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Psychological Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Society and Its Reflections on Education

COVID - 19 Pandemisinin Toplum Psikolojisine Etkileri ve Eğitime Yansımaları

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Abstract: Pandemics have been seen in many periods throughout history. Pandemics are diseases that cause millions of people to die and have great negative effects on the psychological health of society. It also disrupted the students' educational process. Pandemics such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Spanish flu which have appeared in the past and threatened the health of people, have also led to negative consequences in people's psychology. Today, people are struggling with a pandemic COVID-19, which was first seen in Wuhan, China. COVID-19, like other pandemics, affected a large number of people in a very short time after it appeared and caused many people to die. The COVID-19 pandemic affects people psychologically because the spread of it still continues, death rates increase day by day, life comes to a halt and its control time is unpredictable. Like the traumatic experiences that have caused many psychological problems on humans throughout history, COVID-19 will have a negative psychological effect on every person. Scientific research on COVID-19 is of great importance in order to prevent the destructiveness of it in social, political, psychological, educational and economic dimensions. After the COVID-19 epidemic has been controlled over time, the psychological effects on people will be clearer. It is estimated that its effect will cause many problems in the short and long term. In this study, the possible psychological effects of COVID-19 on children, youth, elderly people and healthcare staff were discussed in the light of theoretical information. In order to minimize negative psychological effects, some recommendations were presented.

Structured Abstract: Pandemics are diseases that occur from time to time throughout human history, causing millions of people to die and negatively affecting public mental health. Pandemics have been seen in many periods throughout history. Each pandemic negatively affected humanity sociologically, economically and psychologically. Pandemics have devastating effects on not only the psychology of people experiencing the pandemic during the process, but even the psychology of future people. Pandemics such as HIV / AIDS, influenza, SARS, MERS, which have appeared in the past and threatened the health of people, have also led to negative consequences in people's psychology. Today, people are still struggling with a pandemic. COVID-19, which was first seen in Wuhan, China and then spread rapidly all over the world, affects the whole world deeply. Physiologically and psychologically the most affected people by the COVID-19 pandemic are those

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who suffer from this pandemic. Currently, humanity is in the middle of a process that must be rigorously managed. In this context, it is necessary to reveal scientific researches about COVID-19 and to discuss the short and long term effects of it on people. In this study, it was aimed to keep a projection on how COVID-19 could affect people psychologically by starting from the psychological negative effects of epidemics and natural disasters that have affected humanity in the past. In this context, recommendations were made regarding the measures to eliminate the negativities in the short and long term.

Considering the effects of pandemics on the groups of people living in the community, it can be seen that it affects directly patients, and their relatives, healthcare staff, and all other people who are at risk of disease (Morganstein et al. 2017). Children are one of the groups most affected by destructive events such as pandemic, war, forced migration, and natural disaster. It is thought that compared to other age groups, children will be more negatively affected psychologically because of the difficulty of making sense of all these COVID-19 experiences and lack of self-expression skills. Tsang, Scudds and Chan (2004) stated that the children in families who have a pandemic in their family members show excessive crying behavior, have difficulty in sleeping and feel embarrassed. Another group negatively affected by the pandemic of COVID-19 is young people. Al-Rabiaah et al. (2020) in their study on the relationship between MERS pandemics and stress in university students concluded that 77% of the students has low, 18.4% has medium level of anxiety. At the same time, due to the development of technology, compared to other age groups young people can be exposed to negative flows caused by the COVID-19 epidemic around the world through internet and social media. This situation can be claimed to make young people psychologically more risky than other age groups. Likewise, young people are thought to have psychological consequences such as loneliness, depression, anger, pessimism, and hopelessness.

Another group affected by COVID-19 is middle-aged and elderly people. When we look at the COVID-19 Fatality Rate by AGE, age level of people who died because of COVID-19 is seen as “80+ years old 21.9%, 70-79 years old 8.0%, 60-69 years old 3.6” (Worldometers 2020). As a matter of fact, it was determined that psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and psychological distress were observed in the elderly people in studies on the psychological effect of COVID-19 (Kong et al. 2020; Wang et al. 2020).

The healthcare staff can be regarded as the most psychologically affected occupational group in the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare workers are thought to be the most affected group because they try to provide one-to-one assistance to patients exposed to the virus from this epidemic, see the deaths caused by the virus almost every day, and are more likely to be infected by virus. In the studies that investigated the psychological harms of the MERS pandemic to healthcare staffs post-traumatic stress disorder was observed in healthcare staffs (Lee et al. 2018). Alsubaie et al., (2019) found a relationship with anxiety in their study examining the psychological effects of the MERS pandemic in healthcare staffs. Likewise, during the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers have been found to experience psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, fear, anger and trauma (Kang et al. 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the students' educational process. Billions of students and millions of educators are affected by school closures and other restrictions (Ozer, 2020). Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. These nationwide closures are impacting over 60% of the world's student population. Several other countries have implemented localized closures impacting millions of additional learners (UNESCO, 2020). Millions of students have not been able to continue learning in schools, universities, vocational training institutions and adult learning programmes. Many governments responded to the pressing need to provide school children with learning possibilities via online and distance learning (Römer, 2020). Although precautions were taken, the students' learning process was negatively affected. Students who have been stripped of their freedom due to COVID-19 are deeply concerned about when face to face education will happen.

COVID - 19 is a devastating pandemic that deeply affects all humanity. The COVID-19 pandemic affects people psychologically because the spread of it still continues, death rates increase day by day, life comes to a halt and its control time is unpredictable. This effect will cause many problems in the short and long term. As a result of this study, some recommendations have been made for children, young people, elderly people and healthcare staff in the psychological struggle with COVID-19. First of all, families should create an environment of trust that the children can easily express their feelings and thoughts during this process. In

order to meet the educational needs of young people, universities and institutions may be suggested to provide and expand online education activities. As the negatively affected group by the COVID-19 epidemic is the elderly people, they should first limit their social contact. Finally, it can be suggested to develop preventive psychological support programs for children, youth, adults, elderly and healthcare staff related to the short and long term psychological effects of COVID-19 by also examining the past pandemics.

Keywords: Pandemic, Pandemic Psychology, COVID-19, Education

Öz: Pandemiler milyonlarca insanın ölmesine neden olan hem toplumun psikolojik sağlığı üzerinde hem de eğitim süreçlerine olumsuz etkileri olan hastalıklardır. Pandemiler tarih boyunca birçok dönemde görülmüştür. Geçmişte ortaya çıkan Orta Doğu Solunum Sendromu (MERS), şiddetli akut solunum sendromu (SARS) ve İspanyol gribi gibi salgın hastalıklar hem insanların sağlığını tehdit etmiş hem de insanların psikolojisinde olumsuz sonuçlara yol açmıştır. Günümüzde neredeyse dünyadaki tüm insanlar Çin'in Wuhan kentinde ortaya çıkan bir pandemi olan COVID-19 ile mücadele etmektedirler. COVID-19, diğer pandemiler gibi ortaya çıktıktan kısa bir süre sonra çok sayıda insanı etkiledi ve birçok insanın ölmesine neden oldu. Hâlihazırda bu etki hala sürmektedir. COVID-19 salgını insanları psikolojik olarak etkiler çünkü yayılımı hala devam etmekte, ölüm oranları her geçen gün artmakta, hayat durmakta ve kontrol süresi tahmin edilememektedir. Tarih boyunca insanlar üzerinde birçok psikolojik soruna neden olan travmatik deneyimler gibi COVID-19'un da her insan üzerinde olumsuz bir psikolojik etkisi olacaktır. COVID-19 ile ilgili gerçekleştirilecek olan bilimsel araştırmalar; sosyal, politik, psikolojik ve ekonomik boyutlarda COVID-19'un yıkıcılığını önlemek için büyük önem taşımaktadır. COVID-19'un kısa ve uzun vadede birçok soruna yol açacağı tahmin edilmektedir. Bu çalışmada COVID-19'un çocuklar, gençler, yaşlılar ve sağlık personeli üzerindeki olası psikolojik etkileri teorik bilgiler ışığında tartışılmıştır. Aynı şekilde COVID-19'un eğitim sürecine ve paydaşlarına olan yansımaları da ele alınmıştır. COVID-19'un olumsuz etkilerini en aza indirmek için bazı öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Pandemi, Pandemi Psikolojisi, COVID-19, Eğitim.

Introduction

Pandemics are diseases that occur from time to time throughout human history, causing millions of people to die and negatively affecting public mental health. According to the World Health Organization, (2020) pandemic is the spread of a new disease worldwide, which has caused many people to be harmed and also killed many people. Pandemics have been seen in many periods throughout history. Each pandemic negatively affected humanity sociologically, economically and psychologically. For example, pandemics such as influenza, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) are among the pandemics that have negatively affected millions of people. Today, people are still struggling with a pandemic. COVID-19, which was first seen in Wuhan, China and then spread rapidly all over the world, affects the whole world deeply. COVID-19 also affected many people and caused many people to lose their lives shortly after emerging like other pandemics (World Health Organization 2020).

Currently, humanity is in the middle of a process that must be rigorously managed. In this context, it is necessary to reveal scientific researches about COVID-19 and to discuss the short and long term effects of it on people. Scientific research on COVID-19 is of great importance in order to prevent the destructiveness of it in social, political, psychological and economic dimensions. In this study, it was aimed to keep a projection on how COVID-19 could affect people psychologically by starting from the psychological negative effects of epidemics and natural disasters that have affected humanity in the past. In this context, recommendations were made regarding the measures to eliminate the negativities in the short and long term.

COVID-19 Pandemic Psychology

Pandemics have devastating effects on not only the psychology of people experiencing the pandemic during the process, but even the psychology of future people. Pandemics such as HIV / AIDS, influenza, SARS, MERS, which have appeared in the past and threatened the health of people, have also led to negative consequences in people's psychology. Considering the effects of pandemics on the groups of people living in the community, it can be seen that it affects directly patients, and their relatives, healthcare staff, and all other people who are at risk of disease (Morganstein et al. 2017). The psychological reaction of each person in the face of intense stress and fear caused by pandemics can be different. It has been observed that pandemics cause psychological effects such as depression, anxiety, fear of death, losing loved ones, posttraumatic stress disorder, psychotic symptoms and mourning in general (Taylor 2019). However, some people can control the negative emotions of pandemics and continue their lives normally. But some people cannot cope with these feelings and need professional support. In this regard, the negative consequences for individuals and the society from the beginning of its spread to its control are regarded as unpredictable disaster.

Physiologically and psychologically the most affected people by the COVID-19 pandemic are those who suffer from this pandemic. In the studies examining the psychological effects of COVID-19 on patients, as seen in other epidemics that most patients face negative psychological conditions such as posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, loneliness, distress, fear, anger and fear of being tagged (Bo et al. 2020; Wu, Chan and Ma 2005; Cheng et al. 2004). Indeed, large-scale destructive events such as natural disasters and wars in the past have been known to affect people's psychological health negatively. In such cases, the most common behavioral and psychological disorders are reported to be depression, anger, anxiety, low self-esteem and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Arpaci et al., 2020b; Nigam and Kumar 2020; Steinberg and Daniel 2020; Sood 2020). For example, Van Bortel et al. (2015) examined the psychosocial effects caused by the ebola pandemic. In their study, they stated that ebola has personal, social and global effects. These effects are generally expressed as fear and anxiety, shame, mourning, loss of confidence, trauma, discrimination and psychological disorders. In different studies, it has been reported that COVID-19 epidemic has many mental problems including anxiety, depression and stress; as well as psychological problems including PTSD, sleep disorders and etc. in both the healthcare staff and the public (Hu et al. 2020; Liu et al. 2020; Kang et al. 2020; Sun et al. 2020; Xiang et al. 2020). At the same time, researchers predict that COVID-19 epidemic will cause problems such as extreme fear of disease, anger, increased alcohol and tobacco use, acute stress disorder, schizophrenia and suicidal tendencies (Hu et al. 2020; Huang and Liu 2020; Li et al. 2020; Dai et al. 2020). On the other hand, hypochondriasis can be seen in people who have been exposed to the disease and recovered or who have never been infected. The continuous exposure of people to information, news and videos about a disease, as in COVID-19, causes hypochondriasis (Marcus et al. 2007). COVID-19 is the most mentioned topic in almost every mass media for the last 6 months. In this context, intense exposure to COVID-19 is predicted to increase the likelihood of hypochondriasis in today's people.

Psychological Effect of COVID-19

Like the traumatic experiences that have caused many psychological problems on humans throughout history, COVID-19 will have a negative psychological effect on every person. In this context, children are one of the groups most affected by destructive events such as pandemic, war, forced migration, and natural disaster. It is thought that compared to other age groups, children will be more negatively affected psychologically because of the difficulty of making sense of all these COVID-19 experiences and lack of self-expression skills. In their study on the SARS pandemic's psychological effect on children, Tsang, Scudds and Chan (2004) stated that the children in families who have a pandemic in their family members show excessive crying behavior, have difficulty in

sleeping and feel embarrassed. Wang, Zhang, Zhao, Zhang, and Jiang (2020) stated that children may face many psychological problems such as the fear of getting infected with the COVID-19 epidemic, anxiety and frustration, and troubles because of the shortage of social interaction. In this sense, it can be claimed that children who are adults of the future are at a great psychological risk.

Another group negatively affected by the pandemic of COVID-19 is young people. It may be thought that young people will be less psychologically affected by COVID-19 due to the low death rate because of COVID-19 and the ability to easily overcome the physiological symptoms caused by the virus. However, it is predicted that young people will be negatively affected by this pandemic process and will experience psychological problems. As a matter of fact, Sim et al. (2010), concluded that psychological problems was associated with being young in their study examining the psychological effects of epidemics. Al-Rabiaah et al. (2020) in their study on the relationship between MERS pandemics and stress in university students concluded that 77% of the students has low, 18.4% has medium level of anxiety. Likewise, Wang and others (2020) found that young people are more affected by the epidemic psychologically and feel more stressed, anxious, intolerant, and depressed in their study in which they investigated the psychological effects of the COVID-19 epidemic in China (Wang et al. 2020). It is also stated that just as seen in other pandemics, intolerance to uncertainty can be observed in COVID-19. It is stated that intolerance of uncertainty is associated with psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety (Shapiro, Gros and McCabe 2020; Wheaton and Ward 2020). In addition, studies conducted on the psychological effects of COVID-19 in youth have shown that psychological problems such as depression, distress, anxiety, irritability, sadness, and fear are observed (Arpaci et al., 2020a; Huang and Zhao 2020; PEW 2020; Cao et al. 2020; Huang, Xu and Liu 2020). In addition, it is reported that Chinese international university students may be negatively affected psychologically because of racism and alienation that may cause psychological disorders (Zhai and Du 2020). Quarantine and home isolation are one of the most important issues in the investigation of the psychological impact of the COVID-19 epidemic. During the period when COVID-19 began to emerge and spread, the education process of the youth continued. Because of the rapid spread of the epidemic and the increase of deaths in many countries young people have stopped their education and stayed in their homes. Therefore, the likelihood of loneliness and depression increase in young people whose education process is negatively affected and their social relations are disrupted. Although they can continue their social relations through internet and social media applications, it is obvious that they will not be as healthy and high quality as social relations established face to face. This situation can be claimed to decrease the relationships and life satisfaction. At the same time, due to the development of technology, compared to other age groups young people can be exposed to negative flows caused by the COVID-19 epidemic around the world through internet and social media. This situation can be claimed to make young people psychologically more risky than other age groups. In other words, although variables such as life styles, physical strength, developmental characteristics and less possibility of being affected by the virus that caused the epidemic may provide them a protective role against the COVID-19 epidemic, just the opposite they may also become risk factors. In general, although virus-related deaths are not common among young people (Worldometers 2020), there is a great deal of restriction in their social life and uncertainty about when this isolation process will end. Therefore young people are thought to have psychological consequences such as loneliness, depression, anger, pessimism, and hopelessness.

Another group affected by COVID-19 is middle-aged and elderly people. When we look at the COVID-19 Fatality Rate by AGE, age level of people who died because of COVID-19 is seen as “80+ years old 21.9%, 70-79 years old 8.0%, 60-69 years old 3.6” (Worldometers 2020). It is anticipated that the elderly people, who are the most probable group with COVID-19 deaths, will experience high levels of stress and fear against the virus. As a matter of fact, it was determined that psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, and psychological distress were observed in the

elderly people in studies on the psychological effect of COVID-19 (Kong et al. 2020; Wang et al. 2020). In this regard, it is claimed that the cognitive and emotional disorders of elderly people may increase because of COVID-19 and existing psychological disorders can be triggered (Yang et al. 2020). In this regard, the high risk of death of the elderly people because of COVID-19 makes them psychologically more vulnerable.

Psychological Effect of COVID-19 on Healthcare Staff

The healthcare staff can be regarded as the most psychologically affected occupational group in the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare workers are thought to be the most affected group because they try to provide one-to-one assistance to patients exposed to the virus from this epidemic, see the deaths caused by the virus almost every day, and are more likely to be infected by virus. As a matter of fact, in the past SARS pandemic, the results of the studies examining the level of psychological effect of healthcare staff found the psychological problems such as posttraumatic stress disorder, stress, and psychological distress (Chan and Huak 2004; Tam et al. 2004; Wu et al. 2009). Similarly, in the studies that investigated the psychological harms of the MERS pandemic to healthcare staffs post-traumatic stress disorder was observed in healthcare staffs (Lee et al. 2018). At the same time, in their study on the psychological effects of the SARS epidemic in healthcare staffs Chong et al. (2004) stated that fear, sleep problems and depression were observed in them. Finally, Alsubaie et al., (2019) found a relationship with anxiety in their study examining the psychological effects of the MERS pandemic in healthcare staffs. Considering the psychological damage caused by pandemics to healthcare staffs in the past, COVID-19 pandemics will also have psychological negative effects on healthcare staff. As a matter of fact, during the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare workers have been found to experience psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, fear, anger and trauma (Kang et al. 2020). Likewise, healthcare workers of COVID-19 have been found to experience psychological problems such as low sleep quality, depression, anxiety, fear of infecting the people they love, anxiety, insomnia, distress, nervousness, psychological stress, sadness, fear, (Ho, Chee and Ho 2020; Huang and Zhao 2020; Lai et al. 2020; Huang, Xu, and Liu, 2020; Zhou et al. 2020). The healthcare workers' risk of infecting COVID-19 at any time and a number of other difficulties imposed by their professional responsibilities, deepen the psychological damage they experience.

COVID-19 on Education Reflections

COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the students' educational process. Billions of students and millions of educators are affected by school closures and other restrictions. Social distancing and other limitations due to COVID-19 may cause negative psychological conditions such as anxiety and fear, and these may affect the well-being of students and parent (Ozer, 2020). Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. These nationwide closures are impacting over 60% of the world's student population. Several other countries have implemented localized closures impacting millions of additional learners (UNESCO, 2020). Millions of students have not been able to continue learning in schools, universities, vocational training institutions and adult learning programmes. Many governments responded to the pressing need to provide school children with learning possibilities via online and distance learning (Römer, 2020). Although precautions were taken, the students' learning process was negatively affected. Students who have been stripped of their freedom due to COVID-19 are deeply concerned about when face to face education will happen.

Education has been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic with 1.53 billion learners out of school and 184 country-wide school closures, impacting 87.6% of the world's total enrolled learners (Education Cannot Wait [ECW], 2020). School closures could prevent the rapid spread of the epidemic. It seems to be the optimal solution in the short term. School closures can affect deaths during an outbreak either positively, through reducing transmission and the number of cases, or negatively, through reductions in the health-care workforce available to care for those who

are sick (Viner et al., 2020). However, when school closures take longer, students' learning and social relationships are negatively affected. Schools provide face-to-face education. But because face-to-face education cannot take place because of the epidemic, the country's education administrators want students to be accessible through distance or online education (Reimers & Schleicher, 2020). This in itself harbors a problem. Because online education requires an excellent infrastructure. Every student needs to be accessible to online or distance education. But unfortunately access to the internet is not the same everywhere. Likewise, not every student has their own PC. Moreover, some regions of the world do not even have electricity. Even if the infrastructure problems are resolved in some way, the constant exposure of students to distance or online education is tedious to them. For this reason, the motivation of the students for learning decreases and the learning goals are not achieved. Not only students but also teachers and families are affected by the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on education. Families may not have enough support for their children to learn at home. This may be due to low socio-economic level of families, as well as low educational level of family members. Likewise, teachers have an important role in the success of the educational process. But most teachers lacked pedagogical competence about how to manage the teacher distance or online education process. They didn't know how to develop distance or online educational tools (Rapanta et al., 2020). Therefore, the negative effects of the outbreak seem to be more difficult to compensate for for the students.

Going to school is the best public policy tool available to raise skills. While school time can be fun and can raise social skills and social awareness, from an economic point of view the primary point of being in school is that it increases a child's ability (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020). According to Reimers (2020) for the vast majority of children who lose opportunities to learn because of the pandemic, it will be hard to recover from those losses, the harder the longer the period of physical isolation from other students and teachers. The educational disadvantage such losses generate will beget more educational, and eventually economic and social disadvantage. Because these losses will be experienced by large segments of the population, societies will suffer as their productivity is diminished.

Conclusion and Recommendations

COVID - 19 is a devastating pandemic that deeply affects all humanity. The COVID-19 pandemic affects people psychologically because the spread of it still continues, death rates increase day by day, life comes to a halt and its control time is unpredictable. This effect will cause many problems in the short and long term. After the COVID-19 epidemic has been controlled over time, the psychological effects on people will be clearer. The psychological problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have global effects in the long term. In this context, some measures are required to minimize its negative psychological effects. In this part of the study, some recommendations have been made for children, young people, elderly people and healthcare staff in the psychological struggle with COVID-19:

Recommendations for Healthcare Staff

- Protective equipment must be provided in full.
- Since they work hard due to the pandemic, they should be kept in touch with their families, friends and other people, even online.
- Because of the possibility of transmitting the virus to their family members, accommodation should be offered in different places if desired.
- Online psychosocial support can be provided at any time against negative emotional situations that may arise because of reasons such as high risk of virus transmission, long-term obligation to work, problems with patients and patient families.

- The fight against the COVID-19 pandemic is global as well as on a national basis. Therefore, not only healthcare staff, every person should support each other in this process and healthcare staff should know that they are not alone. Therefore, it may be suggested to carry out activities that will increase the morale and motivation of healthcare staff at national and global level.

Recommendations for Children

- First of all, families should create an environment of trust that the children can easily express their feelings and thoughts during this process.

- In order for children to express themselves in accordance with their developmental characteristics, methods such as drawing, playing games, singing music can be used.

- Children's questions about COVID-19 should not be left unanswered, passed over and should not be lied to. In addition, children should be informed about what the COVID-19 epidemic is, when it may end and what effects it may have in accordance with their developmental characteristics.

- Children learn many behaviors from their parents through observation. Therefore, parents need to demonstrate cognitive, behavioral or emotional responses that could be model for their children.

- In order to continue the social relationships that children need, the activities such as playing games at home, watching popular movies and videos, reading books, etc. may be suggested.

- Educational activities can be carried out in the online environment with the support and cooperation of teachers and related experts in order to continue the educational development of children.

- Online psychological support should be provided by experts for the children who experience intense stress.

Recommendations for Young People

- In order to cope with the feelings of loneliness, despair, and pessimism that may arise during the isolation at home, they need to maintain their social relationships, even online.

- In order to reduce the negative psychological effects that the isolation status of the home may cause over time, relaxing exercises or sports activities appropriate for home may be recommended.

- In order to ensure their personal development reading books, watching movies, series or documentaries, and doing activities with musical instruments are recommended.

- In order to meet the educational needs of young people, universities and institutions may be suggested to provide and expand online education activities.

- Online psychological support should be provided by experts for young people who experience intense stress and fear.

Recommendations for The Elderly People

- As the negatively affected group by the COVID-19 epidemic is the elderly people, they should first limit their social contact.

- The personal and social needs of the elderly people living alone should be provided by government agencies, non-governmental organizations or other people.
- Elderly people who may use internet and social media less than other age groups should be provided with right and sufficient information about COVID-19 pandemic.
- In some countries, when elderly people go out onto the streets they may be exposed to insulting words and behaviors by other people. Since this situation may affect the psychology of the elderly negatively, such situations should be prevented by state institutions and non-governmental organizations.
- In order to prevent the fear of death, which is high in old age, from increasing in this process, psychological support activities should be expanded as much as possible.
- Elderly people living alone should be kept in touch with their family members or friends, even online.
- Online psychological support should be provided by experts for elderly people who experience intense stress and fear.

Recommendations for Education Stakeholders

- The infrastructure of the online or distance education system needs to be strengthened. Access to every student should be established, no student should be deprived of education.
- In-service training should be provided to teachers in order to improve teachers' distance or online teaching competencies.
- Parents should try hard enough to make up for their children's learning.

Recommendations for Researchers

- When studies on COVID-19 are examined, it is seen that they are generally focused on physical health. However, studies on psychological effects are also required.
- It can be suggested to develop preventive psychological support programs for children, youth, adults, elderly and healthcare staff related to the short and long term psychological effects of COVID-19 by also examining the past pandemics.
- The psychological effects of patients, who are the most affected group by the COVID-19 pandemic, can be examined in depth using qualitative research methods.
- By collecting data from people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and then recovered, the psychological state of the disease can be examined.
- By using qualitative and quantitative research techniques, studies can be made on how COVID-19 reflects on the education system and its educational stakeholders.

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