RESEARCH ON EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY (REP)

Student Opinions and Suggestions about Distance Education

Celalettin Çelebi[1]

Necmettin Erbakan University

Fatih Yılmaz[2]

Ministry of National Education

Abstract

The coronavirus pandemic, which emerged in 2019 in the city of Wuhan, China, affected societies very quickly. It has brought about important changes in many fields such as economy, health systems, education and so on. In order to avoid losses in education and adapt to this new situation, countries quickly switched from face-to-face education to distance education. This study, aiming to examine the opinions and suggestions of high school students about the compulsory distance education activities during the Covid-19 pandemic, is a phenomenological study designed in the qualitative research design. The participants of the study have been determined by purposeful sampling method and the data have been collected through a fixed format questionnaire. 151 high school students participated in the study which was carried out between May and June, 2021. The data have been analyzed using the descriptive analysis and content analysis techniques. The results show that high school students experienced various problems such as the internet connection problems, software and hardware problems required for the access, communication problems, motivational problems and so on. However, they got support from their families during these times, and apart from the factors negatively affecting their motivation, there were some factors affecting their motivation positively. They also offered some suggestions for the solution of problems encountered.

Key Words

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[1] **Correspondance to:** Dr., Necmettin Erbakan University, Ereğli Faculty of Education, Konya, Turkey. E-mail: celalcelebi75@gmail.com **ORCID:** 0000-0002-2189-6403

[2] Dr., Ministry of Education, Konya, Turkey. E-mail: yilmazoglu@gmail.com **ORCID**: 0000-0001-7852-6756

Education is defined as the process of creating the desired behavioral changes in individual in accordance with the pre-determined goals through their own lives (Ertürk, 1970). One of the objectives of education is to increase the well-being of the individual and society by improving democratic, social and political life in the country (Soylu, 2003). Today, with technology moving at an incredible pace, many disciplines, such as communication, education, transportation, health and so on are taking their share of the advances that technology brings.

Recently these advances, having transformed the world into a global village, have made societies more dependent on each other economically, socially and politically than ever before and, have prepared the ground for some negative developments as well (Buluk & Eşitti, 2020). To illustrate, the spread of the coronavirus epidemic, which has been reported to have emerged in Wuhan, China in December 2019, can be an example to these negative advances.

The epidemic has deeply affected social and economic order all around the world, forcing individuals and societies to change their habits, especially their social lives. In a short time, it was obvious that the level of transmission of the coronavirus epidemic was quite high and that it could lead to the death of individuals, and it was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020 (Pandemi, n.d.). Moreover, it was emphasized that the disease spread through physical contact and through respiration. In the light of this information, considering that schools are places where interpersonal contact is highly intense, education and training activities in almost all schools in Turkey were suspended on the 14th of March, 2020.

Over time, due to the increase in the number of cases and death tolls in Turkey, as in all countries of the world, continuing face-to-face education in schools, which are places where formal education activities are carried out collectively, would increase the rate of transmission and accordingly, it might cause serious problems in the health services. Therefore, distance education activities, eliminating physical interaction between students and teachers, started.

Although face-to-face education is important, such measures were thought to be necessary to control the pandemic and ultimately to protect public health. Therefore, distance education activities were regarded as a form of education that must be started in order to resume education and training activities that have been disrupted or interrupted due to the coronavirus pandemic (Hastunç, 2020).

Bozkurt (2017) defines distance education as an interdisciplinary field that uses technology to eliminate the boundaries between students, teachers and learning resources. Distance education activities, dating back three hundred years in the world, extend to 1940's in our country where they started with radio programs for everyone in the past, cover online higher education today. Thus, considering the progress of distance education, it can be stated that our country is quite experienced in distance education activities. Furthermore, it would be quite reasonable to think that, recent advances in communication technology had an impact on the adaptation to distance education activities as well.

During the coronavirus pandemic, EBA TV content which are 20 minute TV broadcasts, prepared for each class level and each course, offered by the Ministry of National Education in cooperation with Turkish Radio and

Television Corporation (Vikipedi, n.d.), EBA portal, a free of charge educational network offered to teachers and students by the General Directorate of Innovation and Educational Technologies (Coşkunserçe & İşçitürk, 2019), and other similar platforms allowing teachers and students to organize online sessions and share educational content; various educational social media channels, family and peer support became the tools used in the continuation of educational activities for students.

Distance education activities have some advantages and disadvantages compared to face-to-face education. Some of its advantages can be flexible time frame, not being adhere to a physical place, and being able to benefit from a large number of media content and tools and low costs. However, concentration problems, interruption of electricity or internet connection, poor video or voice quality, inequality of opportunity due to the lack or inadequacy of the necessary tools for the course, some difficulties in controlling unwanted behaviors, lack of communication and various health problems can be regarded as some of the disadvantages of distance education activities (de Oliveira et al., 2018; Karakuş et al., 2020; Özyürek et al., 2016). Additionally, the literature also shows undesirable student behaviors such as low learning, high absenteeism rates, feeling of loneliness, and procrastination (Bernard & Rubalcava, 2000), high chances of distraction, having to deal with complicated technology, lack of social interaction, having difficulty in staying in contact with teachers (Sadeghi, 2019), lack of self-discipline and lack of enough feedback (de Oliveira et al., 2018) during distance education.

Taking all these into account, it is considered important to get the opinions and suggestions of students, who are one of the partners of the process, about the distance education activities, to reveal the shortcomings of these activities and to make suggestions for the shortcomings in the activities. In this study, opinions and suggestions of high school students regarding the compulsory distance education activities during the Covid-19 pandemic have been examined. Therefore, this research, tries to find answers to the question of "What are the opinions and suggestions of high school students about distance education?" In addition to this main research question, it also tries to find answers to the following questions.

i.   How and how often do students communicate with their friends during the distance education?
ii.   What kind of support do students get from their families during the distance education?
iii.   What are the factors affecting student motivation positively and negatively during the distance education?

Method

Research Model

This research, designed in the qualitative research design, is a phenomenological study. Phenomenology is the study of essences. It is an attempt to define the essence of perception or consciousness (Merleau-Ponty & Bannan, 1956). In this context, this research aims to evaluate the distance education activities carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic from the students' point of view and to get the student suggestions for the activities.

Participants

The participants of this research are high school students. Before starting the research, the number of participants is one of the important concerns of a researcher (Florey, 1993, as cited in Yılmaz, 2019). Sample selection in qualitative researches is not as rigid as in quantitative researches; however, the effect of the sample on the quality of the research is undeniable (Coyne, 1997). Since collecting data in order to reveal the opinions and suggestions of all high school students who received distance education during the Covid-19 pandemic would not be economical and plausible for the researchers, the participants have been determined in accordance with the research design and access opportunities of the researchers. For this reason, the criterion sampling method, one of the purposeful sampling methods has been adopted in this study. Purposeful sampling is a method frequently used in qualitative research designs and consists of individuals or groups who can provide the appropriate data for the research, have the necessary knowledge about the research subject, and volunteer to participate (Bernard, 2002; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Patton, 2002; Spradley, 1979, as cited in Palinkas et al., 2015), and in the criterion sampling method, participants or cases that meet the predetermined criterion are included in the research (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006, p. 112). Table 1 below shows the demographic distribution of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Participants

Gender	n	f
Male	81	53.64
Female	70	46.36
Total	151	100
Type of School		
Anatolian high school	64	42.39
Vocational high School	87	57.61
Total	151	100

According to Table 1, 53.64% of the participants are males and 46.36% of them are females. Moreover, 42.39% of the participants attend Anatolian high schools and 57.61% of them attend vocational high schools.

Data collection tool and the data collection

In this research, a fixed format questionnaire, developed by the researchers using Google forms, has been used as the data collection tool. Before the preparation of the form, studies in literature on distance education during the Covid-19 pandemic have been reviewed. Hoping to fill the gap in the field, high school students have been determined as the participants, and their opinions and suggestions about distance education activities have been studied. Expert opinions have also been taken for the questions in the form.

The pre-application of the form was carried out with 14 students, and in the light of the feedback obtained from the pre-application and expert opinions, the form got its final form and the research started. The form consists of two

parts. While the first part of the form collects demographic information of the participants, the second part has questions related with distance education. During the data collection, since the online form did not allow any missing data, all participants answered the questions thoroughly.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis, which is one of the most frequently employed approaches (Sandelowski, 2000) and content analysis methods have been adopted in the analysis of the research data. Descriptive content analysis, aiming to find out the tendencies, makes use of descriptive statistics (Dinçer, 2018). Qualitative descriptive studies offer a summary of an event in everyday terms. In this method, researchers seek descriptive and interpretive validity as well (Sandelowski, 2000). On the other hand, content analysis is the process of categorizing the research data in terms of their similarities or conceptual categories to find patterns or relationships (Julien, 2008). In this context, the answers given by the participants have been examined by each researcher, and conceptual categories have been formed by bringing similar statements together. Next, the researchers consulted with an expert experienced in qualitative researches and asked him to match the answers with the conceptual categories. As a result, it was determined that the consistency between the raters was 92%. This value meets the rate of consistency among the raters suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994).

Findings

In this part of the study, the findings of the research are presented in tables. Table 2 shows how often the participants attended live classes.

Table 2

Frequency of Attending Live Classes

Frequencies	f	%
Never	10	6.62
Rarely	16	10.60
Sometimes	30	19.87
Often	37	24.50
Always	58	38.41
Total	151	100

Table 2 shows that %38.41 of the students always, %24.5 of them often, %19.86 of them sometimes, %10.59 of them rarely, and %6.62 of the them never participated in live classes during the distance education. Accordingly, it can be concluded that most of the students participated in the live classes.

Table 3

Platforms Students Follow and Things They Do When They don't Attend Live Classes

Platforms followed/Things done	f	~%
Watching videos from YouTube	99	58.57
Spending time on social media	28	16.56
Following online educational platforms	23	13.7
Getting peer support	6	3.55
Doing nothing	4	2.36
Solving tests	3	1.77
Attending private teaching courses	3	1.77
Other (working, playing, doing sports etc.)	3	1.77
Total	169	100

It is clear from Table 3 that students engage in educational or non-educational activities when they do not attend live sessions during the distance education. When students do not attend live sessions, they mostly watch videos on YouTube (58.57%), then spend time on social media (16.56%), and use online educational platforms (13.7%).

Table 4

Student Opinions on Distance Education

Dimensions	Student Opinions	f	%	x̄
Education	It is useless (You cannot learn anything by means of distance education)	50	30.3	16.66
	I'm lagging behind classes	18	10.9	
	It is useful, it should continue like this	12	7.3	
	There is no change	12	7.3	
	We have learned the importance of school	6	3.63	
	I started to pay attention to studying	2	1.21	
Self-view	I am bored	19	11.51	5.2
	I got lonely	3	1.81	
	I started having fun on the Internet with friends	2	1.21	
	I have gained weight due to staying at home	1	0.6	
	I am having health problems	1	0.6	
Participation	We cannot pay attention to the lesson as in the classroom	8	4.84	4
	Participation in classes is quite low	6	3.63	
	They play games and watch videos in class	3	1.81	
	They have difficulty attending morning classes	2	1.21	

	They do not attend classes on time	1	0.6	
Technology	The rate of technology use is increasing	12	7.3	
	There are connection problems	5	3.03	6.33
	Distance education is developing	2	1.21	
Total		165	100	32.19

According to Table 4, it is clear that student opinions about distance education are grouped under education ($\bar{x}$=16.66), self-view ($\bar{x}$=5.2), technology ($\bar{x}$=6.33) and participation ($\bar{x}$=4) categories respectively. Regarding the distance education, high school students think that "It is useless; you cannot learn anything by means of distance education (30.3%), I'm lagging behind classes (10.9%), it is useful, it should continue like this (7.3%), there is no change (7.3%), we have learned the importance of school (3.63%), I started to pay attention to studying (1.21%)". In terms of self-view, they expressed some negative opinions such as "I'm bored (11.51%), I got lonely (1.81%), and some positive opinions such as "I started having fun on the Internet with friends (1.21%)". In the participation dimension, the students expressed opinions like "we cannot pay attention to the lesson as in the classroom (4.84%), participation in classes is quite low (3.63%), they play games and watch videos in class (1.81%)". In the technology dimension, they stated that "the rate of technology use is increasing (7.3%), there are connection problems (3.03%) and distance education is developing (1.21%)".

Table 5

Getting or not Getting Support from the Family during the Distance Education

Getting/not getting support	f	%
I do not get any support	54	35.76
I get support	97	64.24
Total	151	100.00
Getting support	f	%
Following the process closely, they remind me of my responsibilities.	78	58.65
They help me with my homework and exams.	31	23.31
They communicate with my teacher about my lessons.	24	18.05
Total	133	100.00

According to Table 5, while 35.79% of the students do not get any support from their families during the distance education, 64.24% of them get family support. Students who stated that they received support report that "following the process closely, they remind me of my responsibilities (58.65%), they help me with my homework and exams (23.31%) and they communicate with my teacher about my lessons" (18.05%).

Table 6

Getting in Contact with Friends during the Distance Education

Frequency of getting in contact	f	%
In sessions only	65	43.05
Often	49	32.45
Everyday	27	17.88
I do not get in contact	9	5.96
Sometimes	1	0.66
Total	151	100.00
Way of contact	f	%
Messaging	74	50.34
Video calls	28	19.05
Playing online games together	22	14.97
Doing homework together	14	9.52
Meeting with close friends outside	8	5.44
Talking on the phone	1	0.68
Total	147	100.00

According to Table 6, during the distance education, 43.05% of the students get in contact with their friends only during live sessions, 32.45% of them often, 17.88% of them every day, 5.96% of them do not get in contact with their friends and 0.66% of them state that they sometimes get in contact with their friends. During the distance education, students contact their friends by messaging (50.34%), video calling (19.05%), playing online games together (14.97%), doing homework together (9.52%), meeting with close friends outside (5.44%) and talking on the phone (68%).

Table 7

Factors Affecting Student Motivation Negatively during Distance Education

Dimensions	Reasons for Negative Motivation	f	%	x̄
	Connection problems	61	23	
	Webcam and microphone problems	14	5.38	
	Device shortages and malfunctions	13	5.00	
Negative extrinsic motivation	Being at home	12	4.62	6.88
	Too much noise in the sessions	8	3.08	
	Distance education is unrealistic	8	3.08	
	Having to work	7	2.69	
	Not being able to learn face to face	6	2.31	

	Power cuts	5	1.92	
	Lack of communication	5	1.92	
	Family pressure	5	1.92	
	Pandemic	4	1.54	
	Unauthorized entry of people into the sessions	4	1.54	
	Overlap of courses	3	1.15	
	Lack of topics	3	1.15	
	Sharing the room with siblings	3	1.15	
	Lack of discipline in class	3	1.15	
	Lack of homework check	2	0.77	
	No responses	1	0.38	
	No help except from the family	1	0.38	
	Having to attend classes early in the morning	1	0.38	
	Constant change of course hours	1	0.38	
	Too much homework	1	0.38	
	Attendance to the sessions is not compulsory	1	0,38	
	Not understanding	17	6.54	
	Attention disorder	17	6.54	
	Uncertainty - anxiety about the future	12	4.62	
	Back, head, eye problems	10	3.85	
	Technology addiction	8	3.08	
Negative	Boring lectures	5	1.92	
intrinsic	Unwillingness and feelings of emptiness	5	1.92	6.76
motivation	Exam anxiety	4	1.54	
	Sleep disorders	4	1.54	
	Not participating in discussions	3	1.15	
	Psychological deterioration	1	0.38	
	Not studying	1	0.38	
	Problems related with puberty	1	0.38	
Total		260	100.00	13.64

It is obvious in Table 7 that the reasons that negatively affect high school students' motivation towards distance education are gathered in two dimensions as extrinsic ($\bar{x}$=6.88) and intrinsic ($\bar{x}$=6.76). In negative extrinsic motivations dimension, students have such problems as "connection problems (23%), webcam and microphone problems (5.38%), device shortages and malfunctions of the necessary equipment (5%) and being at home (4.62%)". On the other hand, in negative intrinsic motivation dimension they have such problems as, "not understanding

(6.54%), attention disorder (6.54%), uncertainty- anxiety about the future (4.62%), back, head and eye problems (3.85%)".

Table 8

Factors Affecting Student Motivation Positively during Distance Education

Dimensions	Reasons for positive motivation	f	%	x̄
Positive extrinsic motivation	More studying opportunities	28	18.54	7.5
	Teacher support	19	12.58	
	Being at home	13	8.61	
	Being distance	10	6.62	
	Having more time	8	5.30	
	Our family's support	7	4.64	
	I can learn the topics I do not understand by watching videos	4	2.65	
	Increase in learning resources	3	1.99	
	Being in an online course with my friends	3	1.99	
	Teachers make the lesson fun	3	1.99	
	Having a session at an early hour	2	1.32	
	Sparing time for my animals	2	1.32	
	No pressure as in school	2	1.32	
	No exams	2	1.32	
Positive intrinsic motivation	Online games improve my mind	9	5.96	5.11
	Quiet environment increases motivation	8	5.30	
	Being more comfortable	6	3.97	
	I stay healthy	5	3.31	
	Increased confidence in myself	5	3.31	
	I can focus better on the lesson	4	2.65	
	I can study regularly	4	2.65	
	Reading books	4	2.65	
	Having an advantage over students who cannot attend	1	0.66	
Total		151	100.00	12.11

It is clear in Table 8 that reasons positively affecting high school students' motivation towards distance education are gathered in two dimensions as extrinsic (x̄ =7.5) and intrinsic motivation (x̄=5.11). In positive extrinsic motivation dimension the students stated some motivational factors like "more studying opportunities (18.54%), teacher support (12.58%), being at home (8.61%)", had positive effects on them. On the other hand, in the positive intrinsic motivation dimension, they stated some motivational factors such as "online games improve my mind (5.96%), quiet environment increases motivation (5.30%), and being more comfortable (3.97%)".

Table 9

Student Suggestions to Increase Participation in Distance Education

Categories	Codes	f	%	x̄
Teaching and Learning Procedure	Lessons should be more fun	39	22.54	6.58
	Students should study	4	2.31	
	Memory techniques should be used	1	0.58	
	Topics should be consolidated	1	0.58	
	There should not be question solving activities during 30 minutes in a lesson	1	0.58	
	Students should have more opportunities to speak	1	0.58	
	There should be less homework	1	0.58	
Motivation	There should be rewards (financial rewards, marking up, etc.)	13	7.51	9.33
	Students should be encouraged for the lessons	10	5.78	
	Those who do not participate should be penalized (marking down, having to study more, etc.)	5	2.89	
Communication	Teachers should be in constant contact with families	9	5.20	3.75
	There should be more interaction between the student and the teacher	3	1.73	
	Teachers should chat with students outside the class	2	1.16	
	Teachers should also take students into consideration when making syllabus	1	0.58	
Legislation	There should be fewer lessons	13	7.51	5.25
	Attendance should be a must	10	5.78	
	Education should be face to face	6	3.47	
	Attendance should be optional	4	2.31	
	Webcams should be on	4	2.31	
	There should be mid-terms	3	1.73	
	Students should repeat the grade	1	0.58	
	Attendance must be taken	1	0.58	
Practice	Sessions should be in later hours	9	5.20	4.5
	Duration of courses should be longer	5	2.89	
	Duration of courses should be shorter	3	1.73	
	Breaks should be longer	1	0.58	
Background	The necessary devices and internet must be provided to those who are in need	17	9.83	3.66
	EBA should be checked frequently	1	0.58	

	There should be the necessary studying environment at home	1	0.58	
	Ready-made course content should be reproduced	1	0.58	
	Applications creating a class like atmosphere should be developed	1	0.58	
	Teachers should learn how to use Zoom and some other applications	1	0.58	
Total		173	100.00	33.07

Table 9 shows that the participants made suggestions in the teaching and learning procedure ($\bar{x}$=6.58), motivation ($\bar{x}$=9.33), communication ($\bar{x}$=3.75), legislation ($\bar{x}$=5.25), practice ($\bar{x}$=4.5) and background ($\bar{x}$=3.66) dimensions.

Some of the suggestions in the teaching and learning procedure dimension are, "lessons should be more fun (22.54%), students should study (2.31%), memory techniques should be used (0.58%) and topics should be consolidated (0.58 %)". Some of the suggestions in the motivation dimension are, "there should be rewards (7.51%), students should be encouraged for the lessons (5.78%) and those who do not participate should be penalized (2.89%)". On the other hand, in the communication dimension, students made suggestions like "teachers should be in constant contact with families (5.20%), there should be more interaction between the student and the teacher (1.73%) and teachers should chat with students outside the class (1.16%)".

Some of the suggestions in the practice dimension are "sessions should be in later hours (5.20%), duration of courses should be longer (2.89%), and duration of courses should be shorter (1.73%)". Lastly, they made some suggestions in the background dimension like "the necessary devices and internet must be provided to those who are in need (9.83%), EBA should be checked frequently (0.58%) and there should be the necessary studying environment at home (0.58%)".

Table 10

Words and Concepts Associated with Distance Education

Dimensions	Words and concepts	n	f	%
	Course	1	24	5.61
	Online education	2	14	3.27
	School	3	12	2.8
	Exam	4	10	2.34
Items related with education	Not understanding	5	9	2.1
	Book	6	8	1.87
	Education	7	8	1.87
	Homework	8	7	1.64
	Teacher	9	5	1.17
	Ziya Selçuk	10	5	1.17

Topic	11	4	0.93
Learning	12	4	0.93
Family	13	4	0.93
Morning	14	4	0.93
Friend	15	4	0.93
Attention disorder	16	3	0.7
Missing	17	3	0.7
Unnecessary	18	3	0.7
Unable to participate	19	2	0.47
Disorganization	20	2	0.47
Being destroyed	21	2	0.47
Syllabus	22	2	0.47
Break	23	2	0.47
Time	24	2	0.47
Student	25	2	0.47
Notebook	26	2	0.47
Nonsense	27	2	0.47
Listening	28	1	0.23
Loss	29	1	0.23
Practical intelligence	30	1	0.23
Eraser	31	1	0.23
Internship	32	1	0.23
Duration	33	1	0.23
Getting prepared for the university	34	1	0.23
Pressure	35	1	0.23
Studying	36	1	0.23
Different	37	1	0.23
It is useful	38	1	0.23
It is useless	39	1	0.23
Communication	40	1	0.23
Of poor quality	41	1	0.23
Word	42	1	0.23
Sharing	43	1	0.23
Repeating the grade	44	1	0.23
Giving up	45	1	0.23
Attendance	46	1	0.23

	Waste of time	47	1	0.23
	Difficult	48	1	0.23
	Pencil	49	1	0.23
	Table	50	1	0.23
Feeling	Getting bored	1	29	6.78
	Bad	2	9	2.1
	Stress	3	9	2.1
	Comfort	4	4	0.93
	Good	5	4	0.93
	Unwillingness	6	3	0.7
	Longing	7	3	0.7
	Asociality	8	2	0.47
	Enjoyable	9	2	0.47
	Happiness	10	2	0.47
	Feeling of inadequacy	11	2	0.47
	Failure	12	2	0.47
	Mixed feelings	13	1	0.23
	Fear	14	1	0.23
	Depression	15	1	0.23
	Joy	16	1	0.23
Items related with technology	Computer, tablet	1	36	8.41
	Zoom application	2	21	4.91
	EBA application	3	21	4.91
	The internet	4	20	4.67
	Microphone	5	6	1.4
	Webcam	6	5	1.17
	Link	7	3	0.7
	Game	8	3	0.7
	Screen	9	2	0.47
	YouTube	10	2	0.47
	Image	11	2	0.47
	Voice	12	2	0.47
	Modem	13	1	0.23
Items related with health	Virus	1	8	1.87
	Staying at home	2	8	1.87
	Coronavirus	3	7	1.64

Mask	4	5	1.17
Distance	5	4	0.93
Isolation	6	3	0.7
Pandemic	7	3	0.7
Restriction	8	3	0.7
Illness	9	2	0.47
Hygiene	10	2	0.47
Insomnia	11	2	0.47
Restriction	12	2	0.47
China	13	2	0.47
Tiredness	14	1	0.23
Health	15	1	0.23
Vaccine	16	1	0.23
Breakfast	17	1	0.23
Hospital	18	1	0.23
Pray	19	1	0.23
Total		98	428	100.00

Table 10 shows that, words or expressions students associate with distance education are related to education (3.44%), emotion (4.68%), technology (9.53%) and health (3%) dimensions. In education dimension, students relate distance education with expressions like "course (5.61%), online education (3.27%) and school (2.80%)"; in feeling dimension they relate it with expressions like "boring (6.78%), bad (2.10%) and stress (2.10%); in technology dimension they relate it with expressions like "computer, tablet (8.41%), Zoom application (4.91%) and EBA application (4.91%)"; in the health dimension they relate it with expressions such like "virus (1.87%), staying at home (1.87%) and coronavirus (1.64%).

Discussion

In this section, results obtained from the findings of this study, which aims to determine the opinions and suggestions of high school students about distance education, have been interpreted comparing to the results of other studies. Considering the results of this study, it can be concluded that while benefiting from distance education activities, high school students experience some obstacles like internet connection problems, lack of the required hardware, software or technological devices, socialization problems, and various factors affecting their motivation negatively. However, the participants state that there are some factors affecting their motivation positively as well, and they receive support from their families for the problems they encounter.

As in many other countries of the World, during the Covid-19 pandemic, online education platforms have been used in Turkey so that students are not totally alienated from education. A significant part of the students participating in the research stated that they attended the live sessions during the distance education. Similarly,

Karakuş et al. (2020) concluded in their research that all teacher candidates participating in the research attend live sessions regularly, but sometimes they cannot follow all of the sessions due to various unexpected technical difficulties. In this research it has come out that the students, who do not attend live sessions regularly, watch videos on YouTube, spend time on social media or in several online environments such as online educational platforms. Some factors such as "boring lessons and internet connection problems" may be some of the reasons of the students' not attending live sessions and doing extracurricular work.

Opinions of high school students regarding distance education are grouped under four dimensions as education, self-view, participation and technology. In these dimensions, students mostly came up with negative opinions such as "distance education is boring (Jun et al., 2021), it is useless, because students cannot learn anything in distance education (Scarpellini et al., 2021), they cannot pay attention to the lesson as in the classroom (Sarikaya & Yarimsakalli, 2020), the level of participation in the lessons is low" (Genç, 2020). Likewise, teachers participating in Sarı and Nayır (2020)'s research emphasized similar problems such as not being able to communicate adequately with students during distance education and not being able to attract student attention to the courses. Therefore, as Scarpellini et al. (2021) stated, if the online learning-teaching process is ineffective, the academic development of students may be at risk.

The family has a great place in the child's physical, mental, social and emotional development and school success. A healthy development of the child in these aspects is closely related to the family environment (Şişman, 2001). The majority of high school students stated that they received support from their families during the distance education. It has come out in the research that families provide support to their students by following the process closely, reminding their children of their responsibilities, and helping them with their homework and exams. As Bozkurt et al. (2020) stated, parents have suddenly assumed new educational roles as students leave schools and universities and return to their homes due to the pandemic. In the study of Kuş et al. (2021), parents stated that family ties were strengthened, their personalities developed, communication and awareness in the family increased during the pandemic.

Moreover, it has come out in the research that, during the distance education, nearly half of the students meet their friends only during courses. So, it is reasonable to come to the conclusion that the distance education negatively affects the communication of students with each other. In a similar vein, some other researchers also state that distance education, where communication is carried out only with a technical tool, negatively affects the social skills of students (de Marcellis-Warin et al., 2020; Genç, 2020; Karakuş et al., 2020). In the distance education, there are some other negative aspects such as lack of interaction between education stakeholders, difficulties in socializing and not being able to benefit from adequate guidance services, too (Başaran et al., 2020; Blahušiaková et al., 2021; Hawley et al., 2021; Özdoğan & Berkant, 2020). According to the results of our research, students who state that they meet their friends outside the classroom communicate via messaging or video calling.

Motivation is defined as activating the individual with certain motives (Püsküllüoğlu, 1991). While the one related to environmental factors is defined as extrinsic motivation, the one related to the work done by the individual himself/herself is defined as intrinsic motivation (Argon & Ertürk, 2013). Students stated that extrinsic and intrinsic

factors such as "the opportunity to study more, a quiet environment (Blahušiaková et al., 2021; Fırat et al., 2018) and online games improving their minds" positively motivated them for distance education.

On the contrary, factors negatively motivating high school students for distance education are mostly external such as internet connection problems, webcam and microphone problems, lack of the required equipment and unexpected malfunctions; and some intrinsic factors like not understanding, attention disorder, uncertainty and anxiety about the future (Hawley et al., 2021; Jun et al., 2021; Kuş et al., 2021; Sarikaya & Yarimsakalli, 2020; Sever & Özdemir, 2020). Eventually, it can be concluded that this situation causes loss of motivation in all education stakeholders, including teacher candidates (Karakuş et al., 2020), teachers and administrators (Özdoğan & Berkant, 2020) and students (Sarikaya & Yarimsakalli, 2020). Students, who are aware of this unwanted outcome, made some suggestions like financial rewards, marking up, encouraging participation, and punishment for those not participating.

In order to increase student participation in distance education, suggestions offered by high school students are grouped under six dimensions as teaching and learning procedure, motivation, communication, legislation, practice and background. The participants think that the distance education is boring and suggest that courses should be more fun in order to increase participation.

During the distance education, reasons such as connection problems, lack of equipment, audio or video problems prevent the lessons from being fully understood. It also negatively affects the interaction between the student and the teacher, as well as the effective regulation of the learning and teaching procedure, as in face-to-face education.

Since distance education is a type of education that does not take place face-to-face, there is no direct communication between the participants (Karakuş et al., 2020). In communication dimension, high school students having difficulties during these times suggested that teachers should constantly communicate with their families. As Sarikaya and Yarimsakalli (2020) stated, there should be no communication problems between the student and the teacher in order for a course to be successful or efficient.

In legislation dimension, high school students stated that there should be less courses and attendance to the courses should be compulsory. It can be said that optional participation in courses in distance education causes low attendance and negatively affects the efficiency of the courses. Therefore, identifying and resolving the factors negatively affecting student participation in courses is considered to be highly important.

In practice dimension, the participants stated that courses should be held at a later time and their duration should be longer. Contrary to the findings of this research on the extension of duration of courses, Jun et al. (2021) found out that the participants had a positive stance on the reduction of course duration.

The participants, to solve problems such as lack of the Internet or computers (Flores & Gago, 2020; Özdoğan & Berkant, 2020; Yilmaz Ozelci, 2021), have suggested providing the necessary devices and the Internet to the ones who are in need of them. Türker and Dündar (2020), in their study with high school teachers, concluded that infrastructure problems and lack of equipment in teachers and students are important obstacles in distance education. As Bozkurt (2020) stated, investments should be made in technology infrastructure and educational technologies in a

meaningful way and according to the needs, and a balance policy should be followed by investing in abstract technologies as well as concrete technologies.

According to the results, it is clear that the expressions high school students associate with distance education are grouped under the dimensions of education, feeling, technology and health. Considering the expressions such as course, getting bored, computer, tablet, virus that students metaphorically associate with distance education, it is clear that they are similar to the views expressed in other themes. Accordingly, it can be concluded that students have a clear and holistic perspective on distance education.

Suggestions

Depending on the findings of this research;

i. It is suggested to meet the necessary technical, hardware or software requirements, which are one of the most common needs in distance education.

ii. It is recommended to determine the factors preventing student motivation in extraordinary conditions such as the pandemic, and to carry out studies that will motivate students for the courses.

iii. During the distance education, necessary efforts should be made to diversify and keep communication channels open among education stakeholders.

Ethic

All procedures in this study involving human participants were carried out in accordance with the ethical standards.

Author Contributions

This article was written with the joint contributions of two authors.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Funding

No scholarships or payments have been received from any institution for this article.

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