

Review Article

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EVALUATION OF RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON FAMILY, WOMEN AND CHILDREN

COVID-19 PANDEMİSİNİN AİLE, KADIN VE ÇOCUK ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİYLE İLGİLİ ARAŞTIRMALARIN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic, which started to appear at the end of 2019 and spread rapidly and made people sick physically, manifested itself with its negative effects on people's mental health and social life in the process, and became a global problem in terms of the problems it caused in social life. Human-being is a multidimensional entity with his soul, body and social existence. Moreover, everything that happens within each of these dimensions has an impact on the other dimensions. The problems that were experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic related to family, women and children have not yet lost their impact. The precautions taken by governments due to the pandemic have affected social and economic life in many ways. The impact of the pandemic, both on health and on social and economic life, has had very negative consequences on family members who have various roles. These problems in the family are based on the problems experienced in nutrition, employment, housing, education, health and communication during the epidemic process. In many fields of health sciences and social sciences, especially in medicine, various studies on the effects of the pandemic and solutions have been carried out during the pandemic process in the world and in our country. In this article, a selection of studies investigating the effects of the pandemic on family, women and children, both in the world and in our country, has been created, classified and evaluated. The aim of this research is to obtain a bird's-eye view of the studies, each of which approaches the subject from different perspectives, and to evaluate the subject holistically. With this method, it will be possible to predict the long-term effects of the pandemic on the family. Thus, it is aimed to contribute to the search for solutions and to provide a perspective to the scientific world and social policy actors on the social problems that have arisen due to the pandemic.

Keywords: family, Covid-19, children, women, pandemic

ÖZET

2019 yılı sonlarında görülmeye başlayıp hızla yayılan ve insanları bedenlen hasta eden Covid-19 salgını, süreç içerisinde insanların ruh sağlığı ve sosyal yaşantıları üzerindeki olumsuz etkileriyle de kendini göstermiş, sosyal hayatta yol açtığı sorunlar bakımında da küresel bir sorun haline gelmiştir. Zira insan, ruhu, bedeni ve sosyal oluşu ile çok boyutlu bir varlıktır. Üstelik bu boyutların her birinde meydana gelen her şey diğer boyutlar üzerinde etkili olmaktadır. Covid-19 salgını sürecinde yaşanan, aile, kadın ve çocuklarla ilgili sorunlar hala etkisini kaybetmiş değildir. Hükümetlerin pandemi kapsamında aldığı önlemler, sosyal ve ekonomik hayatı birçok yönden etkilemiştir. Pandeminin hem sağlığa etkisi hem de sosyal ve ekonomik hayata etkisi, çeşitli rollere sahip aile bireyleri üzerinde çok olumsuz sonuçlara yol açmıştır. Ailede yaşanan bu sorunlar, salgın sürecinde beslenme, istihdam, barınma, eğitim, sağlık ve iletişim konularında yaşanan problemlere dayanmaktadır. Salgın sürecinde dünyada ve ülkemizde, Tıp başta olmak üzere, Sağlık Bilimleri ve Sosyal Bilimlerin birçok alanında salgının etkileri ve çözüm yolları üzerine çeşitli araştırmalar yapılmıştır. Bu makalede, gerek dünyada gerekse ülkemizde salgının aile, kadın ve çocuklar üzerindeki etkilerini araştıran çalışmalardan bir seçki oluşturularak, sınıflandırılmış ve değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırmanın amacı, her biri konuya farklı boyutlardan yaklaşan çalışmaların kuşbakışı bir görüntüsünü elde etmek ve konuyu bütüncül olarak değerlendirmektir. Bu yöntemle salgının aile üzerindeki uzun vadeli etkilerinin öngörülebilmesi mümkün olacaktır. Böylece çözüm arayışlarına katkıda bulunmak ve salgın nedeniyle ortaya çıkan sosyal problemler konusunda bilim dünyasına ve sosyal politika aktörlerine bir perspektif sunmak hedeflenmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler; Aile, Covid19, çocuk, kadın, salgın.

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INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which emerged in Wuhan, China in December 2019, is a disease that was identified on January 13, 2020, and turned into a pandemic as a result of research on some patients with respiratory symptoms in late December. The pandemic was initially detected in the seafood and animal market in this region (Ministry of Health, 2020). Later, the virus spread from person to person and throughout other provinces of China and the world. After the virus spread to the world, on March 11, 2020, it was declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (BBC, 2020).

The coronavirus epidemic spread very quickly to other countries due to its ability to be transmitted from person to person (Işık, 2020). As the virus cannot be detected with a single symptom, cases have not been easy to reach and have spread globally (Johansson 2021). The lack of any treatment method in the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic and the rapid increase in deaths worried all countries in terms of public health (Zhou, Chen, 2020).

The first coronavirus case in our country was seen on March 11, 2020, and the first death from coronavirus was seen on March 18, 2020. On March 16, 2020, face-to-face education was suspended in all educational institutions from primary schools to universities. As the number of deaths increased, citizens aged 65 and over and under the age of 20 were prohibited from going out (Alisinanoğlu, Karabulut, Türksoy, 2020). Over time, other measures began to be taken, such as closing the border gates, suspending air flights, quarantining those who came from abroad, stopping all kinds of artistic, cultural and sports activities, and declaring a curfew on weekends (Işık, 2020). On April 3, 2020, a partial curfew was declared with the Presidential decree and the use of masks in public areas became mandatory (Karataş, 2020). As of April 29, full closures have started.

In this process, the flow of social life was interrupted in many ways. Some of the employees in the private sector lost their jobs and started to experience financial difficulties. During the pandemic, many problems such as the change in social order, losses in household income, loss of status, social and economic measures, decrease in social communication and uncertainties about the future followed by. The changes that the pandemic, which started as a physical health problem, later created in the psychological, social and economic fields, gradually increased its negative effects on the lives of families and individuals. The aforementioned situations caused individuals to experience feelings such as helplessness, anger, panic, anxiety and social phobia (Altın, 2021).

As in other countries, in addition to the measures announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) to prevent the pandemic, some personal and social precautions were taken in Turkey, including practices announced with the slogans like "Stay at Home" and "Life Fits Home" (Işık, 2020). Staying at home has become an important concept within the measures and decisions taken to keep the pandemic under control (Okumuş, 2020). Thus, as in many countries, during social isolation practices to protect public health and prevent the spread of Covid-19, individuals have started to spend a long time with their families in limited physical spaces (Altın, 2021).

As a result, the house has become a place of refuge for protection from the virus. The institution mostly affected by this process has undoubtedly been the family, which constitutes the basic building block of the society. The family, staying together in the same house, has become an institution where changes occur both within and around it (Okumus, 2020). *"It is natural for two people who have been together for a long time, whether in family relationships or around them, to have friction and arguments."* (Bayer, 2018). While family members spend most of their time together at home during the pandemic, emergence of a crisis environment in unhealthy families could gradually increase. According to the data from the Ministry of Interior, incompatibility has increased in quarantined families and the possibility of this process to cause a crisis in the family has increased (Işık, 2020). Therefore, stay-at-home calls could not create a safe and peaceful space in every family environment.

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On the other hand, family members experienced fear of losing their loved ones in this process, which affected their mental health. Individuals who were exposed to disease had to survive this period on their own, staying away from their loved ones during the quarantine process. During the pandemic, family conflicts, disagreements and uncertainties about parenting roles have caused family members to experience psychological problems. Especially women and children are counted among the mostly affected groups. Women's domestic workload, taking care of family members such as children and the elderly at home, and the unequal distribution of parenting responsibilities increased their role diversity in this period.

During this period, children could not go to educational institutions, could not meet with their friends and teachers face to face, and their socialization opportunities were limited. Since children could not spend time with their peers, they experienced a feeling of loneliness and spent most of their time in the virtual environment. This situation caused them to be isolated from the outside world. At the same time, children were more affected by the crises experienced during the pandemic process since they haven't developed coping mechanisms like an adult individual. This situation has caused psychosocial and behavioral problems in children (Aral, Kadan, Aysu, 2020).

During the onset of the epidemic and in the following period, many problems experienced around the family, women and children, which were briefly mentioned above, have been subject to scientific research and investigations. The aim of this research is to examine the subject issue and discuss the increasing domestic problems, based on the literature on the negative effects of the pandemic process on the family, women and children. In addition to the studies conducted in our country, studies on the effects of the pandemic on the family in Western societies were also evaluated in order to provide an opportunity to make a comparison in the research and to see the global dimension of the effects.

One of the main purposes of the research is to provide a perspective to ensure that the long-term effects can be predicted and necessary precautions are taken, by drawing attention to the effects of the Covid-19 epidemic on family, through its effects on family and other social institutions.

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON FAMILY

The family is the first unit that ensures the continuation of the humanity as a result of biological relations and where the socialization process emerges (Sayın, 1990:2). The family is an indispensable structure for the continuity of societies and an institution that has no alternative. In addition, the family has a fundamental role in the integration of social institutions (Erkal, 1998:97). Each individual in the family has a position and appropriate roles (Sayın, 1990:2). Mutual love, respect, solidarity and division of labor within the family are essential. As it is widely known, the family is an important institution with the functions of renewing the population, transferring the national culture, socializing the children, and economic, biological and psychological satisfaction (Erkal, 1998: 97,98).

Although the family has undergone some transformations from the past to the present, it still owns very crucial functions. While some of these functions are now fully or partially undertaken by society or the state (such as education, health, security, economics), some functions have become indispensable for the family with an increasing level of importance (such as maintaining the population, meeting the child's need for love, gaining self-confidence and socializing the individual). Just as society has undergone some changes over time, the family has also undergone major transformations in terms of both its structure and functioning (Sayın, 1990: 2).

"The family consists of various cultural, structural and systemic dimensions. After social traumatic events, families are affected in different aspects in their original structures" (Koçak, Z. & Harmancı, H. 2020). Every family encounters life's difficulties from time to time. The coping mechanisms of healthy and harmonious families are strong and can maintain their balance. Problems experienced in an unhealthy and incompatible family structure may easily upset the balance of the family. It is inevitable to

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experience crises in such environments (Dilber, 2020).

Undoubtedly, the family has been the social area most affected by the Covid-19 epidemic. The family, which is a relatively small social unit, is almost like a laboratory to show the effects of a phenomenon or process on society in terms of many dimensions such as having various functions, being the basis for social communication and interaction of members with each other, and being the first place of socialization. As a matter of fact, problems that occur in the family affect the society, as well as the problems experienced in the society affect the family. Similarly, positive processes and successful relationships in the family also affect social relations in a positive direction.

When the studies on the effects of the pandemic on the family are examined, three main issues stand out: Psychological and communication problems caused by the health problems experienced, incompatibilities due to economic problems and the effects of the pandemic on divorce and domestic violence.

Research on how families have been affected by the pandemic will be presented below. However, it should be noted that, despite all the problems experienced in coping with the effects of the pandemic, many studies have shown that individuals in the family are more advantageous than single individuals. In a study conducted in Spain, it was noted that, during the quarantine process, the psychology of individuals who are married is less affected than singles (Rodríguez-Rey, Garrido-Hernansaiz, Collado, 2020). In a study conducted by Wilson (2020), it has been suggested that family members spending long time together at home during Covid-19 will strengthen relationships between each other. On the other hand, it was more difficult for families with low income and high households to adapt to living conditions compared to the ones with high income levels, and family members were more worn out during the pandemic (cited by Özyürek, Çetinkaya, 2021).

In a study conducted in the United States, the experiences of families with school-age children in the first three months of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic were examined, and the study generally focused on income level and race/ethnicity. 223 parents of school-aged children participated in this study by completing an online questionnaire. The results revealed that low-, middle-income parents of color experienced more financial problems during the pandemic compared to higher-income, white parents (Chen, Byrne, Vélez, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has left many people unemployed. The economic crisis experienced by societies also affected families. In the United States alone, approximately 30.3 million applications for unemployment insurance were filed between March 21 and April 25, 2020. This shows that the pandemic caused job losses in both high and middle income countries (Ahad, Parry & Willi, 2020). Family members had difficulties in accessing the services provided by the state during this period and trying to meet their basic needs caused them to experience anxiety.

A national survey for parents with children younger than 18 was conducted in the United States in June 2020 to measure changes in health status, insurance status, food security, public subsidies, childcare, and use of healthcare since the start of the pandemic. In the study, 27% of parents reported that their mental health deteriorated and 14% reported that their children had behavioral problems. The proportion of families with moderate to severe food insecurity increased from 6% to 8%, and 24% of parents reported neglecting childcare. 16% of parents reported changes in the insurance system and 11% reported worsening food security (Patrick, et al., 2020). In a study of 448 parents with young children in Ohio, it has been shown that social conditions such as confinement due to COVID-19 can be more devastating for parents than short-term economic changes (Schmeer et al., 2021).

Parents participating in the Statistics Canada's "Parenting During the Pandemic" survey reported that in June 2020, 74% felt extremely anxious about gaining balance between work and home and childcare (Charnok et al., 2021). Although

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the time spent between family members increased during this period, it was observed that they experienced communication breakdown as a result of increasing use of technology to reduce their anxiety. In a study by Drouin, Mcdaniel, Pater and Tosco (2020), it was observed that both parents and children increased their use of technology and social media since the beginning of social isolation.

Factors such as the risk of infecting a family member with the disease, the illness of one of the family members and the news of death received from the environment caused individuals to experience anxiety, panic and fear in this process and psychologically worn them out (Günlü, Asıcı, Çetinkaya, 2021). In this period, healthcare workers started to stay in separate houses or hotels because they were afraid of infecting their families with the disease. On the other hand, individuals who were ill and could not go to a separate house due to economic inadequacy felt guilt and helplessness towards their families. In a study conducted in the United States, the majority of individuals who continue to work outside of their homes reported that they are concerned about the possibility of contracting the coronavirus and also infecting their household members (Carli, 2020).

In a study conducted in Australia, the data of pre-pandemic and post-pandemic parent and child mental health, parental substance use, and couple conflict of 2365 Australian parents with children aged 0-18 years were compared. The findings showed that the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have had negative implications for Australian families in general. Parents who participated in the study stated that their psychological health worsened and they increased their alcohol and substance use. In addition, compared to pre-pandemic data, it has been shown that parenting irritability, verbal conflict levels between spouses are higher, family relationships are negatively affected and a more tense family environment is formed (Westrupp et al., 2021).

Although the pandemic initially allowed us to spend more time with our families and relieve longing, family problems could be observed with the prolongation of the process. In a study by Barış and Taylan (2020), compared to the pre-pandemic period, the issues that increased mostly in the family environment were discussions about domestic responsibilities, family members criticizing each other, and constant conflicts within the family. In general, an increase in verbal discussions was observed. On the other hand, family problems which decreased through the pandemic are the separate activities within the family and communication breakdowns.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced families to balance their work and family lives with little public support. Schools and kindergartens were closed, and only parents were responsible for child care and education. While many parents run their paid jobs from home, some parents have had financial difficulties due to losing their jobs. Whatever the case, balancing work and family life has been increasingly difficult during the pandemic. Considering the conditions during the pandemic, the fact that women are forced to do more housework and have no free time has led to discussions that gender inequalities will worsen (Fisher et al., 2020).

There are also remarkable studies that the pandemic deeply affected the relations between spouses and disrupts the functioning of the family institution. For example, in a report by the *Global Times*, it was noted that in March, in China, applications for divorce increased in regions where the quarantine process was over, and the number of women who applied to authorities because they were subjected to violence, only in February, doubled. In Turkey, when the violence rates in March 2019 are compared to the ones in March 2020, cases of domestic violence have increased by 38.2% (<https://sarkac.org/2020/05/covid-19-ve-yakin-iliskilerimiz/>). In a study conducted in the United States, 34% of couples stated that they had conflicts in their relationships due to the pandemic (cited by Ünver, Güloğlu, 2021). In a study conducted in South Korea, it was revealed that marriage and divorce rates decreased at similar rates. In this study, it was thought that the effect of the pandemic on the

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economy may have reduced marriages. In addition, it is predicted that the fertility rate will decrease in the short and medium term due to the decrease in the number of marriages (Kim, Kim, 2021).

Perhaps one of the most dangerous consequences of the pandemic for families is the increase in domestic violence. The pandemic has caused individuals who are prone to violence in the family to experience outbursts of anger, increase their alcohol use, and the emergence of urges to harm others. The increase in violence cases was recorded as 30-36% in France, 40-50% in Brazil, 25% in Argentina, 33% in Singapore, and 10-35% in different states of the United States. In this period, due to the increase in domestic violence cases, there have been different practices in some countries. For example, some hotels in Italy and France have been used as shelters for family members who have been victims. In most of the countries, the number of calls made to help and support lines has increased during the pandemic. In order to build and insight for the cases of domestic violence, an application was created in Spain in which the pharmacy workers reported violence, after women demanded "mask 19" from the workers in pharmacies (Ünal, Gülseren, 2020).

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON WOMEN

When it comes to the social problems caused by the pandemic, it is accepted that the most affected groups are women and children. This is largely due to the fact that women and children are the disadvantaged part of society even in non-crisis periods. Looking at the social life from past to present, women have largely been affected by the implementation of various rules of societies in different religions and cultures than men (Zastrow & Kirst-Ashman, 2013; cited by Can, 2020). It is also accepted that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and men also differs (Augustus, 2021).

When the studies on the negative consequences of the pandemic process on women are examined, it is seen that the studies mostly focus on the negative effects of women's mental state, the increase in violence against women, their exposure to the problems brought about by processes such as pregnancy, child and elderly care, and loss of work.

The UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) has found that women are more depressed than men through the last wave of the pandemic, seen at the end of 2020. According to the data of the institution, 40 out of every 100 women and 26 out of every 100 men between the ages of 16-29 are in a depressive mood (<https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler-dunya-57004559>)

Regarding the studies about other countries, it can be determined that the psychological burden for women has been larger during the pandemic process. *"Recent research in the United States shows that parents of children under the age of 18 experience more stress due to the coronavirus pandemic and response. About 32% of fathers reported worsening mental condition due to contagion compared to 57% of mothers, suggesting that mothers carry a disproportionately large part of the burden"* (Power, 2020).

It has been observed that during the pandemic, pregnant women are more affected by the hospital processes and their mental health may deteriorate significantly due to their anxiety about the disease. In a study conducted in China, it was reported that higher anxiety levels and depression symptoms were observed before and after the COVID-19 pandemic (as cited in Karkin et al., 2021). In a study conducted by López-Morales et al. (2021), with 102 pregnant women and 102 non-pregnant women, it was revealed that anxiety levels of all women increased, but depression, anxiety and negative effects increased more significantly in pregnant women.

Another crucial issue that affects women regarding the problems experienced during the pandemic is that the health workers are mostly women. Thus, the possibility of transmitting the disease to family members caused women to experience more fear and panic than men. *"Although men are at higher risk of dying from the disease, research on Chinese healthcare workers has revealed that the psychological effects of working with COVID-19 patients for women and men are equal, controlling for variables such as occupation, marital status, etc. In a study conducted on Italian healthcare workers, although it did not include any control that could account for gender differences, it was determined that women had higher levels of anxiety, panic and post-traumatic stress disorder"* (Carli, 2020).

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As for women's employment-related problems during the pandemic period, although the employment losses of men seem much greater than women in the recent economic recessions in the United States, on the contrary, women were employed less than men after the Covid-19 pandemic (Alon et al., 2020). Alon et al. (2020) stated the reasons for this as the increased workload of women in sectors affected by the pandemic, such as hotels and restaurants, and the increase in childcare responsibilities with the closure of schools.

One of the negative changes experienced by women who continued their working life during the epidemic was the transition to the distance education system in schools and kindergartens, and the increase in the various responsibilities of women who took care of their children at home. During the pandemic, women who switched to home-office working life had to undertake the responsibility of individuals (children, elderly, disabled) who needed home care on the other hand, while trying to fulfill their duties. Especially the suspension of education in schools and kindergartens and the transition to the online education system have increased the free time for children. Therefore, trying to control both the educational process and the social development of children has kept women busy at home and tired them mentally and physiologically. As a result, women's performance in working life has decreased (Can, 2020).

Findings from semi-structured interviews with 26 women working in the United Kingdom revealed that the pandemic process increased the domestic workload of British women and they experienced role conflicts. Participants stated that increasing role conflict negatively affected them both at work and at home and reduced their performance (Adisa, Aiyenitaju, Adekoya, 2020).

While women in Turkey spent about 4 hours a day on the care of household members before the pandemic, men spent about 1 hour on these activities (TÜİK, 2016). When we look at the pandemic period, the findings of a survey conducted by the UN Development Program in May by interviewing 2,400 people in Turkey, it has been shown that, very similar to Western states such as Europe and the United States, in Turkey, during the Covid-19 pandemic, women work many more hours than men in jobs that are described as "unpaid work" at home (Euronews, 2020). According to a New York Times poll, approximately 20% of men in the United States declared they were fully or mostly responsible for their duties within the home during quarantine, but 2% of women reported agreeing with men (UN Women, 2020).

In the research conducted under the leadership of "UN Women Turkey" on the social and economic reflections of the COVID-19 epidemic on women and men in Turkey, and gender assessments, a total of 1508 women and men were interviewed over the phone, and as a result, regarding those who stayed at home by taking unpaid leave during the COVID-19 epidemic, it was noted that the proportion of women was higher than that of men. In this process, most of the responsibilities of household and care work were attributed to women (cited by Bozkurt, cited by Barış, Taylan, 2020). The study, which revealed that a significant part of the men participating in the research do not help with housework and family care in normal times, showed that 41% of the male participants do not cook and 25.5% do not clean (<https://turkey.un.org/tr/88666-covid-19-kadinlarin-ev-ve-bakim-islerini-artirdi>).

When we look at the "Working Life and Domestic Violence Report" of a study carried out with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), it can be seen that 76% of the female participants and 53.5% of the males spend more time on housework than before the pandemic (<https://hthayat.haberturk.com/calisan-kadinin-pandemide-siddet-raporu-1076359>).

In a study examining the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on scientists, it was stated that the pandemic affected female scientists more negatively, and those who had children were the most affected group. The findings obtained from the researches carried out on the subject revealed that housework is mostly expected from women and responsibilities within the

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family are not shared equally (cited by Koç, Yeniceri, 2021).

A project tracking violence against women in the United Kingdom found that between 23 March and 12 April, deaths from domestic abuse more than doubled compared to the recent 10-year's average rate (Grierson, 2020).

Studies investigating the impact of natural disasters on crime and violence report that violent forms of crime can be affected, while reports of domestic violence often increase significantly after the disaster event (Campbell, 2020). In Australia, when stay-at-home orders came into effect, police in some parts of the country reported a 40% decrease in delinquency, but a 5% increase in domestic abuse calls. At the same time, there was a 75% increase in Internet searches for support for domestic abuse through Google in Australia (Usher, 2020).

As of the third week of March, the United Nations Women's Unit (UN Women) reported that the number of calls to the violence hotlines increased by 33% in Singapore, 30% in Cyprus and 25% in Argentina, and stated that the number of applications to shelters has increased in European countries such as Canada, Germany and Spain. At the Fourth National Action Plan Preparation Workshop on Combating Violence Against Women, held by the General Directorate of the Status of Women of the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the General Manager of the Status of Women declared that due to the high number of calls received to the ALO 183 Social Support Line during the Covid19 pandemic, there was a priority order in answering the calls. It has been mentioned that women can directly reach the hotline by dialing zero when a violent call is made (Eroğlu D. and Gençay H., 2020). The Support System for Women (KADES), which provides 24/7 support for women in danger in Turkey, is another application created to intervene in a short time. Under such circumstances, it might be much more difficult to get away from the perpetrator of violence. Providing faster and easier access to support lines in case of exposure to physical and psychological violence in the family is of great importance, especially in extraordinary circumstances such as pandemics.

When we look at the increase in the number of calls to helplines in other countries; In Germany, women who were exposed to domestic violence during the pandemic process and their relatives applied to the telephone hotline, which was created for the purpose of preventing domestic violence, more than in previous years and requested help. Petra Söchting, the manager of the hotline, declared in a statement in Berlin on Monday that they received about 51,000 calls in 2020, a 15% increase compared to the previous year. Söchting reported that the number of phone calls increased especially after April 2020 and that 24,000 of the calls were related to domestic violence. Thus, it was emphasized that there was a 20% increase in the applications made by women who were exposed to domestic violence (<https://www.dw.com/tr/pandemide-kad%C4%B1na-%C5%9Fiddet-artt%C4%B1/a-57486936>).

Likewise, in the United States, police departments have reported an increase in searches for domestic abuse in cities across the country. For example, an 18% increase was observed in San Antonio and a 22% increase in Portland, Ore. A study in the journal Radiology reported that radiology scans and superficial wounds for domestic abuse between March 11 and May 3, 2020 at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, exceeded the combined rate for the same period in 2018 and 2019 (<https://time.com/5928539/domestic-violence-covid-19/>). Since the first days of the quarantine, there has been an increase in calls to the lines created for domestic violence in other European countries. An increase of 25% was observed in the UK, 20% in Spain (Ünal, Gülseren, 2020).

Renzetti (2009) stated that women are victimized in cases of violence against women with low income and deficiencies in social support networks, and this situation may restrict women from seeking help by getting away from the perpetrator, making it difficult for them to get support from their surroundings. It is noteworthy that during the curfew, it is easier to

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conceal the physical or emotional violence experienced because the survivors of domestic violence have few opportunities to seek help and cannot reach health and safety services (Stark, 2009; cited by Usher et al., 2020, cited by Altın, 2021). In some countries, such as the United States, an increase in calls to domestic violence hotlines was expected during the pandemic, but many organizations observed the opposite. In some regions, the number of calls dropped by 50%. Experts suggested that violence rates did not decrease, on the contrary, victims could not safely access services and connect to hotlines (Evans, Lindauer, Farrell, 2020).

When we look at the news on the subject, the National Domestic Violence Hotline, which usually receives up to 2,000 calls a day, counted 951 callers who mentioned Covid-19 while reporting their abuse between March 10-24. A caller from New York stated that her abuser kicked her out of the house and then took her children by force. Another caller told the helpline that she was forcibly held at home after being threatened with an unlicensed weapon by her abuser and said that he used the pandemic as an excuse to prevent her from leaving her (The Guardian, 2020).

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON CHILDREN

The highly contagious COVID-19 pandemic has created a worldwide panic, and education processes have been temporarily suspended in most of the countries to support the "stay at home" call. Accordingly, the distance education application for students has been started. In Turkey, home education has been provided with the "EBA/Education Informatics Network" system or the distance education opportunities within the universities (Üstün, Özçiftçi, 2020). Children have been among the groups most affected by the pandemic due to reasons such as staying away from their friends and teachers, experiencing boredom in the home environment, being inactive due to the narrowing of their activity areas, and facing virtual dangers because they spend too much time with technological devices.

The effects of the pandemic on education, problems in accessing technology-based learning, the postponement of school and exam schedules, the difficulty of conducting classes online by teachers, the deprivation of regular nutrition and shelter at school for children in disadvantaged areas, the burden of distance education or home education on parents and caregivers, have all caused social isolation reducing the social interaction of young people. It is accepted that the school is not only a learning place, but also a social common area where children learn to socialize and receive care and counseling (Can, 2020).

In a study conducted by Balhara et al., 50.8% of children showed an increase in digital gaming behavior during this period. In the same study, it was found that the increase in digital gaming was associated with those who spent more time playing games, reported exam stress, and those who believed that playing games helped combat stress (as cited in Gökler, Turan, 2020). In a study, after the Covid-19 pandemic, parents of school-age children stated that 72% of their children started to spend more time in front of the screen (Mcclain et al., 2021). In a study conducted by Adibelli and Sümen (2020), an online survey was conducted with 597 children aged 7-13 and their parents. As a result, 41.5% of parents stated that their children gained weight, 34.2% had a tendency to sleep and 69.3% had an increased tendency to use the internet.

Parents and caregivers of school children and young people aged 4 to 16 in the UK completed an online survey of their children's mental health change before and after the pandemic, examining changes in mood between March and May 2020 during early curfews. The findings drew attention to certain deteriorations in mental health symptoms of pre-adolescent children. There was a 10% increase in emotional symptoms, a 20% increase in hyperactivity/inattention, and a 35% increase in behavior problems that met probable event criteria. In contrast, there was less variation in adolescent mental health changes, but negative outcomes were observed at both time points for those living in low-income households and children with special educational needs (Waite et al., 2020). As a result of a survey conducted with parents of school children diagnosed with ADHD

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(Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), it has been revealed that children's ADHD behaviors during the COVID-19 pandemic worsened compared to normal circumstances (Zhang et al, 2020).

How childcare worries Australian parents during pandemic restrictions is evident from data of 30-day Google searches in the United States and Australia. While Americans are more concerned about the economy, as schools and workplaces began to close, the threat of a care crisis emerged (Ruppanner, Churchill, Scarborough, 2020).

Closing schools and continuing education at home increased inequality of opportunity. Long vacations are known to harm the school performance of children from a disadvantaged background. Especially when children are away from school, the things they do and the stimuli they receive affect them greatly. Opportunities available to children also differ in relation to factors such as families, parents' education levels, poverty, physical and psychological health, overcrowding at home, lack of computers, and lack of internet access to participate in distance education. Schools provide children with a more consistent learning experience in terms of early childhood education and care. Schools sometimes offer food to students and sometimes take care of their psychological and biological health. It is known that families with special education needs are more advantageous than families that do not have internet access and are dependent on public schools (Fisher et al., 2020)

In particular, children living in socio-economically disadvantaged and crowded families experience more problems. Therefore, the fact that these families spend more time with each other at home caused their stress, fear and anxiety levels to increase, to face economic problems, to a decrease in the level of patience among family members, thus increasing the cases of child neglect and abuse (Cluver et al., 2020).

During the pandemic, children *"may produce untrue information by having difficulty in understanding individual and social measures regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, and their anxiety and fear may increase"* (Özyürek, Çetinkaya, 2021). Since children lack experience in meeting their social, emotional and behavioral needs compared to adults and are in the developmental stage, it becomes more difficult for them to cope with extraordinary events such as pandemics and disasters, and these processes significantly affect children's mental health (Akoğlu, Karaaslan, 2020).

Considering the cases of child neglect and abuse, it is determined that there is an increase during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially with the conflicts between parents. Children's direct witnessing of domestic violence causes post-traumatic stress disorder and some behavioral disorders (Humphryes et al. 2020). In a study of 320 children and adolescents in China, the most common psychological and behavioral problems were difficulties in leaving, distraction, and fear of asking questions about the pandemic (as cited in Çalışkan, 2020). In a study conducted by Özlü et al. (2021) with 304 children, it has been stated that children's anxiety and depression levels are related to their fear of COVID-19.

It is stated that the risk of being exposed to physical, psychological and sexual abuse, and neglect of children who stay at home by their parents due to situations such as interruption of education during the epidemic, curfew and the inability to control children by their teachers, are stated to increase. Although a week has passed since the closure of schools in Ireland, an increase in calls made to some child support hotlines has drawn attention (Ergönen, Biçen, & Ersoy, 2020).

There has also been an increase in child abuse cases in previous extraordinary situations related to public health. For example, during the Ebola virus pandemic in West Africa from 2014 to 2016, school closures led to an increase in cases of child labour, child neglect, sexual abuse and early pregnancy. Child pregnancy incidents in Sierra Leone doubled compared to the pre-pandemic and reached 14 thousand (UNICEF Turkey, 2020).

We see that there are frightening studies on child labor in this period. These examples have increased in underdeveloped Asian and African countries, with families getting poorer and education interrupted. *"In India, for example, tens of thousands of children have started working in the fields and factories. In Kenya, children break stones in quarries instead of going to school. After-*

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school jobs such as brick making, furniture making or brush cleaning have now become a full-time job in Latin America” (cited in Erol, 2021). The World Economic Forum stated that there was a 10% decrease in household incomes in Ivory Coast, which led to a 5% increase in child labor (Ahad, Parry and Willis, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Throughout history, humanity has faced numerous pandemics, and in most of these disasters, people have faced various problems due to psychological, social and economic reasons, especially health. In order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, it was deemed necessary for a large part of the world's population to stay at home at certain intervals and periods. This measure, which was considered to be necessary and compulsory, brought forth other problems affecting the family, women and children.

In addition, these problems continued as the length of staying at home, with education and many sectors entering the work-at-home system. Although some families came together in the process, providing harmony and rapprochement of family members, the number of families of this kind is very few. Because many of the family problems that emerged during the pandemic were reinforced by the presence of other factors. Likewise, the process has led to greater problems for poor families.

The measures taken by governments due to the pandemic have had a direct impact on families both socially and economically, causing family members to face problems in fulfilling their new roles. Employment, education, health, transportation, housing, nutrition, social activity and interpersonal communication of families are the areas most affected by this situation.

With an ordinary observation, it can be clearly seen that the epidemic has caused new problems in the society in many aspects. However, it is necessary to determine the multidimensional causality of the problems and the damage they cause in correct, systematic and scientific ways in order to offer planning and perspective to the institutions and individuals who are in a position to cope with these problems and develop solutions and policies. For this purpose, many studies have been carried out in our country and in the world. Data from the field were collected and analyzed. Each study revealed a different aspect of the subject. While some of the researches determined for this article are academic studies, some of them are statistics declared by institutions.

In this article, it is aimed to portray the problems experienced in the fields of family, women and children together with the pandemic process by examining these studies. For this, the findings obtained from the researches were focused on. Findings were classified and evaluated. For example, regarding women, each finding was determined with different data. Some studies have identified the phenomenon of violence based on the increase in calls to helplines, and some on the increase in the number of divorces based on violence.

Considering the studies investigating the effects of the pandemic on the family, findings such as the increase in the inequalities in the distribution of roles within the family, the increase in unemployment, the increase in the anxious and depressive mood of the family members due to reasons such as illness, contamination and death anxiety, the weakening of the communication within the family with the increase in the use of technology and media, and the increase in violence and fights have been obtained. Studies conducted in our country and around the world have revealed that especially domestic violence has increased at an alarming rate during the pandemic.

The focus of studies examining the effects of the pandemic on women has been the increase in violence against women. In addition, it has been determined that women are held responsible for the care of children, the elderly and the disabled in the family, especially during the periods of curfew, unequal workload distribution, contagion anxiety and depressive mood. It

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is also among the findings that women's employment and job losses are higher than men's. The concerns and anxieties that women had during the pandemic with significant difficulties during the pregnancy period and that the health workers were mostly women and infecting their families were also the subject of research.

It has been determined that the problems that children face due to the pandemic are mostly related to their staying away from education and school, which is the main socialization area. In this process, the increase in children's online time has regressed their communication skills. It has even caused many of them to become addicted to technology. Deterioration of sleep patterns and increased anxiety and fears about illness increased depression. The increase in child labor as a result of the impoverishment of families and the increase in child neglect and abuse in this period are other findings.

As a result, the problems caused by the pandemic continue with a large extent today. The fact that the problems are determined by researching in this way will contribute to taking quick and effective steps on solutions. In this article, examining local and global studies on the subject will also enable to make comparisons about similar or differentiating aspects of the problems experienced by the countries.

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