

Evaluation of the Distance Education Process based on Teachers' Opinions during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Zeki ÖĞDEM [1], Emre SÖNMEZ [2]

[1] zekiogdem15@hotmail.com,
Kırşehir Ahi Evran University,
Kırşehir/Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-2051-3976

[2] emresonmez@gazi.edu.tr,
Gazi University, Ankara/Turkey
ORCID: 0000-0002-2853-7956

To Cite: Öğdem, Z. & Sönmez, E. (2022). Evaluation of the distance education process based on teachers' opinions during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 10(1), 61-75.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.52380/mojet.2022.10.1.351>

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the quality of distance education activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, based on teachers' feedback from primary and secondary schools. In this context, the research was structured in a phenomenological design by employing a qualitative approach. The study participants consisted of 10 teachers determined by the maximum variation sampling method and the snowball sampling method. A semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers were used as data collection tools. The research data were collected through online interviews and also recorded. Research data were analyzed by the content analysis method. According to the findings of the study, teachers mostly used the EBA platform to conduct their distance education activities, school administrations provided limited support to teachers during the distance education process, students and parents had not shown significant interest in the distance education activities, students' participation in the live classes, and their desire to learn, motivation were quite low, and teachers during the distance education process have experienced some systemic and technical problems on the EBA platform. Within the scope of the research, various suggestions were presented as per the research results.

Keywords: *Distance education, COVID-19, teacher, phenomenological design*

Article History:

Received: 14 September 2021

Received in revised form: 19 December 2021

Accepted: 30 January 2022

Article type: Research Article

©2022 MOJET All rights reserved

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19), first detected in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019 and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020, has ushered in a period of global transformation (WHO, 2020). The measures taken by countries to combat the spread of COVID-19 have impacted many sectors and fields (UNICEF, 2020). Since the beginning of the pandemic, several studies have been carried out to estimate its effect on the health sector (Aydın, 2020; Özer and Çetinkaya, 2020; Koçak Tufan, 2020), social and cultural life (Alkan, 2020; Kılıç, 2020) and economy (Acar, 2020; Aysan, 2020; Erdoğan, 2020; Korkut, 2020). Education is another industry that the pandemic has impacted. Numerous research on the impact of the pandemic on educational processes have also been done (Duman, 2020; Eken, Tosun and Tuzcu Eken, 2020; Erhan and Gümüş, 2020; Gören et al., 2020; Keleş, Atay and Karanfil, 2020; Onyema et al., 2020; Özer and Suna, 2020; Tarkar, 2020). According to a United Nations assessment, when the pandemic began, around 138 countries suspended face-to-face school education in order to ensure physical distance requirements and slow the pandemic's spread (Van Lancer and Parolin, 2020). During this crisis, which has

an indefinite duration, it is equally critical to meet the educational needs of children and young people (OECD, 2020a). Despite the fact that there have been studies and research on distance education, most countries have been caught off guard and are now dealing with a distance education process intended to assist face-to-face education years later (Daniel, 2020). Along with distance education, which had to be launched quickly, a slew of difficulties afflicting all aspects of the educational system have surfaced.

As of March 2020, the Ministry of National Education in Turkey has begun to offer distance education services to address the educational needs of students participating in the COVID-19 process. Through the Education Information Network (EBA) and the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation, the Ministry of National Education has initiated distance education (TRT). They promptly generated the course content required for remote education and provided it to students via EBA-TRT collaboration during this process (Özer, 2020).

The distance education approach presented many challenges to policymakers and school principals. Teachers also had difficulty during this challenging and unexpected educational process. It is clear that this unprepared approach places an excessive burden on teachers (Alper, 2020). We may say that taking measures against infrastructure shortfalls, material deficiencies for course content, and low-income families' access restrictions to these sources, and therefore growing success gaps among students, is a must (Van Lancer & Parolin, 2020). Under these circumstances, teachers' ability to provide courses remotely is influenced by the following factors: parents' attitudes, their financial status, the student's level of readiness, communication among colleagues, internet infrastructure availability, and the content of MoNE material. The distance education process has also led to certain changes in student behaviors. Changes in learning materials, the way they acquire information, and their inability to self-discipline are just a few of the issues students face. Furthermore, parents' concerns about when things will return to normal, their fears of catching the disease, and their doubts about whether distance education is adequate are also issues that parents face (Daniel, 2020).

Teachers face classroom management issues in distant education, just as they do in face-to-face education. These issues include a shortage of resources in distance education, uncertainty about how and in what manner distance lessons will be delivered, and classroom management issues in online education (motivating students, attracting attention). However, teachers were not prepared for these situations (Arslan & Şumuer, 2020).

It is thought that the pandemic causes psychological problems for students and teachers (Akat & Karataş, 2020). During the pandemic, students experience unfavorable conditions such as insomnia, depression, loss of appetite, extreme stress, fear, anxiety and irritability. On the other hand, teachers had to deal with issues like depression, anxiety, and psychological inflexibility (Çiçek, Tanhan, & Tanrıverdi, 2020). These unpleasant scenarios, which both teachers and students have encountered, impede the quality of distance learning. In addition, these negative situations experienced by the students will also affect the attitudes of their parents. According to Dilekçi and Limon (2020), during the distance education process, teachers were subjected to an excessive communication burden because they had to communicate with managers of the provincial and district national education directorates, school principals, colleagues, parents, and students via phone, online/remote meeting, e-mail, and one-on-one online/remote communication. According to Özdoğan and Berkant (2020), distance education comes with several flaws such as loss of motivation, lack of measurement and evaluation, the inadequacy of resources such as the internet and computers, inequality of opportunity in education, lack of communication and interaction, technical problems, lack of socialization and being unprepared for the distance education process.

In light of this information, distance education activities, which began with the shutdown of schools in Turkey during the COVID-19 pandemic, have evolved into an important learning process that affects many people. The goal of this study is to determine the quality of this process based on teacher feedback. This study aims to assess the quality of distance education activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic from the perspective of teachers working in primary and secondary schools.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Model

Phenomenological design and qualitative data collection approaches were employed to evaluate the views of primary and secondary school teachers working in public schools regarding the distance education process. The phenomenology approach focuses on phenomena that we are mindful of but do not have a comprehensive understanding of (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006). Phenomenology research aims to expose people's experiences and perceptions of a phenomenon (Merriam, 2013). As a result, using the interview technique with teachers who have gone through the distance education process, their experiences and perceptions regarding distance education were disclosed in this study.

Participants

The study group consists of 10 teachers working in public primary and secondary schools in Ankara in the 2020-2021 academic year. The maximum variation sampling method and snowball sampling method were used in the study. First, an interview with a teacher with a master's degree in Gazi University Educational Administration was performed as part of the research. In this interview, necessary information about the researcher's purpose and the data collection processes has been provided. The teacher who consented to participate in the research and interview was interviewed in person first. Then, the next interview was performed with the teacher who this teacher recommended. According to the comments of the interviewed teachers, the study group has grown like a snowball. In these interviews, attention was paid to ensure variation among teachers. Variables such as age, education level, branch, and professional seniority were used as sources of variation in selecting teachers in this regard. Thus, the variation within the study group was ensured (Table 1). Of the participants, 9 were female, and 1 male and their ages ranged from 29 to 46. 6 of the participants had Bachelor's degrees, and 4 of them had Master's degrees. In addition, 4 of the participants work in the Turkish branch, 2 in primary school teaching, 2 in the English branch, 1 in mathematics and 1 in the science branch. When looking at the participants' years of seniority in their professions, it is seen that there are 4 participants with a seniority of 1-9 years, another 4 participants with a seniority of 10-19 years, and 2 participants with a seniority of 20 years or more.

Table 1. Demographic Information of the Participants

		n
Gender	Male	1
	Female	9
Educational status	Bachelor's degrees	6
	Master's degrees	4
Subject area	Turkish Language Teaching	4
	Primary school teaching	2
	English Language Teaching	2
	Science	1
	Mathematics	1
Participants' years of seniority	1-9 years	4
	10-19 years	4
	20 years or more	2



Figure 1. *Distance Education Spread All Over the World*

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview form with demographic and open-ended questions devised by the researchers has been used to collect data in the study. The interview form was developed after going through various stages. First, the relevant literature was searched with the guidance of research problems. As a result of the literature review, a question pool of 6 questions was created. Second, an education management specialist and a Turkish language specialist examined these questions. According to the education management specialist, all elements affecting the distance education process should be considered, and two questions on the same topic should be merged. In this case, a question about the impact of parents on the distance education process was added to the interview form, and the two questions were merged into one. The Turkish language specialist then looked over the interview questions for grammar, expression, and spelling. And then underlined some typos. Based on the specialists' opinions and suggestions, necessary revisions were made to the interview form. Thus, the interview form is finalized with six demographic and six open-ended questions. Some sample interview questions are presented below:

- How do you think the school administration managed the distance education process during the pandemic? What kind of problems did you face with the school administration during this period? What else should be done by the school administration?

- How would you evaluate the parents' attitude in the distance education process during the pandemic?

The research data were collected via online interviews. First, an interview with a teacher with a master's degree in Gazi University Educational Administration was performed. Following that, appointments were established, and interviews were held based on this teacher's and other teachers' recommendations. The first researcher conducted interviews with the teachers. With the permission of the participants, the online interviews were recorded. The interviews lasted approximately 35 minutes. In around ten days, the researcher concluded the interviews with the teachers.

Data Analysis

Content analysis technique was used in the analysis of the research data. Research data were analyzed in three stages. The interview data collected on the voice recorder was first deciphered literally, and codes were assigned to each transcript to protect the teachers' confidentiality. These transcripts have been added to a folder in the computer environment. Secondly, the research data were read in detail by the first researcher. During the reading process, data that was interesting, relevant, or unique was noted. Finally, the research data were analyzed with an inductive approach. Question-based content analysis was carried out in the research. After analyzing all participants' responses to the first question, the second question has begun

to be investigated. In this case, multiple codes were generated from the data by reading the transcripts of each participant's interviews. These codes were later classified into several themes and categories. Data analysis was conducted with NVivo program.

Validity and Reliability

In this study, some strategies were executed to reach valid and reliable results. Expert opinion, detailed description, citations, meticulous and systematic execution of the research process, and avoiding reflecting individual biases and prejudices on the research were used in this context. During the research process, two expert opinions, one of them is in the field of education administration and the other a Turkish language expert, were taken during the development of the data collection tool. According to Yldrm (2010), it is critical for qualitative research to explain the research method in detail and to report the acquired data fully (Yıldırım, 2010). In this context, the detailed description strategy has been used in this research. All steps of the research and findings are reported in detail. Detailed citations then support the study findings. In addition, to strengthen the research's external validity, the research methodology was meticulously and methodically designed and carried out. Finally, all required safeguards were taken to ensure that the researchers' particular biases and prejudices were not reflected in the research.

FINDINGS

In this section, the findings obtained from the teachers' views on the distance education process are included.

Distance Education Platforms Used During the Pandemic

Participants in the study were asked which educational platforms they used during the distance education process. In this regard, most participants claimed that they use the Education Information Network (EBA), which is the Ministry of National Education's live class platform and education portal, during the distance education process. In addition, the participants stated that they also benefited from Zoom, WhatsApp and Teamlink programs in live classes and meetings (Figure 2).

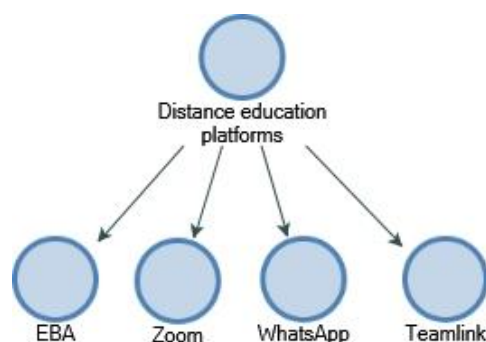


Figure 2. Distance education platforms used by participants

The Effect of School Administration in the Distance Education Process

Participants were asked how school administrations affected and contributed to the distance education process under this category (Figure 3).

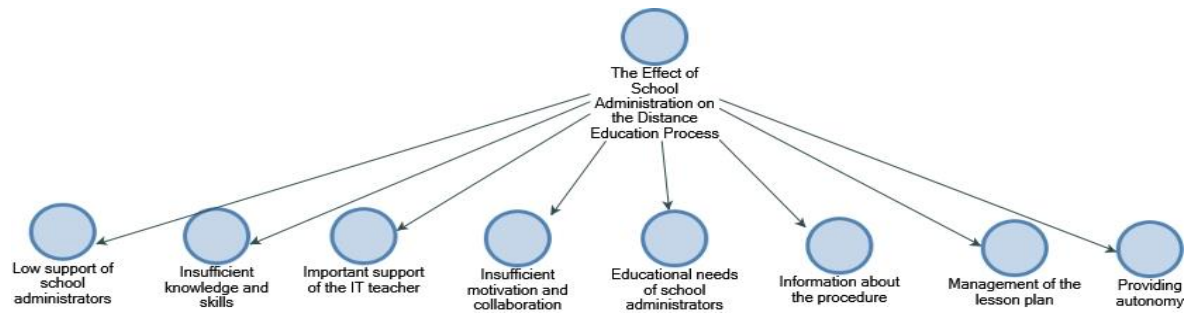


Figure 3. The effect of school administration on the distance education process according to participant opinions

The majority of the participants stated that they received limited support from school administrations during the distance education period. They mentioned that school administrators’ distance education understanding and capabilities and their technical abilities are insufficient. In this regard, it was noted that school administrators lacked a thorough understanding of distance education processes (P7), and were unable to provide sufficient support to teachers (P2), and showed insufficient interest in the subject (P1). As a result, the participants said that the information technologies teacher working at the same school was their primary source of support for distance education and technology. The views of a participant on this subject are as follows:

To be honest, we were guided by our IT teacher rather than the school administration in this process. We always consulted him about the problems we had with the system. Our IT teacher prepared the live class plans according to our availability. (P9)

School administrators, according to some participants, were lacking in communication, motivation, and cooperation. They also argued that school administrations do not take enough steps to motivate teachers and students and foster communication and cooperation with parents. Furthermore, one of the participants indicated that school administrators should receive distance education training, stating the following: Principals should have received training before us. They didn’t know anything, and they didn’t help us at all. (P2)” Finally, several participants underlined that, in contrast to these negative views, school administrators supplied necessary information about distance education processes (P4), organized their curriculum according to teacher demands (P8), and allowed teachers to act independently (P6).

Students’ Approach to the Distance Education Process

Under this category, the participants were asked about the perception and attitude of the students towards the distance education process (Figure 4).

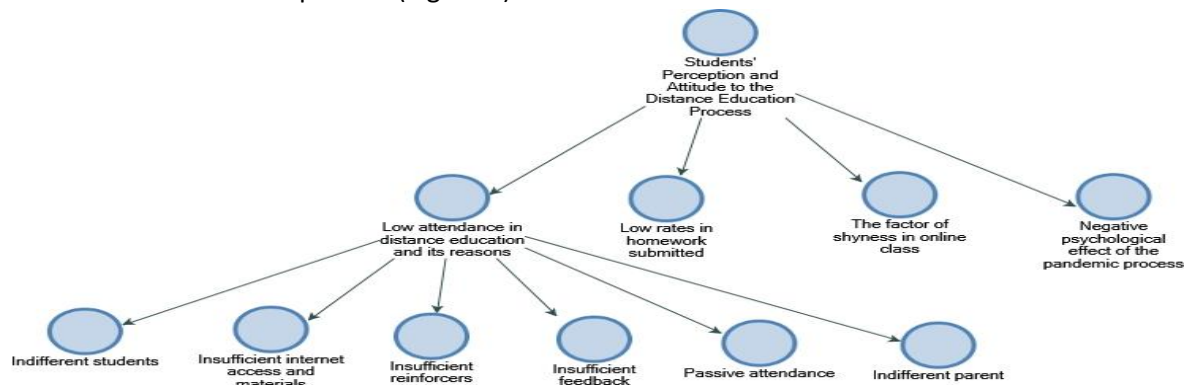


Figure 4. Students’ approach to the distance education process based on views of participants

The majority of the participants stated that the students showed a low level of participation in distance education. Many factors contributed to the current predicament, as stated by participants. In this context, students' apathy and reluctance to learn (P1, P2, P6), internet connection issues, and the inefficiency of materials (P4, P7) are all listed as major factors. Furthermore, several participants claimed that the attendance in the courses might be low because they could not utilize enough reinforcement to motivate students during the distance education process and were unable to provide adequate feedback to students about their efforts (P5, P8). Furthermore, several participants stated that low attendance was attributable to the students' passive mode during the learning process (P5) and the parents' indifference and insensitivity (P9). Some participant opinions about the low level of attendance in distance education processes are as follows:

Those who attended distance education courses were very few; they were not eager to do it... Their reluctance is the biggest problem. They were at home but not attending classes. When I called them and spoke on the phone, they expressed their reluctance. (P2)

Students were not very interested in distance education at all. Even if they were, their interest also decreased gradually in the process. Unfortunately, some students perceived this process as a holiday from the outset, while others could not participate due to financial constraints. Because of a lack of suitable reinforcement or feedback, and their more passive engagement in the teaching process, the majority of those involved in the process has gradually lost interest. (P5)

According to one participant, students often do not complete the homework assigned during the live class and EBA. And added that due to the disruption of the evaluation processes and the motto of "no grading," students did not pay attention to their homework, especially during this period (P2). Another participant noted that while the students were engaged in the lesson, they behaved more shyly than in the classroom (P4). Lastly, one participant stated that the pandemic had negative psychological impacts on students who lived at home for the most part, and as a result, students lost interest in the lessons (P5).

Parents' Approach to the Distance Education Process

Under this category, the participants were asked about the perception and attitude of the parents towards the distance education process (Figure 5).

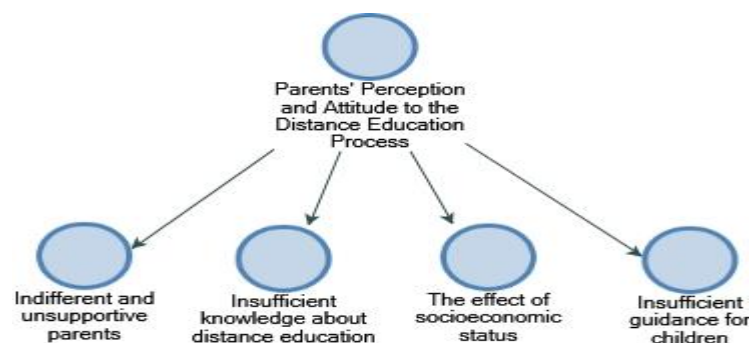


Figure 5. Parents' approach to the distance education process based on the views of participants

During the distance education process, participants assessed parents' attitudes and behaviors. The majority of the participants said that their parents were indifferent and unsupportive of their distance education efforts. It was stressed that the number of parents concerned about their children's live class

process, leading them, and following the lesson program was quite low (P8, P9). Furthermore, some participants claimed that parents lack knowledge and skills in distance education and technological tools (P3, P6). Some participants, however, suggested that parents with a higher socioeconomic status showed more assistance to their children and that socioeconomic structure was a key determinant in this (P4, P5). The views of a participant on this subject are as follows:

My illiterate parents could not help their children at all. However, on the contrary, I had parents who took advantage of the process very well and contributed greatly to their children's learnings. This approach did not negatively impact children from well-off families as it did on children from low-income homes. (P4)

Last but not least, one participant indicated that parents could not sufficiently guide their children regarding distance education (P3).

Systemic and Technical Problems Experienced in the Distance Education Process

Under this category, the participants were asked about the systemic and technical problems they have experienced in the distance education process (Figure 6).

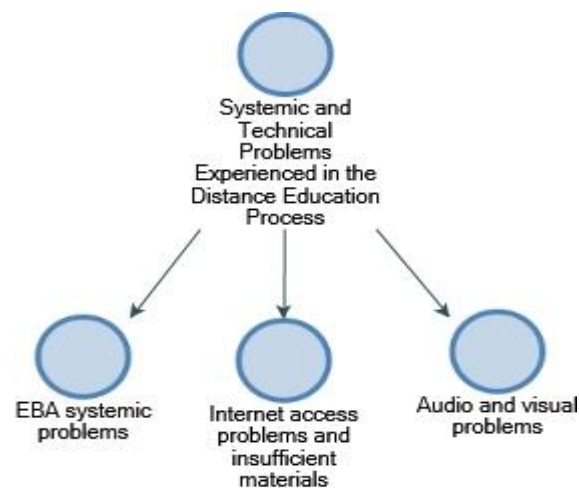


Figure 6. Systemic and technical problems experienced in the distance education process

Participants stated that they experienced some systemic and technical problems in distance education. In this context, it was underlined that there were several issues in the early days of distance education, such as accessing the EBA live lesson module and the internet freezing owing to the intensity. The participants, on the other hand, indicated that these issues diminished over time. Some participant views on this subject are as follows:

I had problems with the live lesson application that is connected to the EBA platform. Like connection issues, constantly receiving some alerts... Because of this, my classes were delayed a lot. (P7)

One of the most significant issues encountered throughout this process is the inability to enter the EBA system due to the high volumes of usage and the inability to participate in the live lesson application. (P5)

In addition, some participants mentioned the problems caused by accessibility to the internet and insufficient materials. The views of a participant on this subject are as follows: In the distance education process, not all of our students have the same resources or conditions. Not everyone can easily access tools such as internet connection, smartphones and tablets.” (P3). Finally, one participant stated that some difficulties were faced during the live class when the sound and camera were on. Also, mentioned the fact

that undesired audio and images are prevalent in the home setting. Then, the students solved this problem by turning off their microphone and camera (P1).

Suggestions for a More Effective Distance Education Process

Under this category, the participants were asked what kind of suggestions they have for a more effective distance education process (Figure 7).

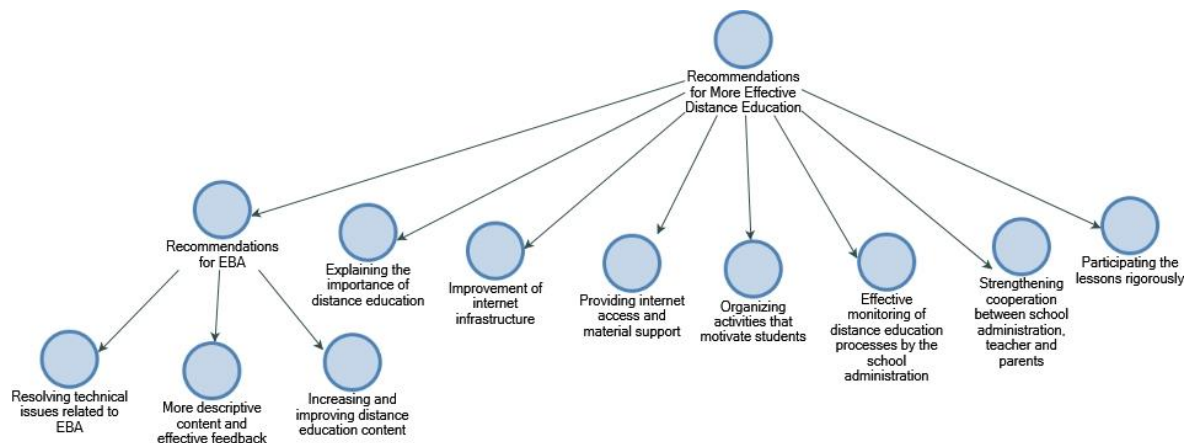


Figure 7. Suggestions regarding the distance education process according to participant opinions

Participants offered some suggestions for a more effective and qualified distance education process. Suggestions related to EBA come to the fore in this matter. As a result, the participants stated that the program's technical issues should be addressed, the educational content should be more descriptive and provide effective feedback, and the content should be increased and improved (P1, P5, P7, P9, P10). Some of the participants' views are stated as follows:

More resources are needed. We were unable to access the page on each refresh of EBA. Even if the assignments provided to the students were completed, they were occasionally observed as not being completed. Such problems need to be resolved. (P1)

I believe that receiving more detailed feedback and even videos on issues that the student doesn't really comprehend in the exercises and tests will improve the clarity and reinforcement of the contents. (P5)

Participants stated that awareness about the importance of distance education activity should be strengthened through further studies (P3, P4, P6, P9). Publicity, attention, and awareness-raising activities are recommended in this context to ensure that teachers, students, and parents will become more sensitive to and interested in this subject. On the other hand, some participants urged that the internet infrastructure be improved to accommodate the demand for distance education (P2, P4, P6). Furthermore, other participants claimed that many students do not have access to the internet or technological devices such as computers and tablets. In this direction, it was stated that students who do not have the necessary resources should be supported in terms of the internet and materials (P4, P7, P8). The views of a participant on this subject are as follows:

All children who will receive education need technological tools and an internet connection. The Ministry of National Education may be capable of providing funding in this area, or it may be able to seek assistance from other government agencies or private institutions and organizations. (P4)

Some participants suggested that teachers design activities that will enable students to become more active and motivated during distance education (P8, P9). A participant shared the following views on this issue (P9): "Teachers who effectively manage this process should focus not only on assignments and lessons but also on activities and research that are appropriate for students' interests and needs and will encourage them to participate more actively." Finally, it was proposed that school administrations monitor the distance education process (P3), that school administration and teachers cooperate more closely with parents (P9), and that teachers and students should be rigorous about participation (P3).

DISCUSSION

According to the study, teachers in primary and secondary schools were found to be the most frequent users of the EBA program in the distance education process. Furthermore, teachers utilized Zoom, WhatsApp, and Teamlink in their live classes and meetings with students. Gören et al. (2020) found that teachers use the EBA live lesson platform in distance education and apps like WhatsApp and Telegram for messaging and phone calls, which is similar to the findings of this study. In another study, Haşiloğlu, Durak, and Arslan (2020) revealed that teachers primarily utilize WhatsApp to communicate with their students during the distance education process.

We found that school administrations provided teachers with inadequate support in the distance education process. It has been emphasized that the knowledge and skills of school administrators regarding distance education and their technological competencies are poor. Moreover, the teachers stated that they received direct support for distance education and technology from the information technologies teacher colleagues. In the distance education process, school administrators might be said to be lacking in communication, motivation, and cooperation. According to Dilekçi and Limon (2020), school administration should communicate with teachers more professionally so that the distance education process can be carried out in a more qualified way. On the other hand, school administrators were urged to provide assistance in adapting learning materials for students with access issues to the material in question (Van Lancer & Parolin, 2020). Similarly, school administrators should exhibit behaviors that reassure students and parents. Measures should be taken to increase distance learning capacities. School administrators should guide teachers in planning the distance education process according to students' learning levels (Daniel, 2020).

In the study, it was concluded that students showed low participation in distance education. The low attendance level was caused by students' indifference and aversion to the classes, difficulty with internet access, and insufficient materials. Furthermore, problems such as not using enough reinforcement methods in distance education, not providing enough and effective feedback, students' passive role, and parental indifference and insensitivity were identified. Moreover, the research found that students did not generally complete their homework assigned from live class and EBA and that the pandemic process, in particular, had severe psychological consequences on students who stayed at home. The findings of the study are generally compatible with the literature. Similar to the findings of this study, Gören et al. (2020) discovered that students faced challenges in following up on distance education classes, motivation to study, concentration on lessons, and internet connection during the pandemic period. An apparent prerequisite to online learning is having access to a computer that students can use to do their work in their homes (OECD, 2020b). In developed countries of Europe, over 95% of students report that they have a computer to use for working at home, but in Turkey, it is approximately 70%. Here, there tend to be very large gaps across socio-economic groups. For example, virtually every 15-year-old in socio-economically advantaged schools in the United States has a computer to work with at home, but only three out of four students in disadvantaged schools have one; in Turkey, it is 87% of students in privileged schools, versus just 40% in disadvantaged schools

(OECD, 2020b). As seen in the OECD report, serious problems are faced in terms of computer access in Turkey. Yılmaz, Güner, Mutlu, Doğanay, and Yılmaz (2020) concluded in their research that the most students do not find distance education services beneficial. Besides, Eken, Tosun, and Tuzcu Eken (2020) found that students lack motivation in the distance education process to create their own learning plan, time management, listening to live classes, taking notes, and revising. Along with these, some studies' (Akgül & Oran, 2021; Demir & Kale, 2020) results showed that students' motivation, interest and attention to the lesson are lower in the distance education process. Last but not least, findings of parallel studies (Çiçek et al., 2020; Demir and Kale, 2020; Yılmaz et al., 2020) showed that during the pandemic period, students' aggression levels increased, they experienced negative emotions such as loneliness and discordance, insomnia, depression, loss of appetite, excessive stress, fear, anxiety and irritability.

We found that aside from parents with high socioeconomic status, other parents did not show sufficient interest and support for distance education. Few parents are concerned about their children's live class experiences, guide them, and follow the lesson plan. Additionally, it is possible to argue that parents' knowledge and skills regarding distance education processes and the use of technology are insufficient. These particular findings of the study are generally compatible with the literature. Arslan, Görgülü Arı, and Hayır Kanat (2021) suggested that parents could not use distance education applications effectively, that they lacked knowledge of the internet and technological tools, that they couldn't connect to the live class, and that they couldn't access the course materials. Furthermore, it has been established that parents lack the digital skills required to manage the distance education process. In line with the study's findings, Haşıloğlu, Durak, and Arslan (2020) found in their research that parents are generally indifferent with the distance education process, except for those with high socioeconomic status.

The research concluded that teachers experienced some systemic and technical problems in the distance education process. There were various issues in the early days of distance education, such as accessing the EBA live lesson module and the internet freezes due to the high usage volume. It can be said that these problems ease off in time. In addition, problems arising from internet access, insufficient materials and ambient noise were mentioned. The findings of the study are generally compatible with the literature. Teachers face challenges in the distance education process such as ambient noise, internet connection, access to the course, lack of digital content, lack of interaction, short course duration, and audio problems, according to Arslan and Şumuer (2020). Furthermore, Yılmaz et al. (2020) found that 68% of students have connection issues at the start of a live class and throughout the lesson.

In the research, teachers offered some suggestions for a more effective and qualified distance education process. Teachers said that the EBA program's technical issues should be resolved, that educational content should be more explanatory and be able to offer feedback, and that the content should be increased and improved. On top of that, teachers stated that awareness regarding the importance of distance education activity should be raised. Publicity, attention, and awareness-raising activities are recommended in this context to ensure that teachers, students, and parents will become more sensitive to and interested in this subject. On the other hand, some participants urged that the internet infrastructure be improved to accommodate the demand for distance education. Furthermore, other participants claimed that many students do not have access to the internet or technological devices such as computers and tablets. In this regard, it was recommended that students who lacked the necessary resources, such as internet access and course materials, should be assisted. Some participants suggested that teachers should design activities that will enable students to become more active and motivated during distance education. Lastly, it was proposed that school administrations monitor the distance education process, that both the school administration and teachers collaborate more closely with parents, and teachers and students become more rigorous about attendance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the quality of distance education activities carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, based on teacher feedback from primary and secondary schools. The research concluded that the teachers mostly use the EBA platform while carrying out their distance education activities. Besides, it is possible to deduce that school administration provided limited support to teachers in the distance education process, and IT teachers offered real support. On the other hand, students and parents are not adequately engaged in distance education activities, and students' involvement in live lessons and their desire and motivation are poor. Additionally, it was revealed that teachers had several systemic and technical issues on the EBA platform during the distance education process. At the same time, students faced a variety of issues related to material insufficiency and internet access.

Some suggestions can be made according to the results of the research. In this perspective, it is advised that the technical problems in the EBA software be resolved and the educational material be extended and developed. Educational information that is more descriptive and capable of providing feedback can be offered to boost student participation and motivation in online learning processes. Further, it is suggested that teachers create activities that engage students and motivate them during an online class. In order to improve the interest and desire of students and parents in distant education activities, awareness-raising activities that highlight the importance of remote education can be carried out in the research. Also, many students do not have internet access or technological tools such as PCs and tablets, according to participant opinions. Providing these fundamental tools and requirements is vital for students' participation in distance learning activities. Finally, appropriate steps can be taken to improve school administrators' digital literacy skills and ensure that school administrators monitor this process.

Yet, the current study has several limitations in some respects. The research covers only primary and secondary schools. Besides, the research was carried out only with teachers. In this regard, the study can only provide information on one dimension of the distance education activities carried out in Turkey throughout the pandemic. In order to overcome this limitation, private schools, as well as public schools, can be included in further research. In addition, students, parents and school administrators can be interviewed as participants.

REFERENCES

- Acar, M. (2020). Korona sonrası dünya: ekonomik, sosyal ve akademik hayatta ne değişecek, ne değişmeyecek? *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 279-299.
- Akat, M. & Karataş, K. (2020). Psychological effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on society and its reflections on education. *Turkish Studies*, 15(4), 1-13. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.44336>
- Akgül, G., & Oran, M. (2021). Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenlerinin, ortaokul öğrencilerinin ve öğrenci velilerinin pandemi sürecindeki uzaktan eğitime ilişkin görüşleri. *Eğitimde Yeni Yaklaşımlar Dergisi*, 3(2), 15-37.
- Alkan, H. (2020). COVID-19 sonrasında yönetsel kapasite: demokrasi bağlamında devletlerin geleceği. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 255-279.
- Alper, A. (2020). Pandemi sürecinde k-12 düzeyinde uzaktan eğitim: durum çalışması. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 45-67.
- Arslan, K., Görgülü Arı, A., & Hayır Kanat, M. (2021). COVID-19 pandemi sürecinde verilen uzaktan eğitim hakkında veli görüşleri. *Ulakbilge*, 57(2021 Şubat), 192-206.
- Arslan, Y., & Şumuer, E. (2020). Covid-19 döneminde sanal sınıflarda öğretmenlerin karşılaştıkları sınıf yönetimi sorunları. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 201-230.

- Aydın, K. (2020). Küresel salgın sonrasında sağlık hizmetlerinin ve ekonomisinin geleceği. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 95-111.
- Aysan, A. F. (2020). COVID-19 salgınının dünya ekonomisini etkilemesinde belirsizlik ve güven kavramsallaştırması. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 521-543.
- Çiçek, İ., Tanhan, A., & Tanrıverdi, S. (2020). COVID-19 ve eğitim. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 1091-1104.
- Daniel, J. (2020). Education and the Covid-19 pandemic. *Prospects*, 49(1), 91-96.
- Demir, S., & Kale M. (2020). Öğretmen görüşlerine göre, Covid-19 küresel salgını döneminde gerçekleştirilen uzaktan eğitim sürecinin değerlendirilmesi. *Turkish Studies*, 15(8), 3445-3470. <https://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.44492>
- Dilekçi, Ü., & Limon, İ. (2020). COVID-19 salgını bağlamında öğretmenlerin algıladıkları "aşırı iletişim yükü" düzeyi. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 231-252.
- Duman, S. N. (2020). Salgın döneminde gerçekleştirilen uzaktan eğitim sürecinin değerlendirilmesi. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 95-112.
- Eken, Ö., Tosun, N., & Tuzcu Eken, D. (2020). Covid-19 salgını ile acil ve zorunlu uzaktan eğitime geçiş: Genel Bir Değerlendirme. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 113-128.
- Erdoğan, B. Z. (2020). Yeni normal dönemde tüketim ve harcama pratikleri. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 495-521.
- Gören, S. Ç., Gök, F. S., Yalçın, M. T., Göregen, F., & Çalışkan, M. (2020). Küresel salgın sürecinde uzaktan eğitimin değerlendirilmesi: Ankara örneği. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 69-94.
- Haşiloğlu, M. A., Durak, S., & Arslan, A. (2020). Covid-19 uzaktan eğitim sürecinde fen bilimleri şube rehber öğretmenlerinin gözünden öğretmen, öğrenci ve velilerin değerlendirilmesi. *Uluslararası Eğitim Bilim ve Teknoloji Dergisi*, 6(3), 214-239. DOI: 10.47714/uebt.811306
- Keleş, H. N., Atay, D., & Karanfil, F. (2020). COVID-19 pandemi sürecinde okul müdürlerinin öğretim liderliği davranışları. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 155-174.
- Kılıç, O. (2020). Tarihte küresel salgın hastalıklar ve toplum hayatına etkileri. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 13-55.
- Koçak Tufan, Z. (2020). Küresel salgın sonrasında sağlık eğitiminin dönüşümü. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 149-171.
- Korkut, C. (2020). Küresel salgın sonrasında ekonomi ve finans Türkiye: Alternatifler ve fırsatlar. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 561-585.
- Merriam, S. B. (2013). *Nitel araştırma: Desen ve uygulama için bir rehber* (3. Basım) (Çev. Ed. S. Turan). Ankara: Nobel.
- OECD, (2020a). A framework to guide an education response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020. *OECD*. Retrieved April, 14(2020), 2020-04.
- OECD, (2020b). Learning remotely when schools close: How well are students and schools prepared? Insights from PISA. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/learning-remotely-when-schools-close-how-well-are-students-and-schools-prepared-insights-from-pisa-3bfda1f7/>
- Onyema, E. M., Eucheria, N. C., Obafemi, F. A., Sen, S., Atonye, F. G., Sharma, A., & Alsayed, A. O. (2020). Impact of Coronavirus pandemic on education. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(13), 108-121.
- Özdoğan, A. Ç., & Berkant, H. G. (2020). Covid-19 pandemi dönemindeki uzaktan eğitime ilişkin paydaş görüşlerinin incelenmesi. *Milli Eğitim Dergisi*, 49(1), 13-43.
- Özer, A., & Çetinkaya, F. (2020). Sağlık hizmetleri ve postpandemik dönemde sağlık hizmetlerinin dönüşümü. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 111-131.
- Özer, M. (2020). Educational policy actions by the Ministry of National Education in the times of Covid-19

pandemic in Turkey. *Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi*, 28(3), 1124-1129.

- Özer, M., & Suna, H. E. (2020). Covid-19 salgını ve eğitim. *Küresel Salgının Anatomisi İnsan ve Toplumun Geleceği*, 171-193.
- Tarkar, P. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education system. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(9s), 3812-3814.
- UNICEF, (2020). Direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and response in South Asia. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/reports/direct-and-indirect-effects-covid-19-pandemic-and-response-south-asia>
- Van Lancker, W., & Parolin, Z. (2020). Covid-19, school closures, and child poverty: a social crisis in the making. *The Lancet Public Health*, 5(5), e243-e244.
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2020). Responding to community spread of COVID-19: Interim guidance, Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/docs/defaultsource/coronaviruse/20200307-responding-to-covid-19-communitytransmission-final.pdf>.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2006). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri* (6. Baskı). Ankara: Seçkin.
- Yıldırım, K. (2010). Nitel araştırmalarda niteliği artırma. *İlköğretim Online*, 9(1), 79-92.
- Yılmaz, E., Güner, B., Mutlu, H., Doğanay, G., & Yılmaz, D. (2020). *Veli algısına göre pandemi dönemi uzaktan eğitim sürecinin niteliği*. Konya: Palet.