18: ''…Frankly, I don't think distance education is efficient for children…''

Regarding the Request-Suggestion Theme, the interviewed parents want the cameras not to be turned off during the distance education process, shorter lesson times, late starting hours, better image and sound quality, more active teachers in live lessons, and making lessons more fun. At the same time, parents want the live lessons to be recorded in order to be able to watch the lessons again and the government and relevant institutions to support parents and students to achieve equality of opportunity. In this context, the parents' views are as follows:

P7: ''…I want teachers to be more active in live lessons. I think it will be more efficient this way…''

P16: ''…In order to make it efficient, I would like our government to provide tablet and computer facilities to children who cannot afford it…''

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the interviews with the students and parents, it is understood that different devices (phones, computers, TV) and platforms (TRT EBA TV, EBA, Zoom, Whatsapp) are used in the distance education process. These devices are provided by the family and used jointly with other siblings. In the study conducted by Başaran et al. (2020), it was determined that if there is more than one student in a house, participation in the lessons is not completely done. The fact that families have technological equipment and infrastructure facilities also affects students' access to distance education. On the other hand, the use of different devices and platforms increases the flexibility and accessibility of distance education (Tarlakazan & Tarlakazan, 2020). Creating highly accessible education channels such as TRT EBA TV and using TVs that we can find in almost every house in this context are of great importance in terms of equal opportunity. As a matter of fact, Gören et al. (2020) determined that students accessed the lessons mostly via TRT EBA TV. In the pandemic process affecting the whole world, Türkiye has also implemented similar distance learning processes like other countries (Motiejunaite-Schulmeister & Crosier, 2020).

Depending on the conditions of the home environment, students sometimes attend their classes in their own rooms and sometimes in available rooms. When there is more than one student at home, the rooms are shared or used alternately. In general, it was determined that the home environment was tried to be made suitable for the students. However, as a result of the crowded Turkish family structure and the socio-economic conditions of the families, as families have more than one student at home and each student does not have their own room, families have found solutions for their students to participate in the lessons more easily. Kaynar et al. (2020) state that students who attend their lessons in their own room during the distance education process have more positive views on distance education compared to their peers who do not. In this context, it can be inferred that the home environment has effects on students' attitudes towards the distance education process.

It is understood that the responsibilities of parents on the education of their children have increased during the distance education process and this situation also puts a strain on the parents (Koç, 2021). In the distance education process, students receive support from their family members on subjects they cannot understand and with their homework. It is stated that students who receive support from their families in the distance education process have a more positive attitude towards learning, their tendency to learn subjects has increased and that family support increases students' self-efficacy (OECD, 2020a). Sun et al. (2020) stated that homework will contribute to the enhancement of students' self-discipline as well as reinforcing the knowledge acquired in the distance education process. At the same time, homework makes what students learn permanent. In this process, the homework given by the teachers and the support of the families are very important for primary school students to gain a context of duty and self-discipline.

Students had difficulties in their lessons during the distance education process. At the same time, 1st grade students have difficulty in reading and writing. In addition, it was concluded that some students could not understand the lessons, they were confused and could not get efficiency from the lessons. Similarly, Başaran et al. (2020) reveal that students have problems with their English lessons. Lessons in which communication in front of the screen is limited and held in an abstract environment challenge students who are in a concrete operational stage in terms of cognitive development stages. In this respect, the methods and materials used in the lessons should be diversified and concretized in a way that students can understand it better.

Students and parents stated they encountered problems such as internet cuts or disconnecting during the distance education, problems in accessing EBA and disconnecting from EBA and Zoom during the lesson, not being able to enter the system due to the high number of users logged in at the same time, video and sound problems and lack of technological equipment. In the literature, there are studies that support our findings (Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020; Bozkurt, 2020; Dikmen & Bahçeci, 2020;

Doğan & Koçak, 2020; Erzen & Ceylan, 2020; Gören et al., 2020; Karadağ & Yücel, 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020; Şeren et al., 2020; Tuncer & Bahadır, 2017). There is no physical contact between student and teacher, as distance education is carried out over the internet. This over-dependence on technology is a major disadvantage for distance education. In the event of any software or hardware failure, the lesson stops, which may disrupt the learning process (Sedeghi, 2019). This situation may negatively affect students' attitudes towards distance education and their academic success. As a matter of fact, there are findings that there is a decline in the success of students lacking infrastructure at home (Morgan, 2020; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). On the other hand, although there are problems experienced throughout the country, it has been stated that after the settlement of the system and the people getting used to the system, technical problems have decreased and the system is used more easily (Serçemeli & Kurnaz, 2020). In this context, minimizing the problems and making the system more usable is an important development for the distance education process.

Parents face problems such as students' inability to focus on their lessons, distraction, not wanting to attend the lesson and not being able to understand the lessons. In other studies of the literature, it has been determined that students' motivation in distance education is low (Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020; Doğan & Koçak, 2020; Gören et al., 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020; Wheeler, 2002). Motivation is effective on studying and being interested in the lesson (Akbaba, 2006). In this context, the lack of motivation in the distance education process may have a negative effect on students' participation in class and involvement in class work. It is the responsibility of all education stakeholders to minimize this impact.

Parents stated that students were worried about being screen-addicted because they spend a lot of time in front of the screen. Families are of the opinion that increased interest in computer and tablet use will harm students (Sirem and Baş, 2020). It is stated that the time spent by students in front of social media and TV during the distance education process has doubled (Keskin & Özer Kaya, 2020). As the time spent in front of the screen and internet usage time increase, the risk of internet and screen addiction increases. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are many studies supporting this result (Alaçam, 2012; Bayraktar, 2001; Doğan, 2013; Döner, 2011; Günüç, 2009; Kaya, 2011; Kır & Sulak, 2014; Şahin, 2011; Tutgun, 2009; Üçkardeş, 2010).

Most of the students and parents think that the school is more efficient than distance education. In the literature, there are studies that are in line with these results and show that the school is more efficient than distance education (Bozkurt, 2020; Doğan & Koçak 2020; Görgülü Arı & Hayır Kanat, 2020; Kaynar et al., 2020; Moçoşoğlu & Kaya, 2020; Yurtbakan & Akyıldız, 2020). Yıldız (2016) found in her study that students' attitudes towards distance education were moderate. Students' negative attitudes towards distance education can also affect their attitudes towards the lessons. In addition, there are some opinions that students' learning by doing-experiencing is limited in the distance education process and that the acquisitions remain at the level of comprehension (Doğan & Koçak, 2020). In this process, learning activities by doing and experiencing may be limited due to reasons such as students' inability to experience classroom atmosphere, not being able to communicate well with their teachers and friends and not being able to directly access course materials and activities. This situation can affect both students' attitudes and success.

On the other hand, there are also students and parents who find the distance education process good and efficient. In the study conducted by Başaran et al. (2020), distance education is seen as successful due to preventing interruption of education. In the studies of Balaman and Hanbay Tiryaki (2021), teachers see distance education not as an adequate and complete teaching method, but as a means for various reasons such as students' not staying away from the lesson, not taking a dislike of the educational environment and not getting into a vacation mood. The main purpose of distance education is to eliminate the conditions that cause disruptions in face-to-face education and time and space discrepancies. In this context, the distance education processes implemented during the pandemic process are very important for the continuity of education.

Some of the parents think that the state and relevant institutions should support parents and students in terms of equal opportunities. It is also revealed in other studies that students and parents have deficiencies in terms of equal opportunities (Doğan & Koçak, 2020). At the point of eliminating the inequality defined as digital divide by OECD (2001), Ministry of National Education carries out studies to make up for the shortcomings of students with the support of the relevant institutions of the state, private sector and non-governmental organizations. As of April 2021, to has delivered around 700,000 tablets with free internet to students for free in Türkiye (Ministry of Education, 2021a). In addition, around 15,000 mobile or built EBA Support Points have been established in order to meet the needs of students who lacks access to technological devices and the Internet across Türkiye (Ministry of Education, 2021b). Free internet service was provided by GSM operators to the parents of students who might have internet problems. It is understood that the disruptions and inequalities of opportunity experienced since March 2020, the date when distance education started, have been tried to be overcome with such measures by those institutions. Similar practices exist in different countries around the world (OECD, 2020b).

In line with the results of the research, it is possible to list the suggestions as follows:

1. Training can be given to students and teachers about the systems used in the distance education process.
2. Within the scope of equal opportunities, internet infrastructure can be developed for each family that experiences a digital divide and internet service can be delivered to families who experience problems. By providing computer-internet facilities to disadvantaged students, the participation of students in classes can be increased.
3. It can be ensured that distance education lessons are in the form of live lessons in which students are taught by their own teachers. These lessons can be recorded and shared with students so that they can be watched again later.

4. It can be ensured that the process continues successfully by diversifying the educational materials according to individual differences and needs.

5. In-depth studies can be conducted to determine the effects of the distance education process on internet and screen addiction.

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Statements of publication ethics

I/We hereby declare that the study has not unethical issues and that research and publication ethics have been observed carefully.

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Appendix-1. Parent Interview Questions

1. What do you think about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic? What kind of problems did you encounter?
2. Did the management of the school where your child is studying contacted you about distance education? What are your expectations from the school administration?
3. What kind of measures does the school administration take during the COVID-19 pandemic? What do you think about sending your child to school?
4. How is parent-teacher communication carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic? What are your expectations from teachers?
5. How does your child view the lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic? Do you have distraction and concentration problems?
6. How do you support your child's participation in the lessons during the distance education process?
7. Do you think there are points that need to be corrected in distance education? What arrangements can be made to make distance education more efficient?

Appendix-2. Student Interview Questions

1. What do you think about distance education during the COVID-19 pandemic? What kind of problems did you encounter?
2. What kind of measures does the school administration take during the COVID-19 pandemic? What do you think about going to school?
3. How is your communication with your teacher during the COVID-19 pandemic? Does your teacher spend enough time with you? What are your expectations from your teacher?
4. How do you access classes during the COVID-19 pandemic? Can you get to classes on time? Which course do you have the most difficulty with?
5. What do you think about the homework given during the COVID-19 pandemic? How are assignments delivered and checked?
6. What kind of support does your family give you during the distance education process? How is a suitable environment provided for your participation in classes?
7. Are there any points that need to be corrected in distance education? What arrangements can be made to make distance education more efficient?