Examining Experiences of Parents About Distance Education During the Epidemic Process

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Abstract

This research aims to examine parents' experience in distance education during the epidemic process. The research is designed as a case study from qualitative research patterns. A semi-structured interview technique as a data collection tool has been used for the study. The data obtained have been analyzed by descriptive and content analysis methods. Typical case sampling method has been used in the study. The study group consist of 48 parents of three different primary schools. According to the results of the research, parents carried out educational activities such as preparing, supporting students, monitoring and conducting activities during the epidemic process. Parents have carried out the educational activities in the epidemic process by providing and participating in the environment for students and contributing to them. Parents evaluate educational activities in the epidemic process in three different ways, which are satisfactory, inadequate and limited. Parents have encountered problems with infrastructure, participation, planning and EIN platform in distance education activities during the epidemic process. It is seen that the proposals for distance education activities in the epidemic process are related to the infrastructure of the EIN platform, preparation for the process, planning the process, the implementation of the content and activities used in education.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important factors affecting the development of societies. For this reason, large investments in education systems should be made. Meeting the increasing educational need in parallel with population growth is one of the important educational problems that societies need to solve. At the same time, lifelong learning needs should be met as a result of the information age. All countries must continue their training systems quickly in terms of renewal and development in accordance with the conditions of the age (İşman, 2011). The distance education system is one of the systems that provides this opportunity. Especially with the new type of Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, the importance of distance education has come to the fore more than ever.

One of the biggest advantages offered by modern information technology is distance education. Thanks to technology, teachers and students can participate in education without being directly together. The international interaction and educational opportunities that have emerged with globalization enable distance education programs to grow and many institutions to do more online studies. Especially the increasing interest of adult students who work in a specific job or need a flexible learning environment has increased the interest of institutions in distance education (Verduin & Clark, 1991). Distance education means that education is web-based for students with the help of evolving internet technologies and computers (Newby, Stepich, Lehman & Russell, 2006). Distance education is a method of education in which the student is physically separated from the teacher. It is used in conjunction with other forms of education, including self-or face-to-face training (Greville, 1989). Distance education is a platform that many schools use to meet the learning needs of students (Hannum, Irvin, Lei & Farmer, 2008). Distance education provides the opportunity for individuals to develop in the field of their own with the possibility of individual and independent learning throughout life (Arat & Bakan, 2011). Distance education is the product of efforts aimed at providing alternative educational opportunities where students and teachers are located in separate environments, is an elaborate, systematic form of education that expands with student support services, where various educational environments are employed (Özer, 1990). With the provision of distance education, advantages such as freedom of time and space, variety of educational materials and methods come to the fore (Katane, Kristovska & Katans, 2015). According to Belanger and Jordan (2004), three important factors play a role in the growth of distance education. The first of these is the provision of educational opportunities for students. The second is to reduce the economic costs of institutions by providing an educational environment with fewer instructors to a larger student body. Finally, individuals have access to educational opportunities throughout their lives, regardless of location and living conditions.

Distance education is a planned systematic educational technology application, where resources and recipients are located in separate environments in most of their learning–teaching processes. It allows recipients the opportunity of "individuality", "flexibility" and "independence" in respects such as teaching age, purpose, time, place and method, etc. In learning-teaching processes; tools and technologies, methods materials such as written and printed materials, audio tools, technologies, face-to-face training, and communication and interaction between resources and recipients are used. (Uşun, 2006). Thanks to distance education practices, teachers and students in different environments miles away from each other can communicate effectively with each other by video and voice (İşman, 2011).

In long holiday periods and in such crisis situations, the use of open and distance learning opportunities based on mutual interaction will prevent students as well as parents from feeling alone. Open and distance learning applications must also perform a supportive, helpful function in these crisis situations (Can, 2020). During the outbreak, the Ministry of National Education of Turkey (MoNE) initiated distance education through the Education Information Network (EIN) in a short period of time with the onset of the outbreak. EIN is an online social education platform benefited by educational stakeholders and developed by the General Directorate of Innovation and Education Technologies. By establishing different television channels at different school levels, the platform has created an opportunity for all students to benefit from distance education. According to statistics of the

Ministry of National Education (MoNE, 2020), EIN, which is actively used in distance education due to the Covid-19 outbreak, is the 10th most visited site in Turkey and the 3rd most visited education website in the world with 3.1 billion clicks. 7 million 383 thousand 213 students and 1 million 30 thousand 516 teachers actively used EIN and 2 thousand 516 hours of lessons have been broadcasted on the platform.

The globally effective New Type of Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak has taken over the world by 2020. During the outbreak, systems such as business life, health, social life, education etc. have been severely affected. Due to the outbreak, face-to-face training has been suspended in Turkey as of March 13, 2020, and the decision has been made to transition to distance education. During the epidemic process, the closure of schools led to significant changes in the roles of teachers, students and parents. During the epidemic, parents played a key role in the distance education process. In the process of distance education, parents have been involved in education, perhaps more than ever in the history of formal education. They faced a variety of roles that they were not used to before, such as preparing suitable environments at home, supplying equipment, building the technology infrastructure and providing motivation for their students. It is thought that the presentation of the experiences of the parents who follow the process closely regarding the activities of distance education will make significant contributions to the nature of the work within the scope of distance education.

Parent support for education is an important factor for student success in traditional school settings. This support in the distance education process has made significant contributions to the success of students (Lee & Figueroa, 2012). During the distance education process, parents have tried various alternatives to facilitate their children's education. Parents have experienced the limits of their skills and resources to support their children in this process. They have tried to meet the expectations of their children by collaborating with the school (Koskela, Pihlainen, Piispa-Hakala, Vornanen & Hamalainen, 2020). The academic progress and special needs of their children are the main issues that worry parents in the distance education process. For this, parents have made efforts to design a quality education opportunity for their children (Garbe, Ogurlu, Logan & Cook, 2020). In this process while parents have tried to rearrange their working lives on the one hand, they have tried to meet the educational needs of their children without neglecting the emotional and psychological aspects on the other hand (Coppola, Senatore & Masullo, 2020). However, research shows that this situation is not easy at all and parents face problems during the process (Demir & Özdaş; Koskela et al, 2020). Revealing parent experiences related to distance education is important for supporting the evaluation of the studies carried out within this framework. On the other hand, this research is important because it is one of the first studies in Turkey to evaluate parent experiences related to distance education at the primary school level. In this respect, research results and recommendations are expected to contribute to subsequent studies in terms of improving distance education, preparing better content and more effective conduct of the process. Within this framework, it is aimed to examine parents' experience in distance education during the epidemic process. Within the scope of this purpose, the following sub-objectives will be sought to respond to:

1. What are the educational activities that parents have carried out during the epidemic process?

2. How do parents carry out educational activities during the epidemic process?

3. How do parents evaluate the activities of distance education in the epidemic process?

4. What are the problems parents face in distance education during the epidemic process?

5. What are the parents' suggestions for distance education in the epidemic process?

METHOD

Research Method

This research is designed as a case study from qualitative research patterns. The aim of the case study is to try to clarify why a decision or a number of decisions were made, how they were implemented, and concluded (Yin, 2003). The most obvious feature of the qualitative condition study is the investigation of one or more states into the depth (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). In this context, the parent's opinions on distance education activities carried out at home during the epidemic process were examined with a holistic approach within the framework of research questions. Thus, it focuses on how parents affect the process of distance education and how they are affected by the distance education process.

Study Group

The study group of the study was selected with typical case sampling technique. Typical situations are used to express situations that do not differ from the universe in terms of their core characteristics and represent the universe (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). In this context, three primary schools were selected in the city center that were not unusual in terms of their basic characteristics and that they could represent the province. Through classroom teachers in these three schools, parents were sent data collection tools and were asked to answer the form. As a result, 48 parents answered the interview form as part of the study. Since it was decided that the data saturation was reached, the responses of the parents were deemed sufficient. Information about parents participating in the study is presented in Table 1:

Table 1. Characteristics of Participants

Participated	Sex			Grade their student attend				
	Female	Male	Total	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	Total
Parents	22	26	48	11	10	17	10	48

As seen in Table 1, 48 parents participated in the study. 22 of the participating parents are female and 26 are male; 11 are first-grade, 10 are second-grade, 17 are third-grade and 10 are fourth-grade parents. In addition, permission has been obtained from the Directorate of National Education of Batman Province for research. The ethics committee decision dated 11.06.2020 and numbered 2020 / 5-9 was also taken from the Mardin Artuklu University Ethics Committee.

Data Collection Tools

A semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool in the study. Semi-structured interview helps to gain in-depth information on a specific issue by eliminating the limitations of write-and-fill tests and surveys with its standardish and flexibility features (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Interview forms were created in line with research questions and based on literature review (Bilgiç & Tüzün, 2020; Can, 2020; Harrison, 2019; Williamson, Eynos & Potter, 2020; Yılmaz & Banyard, 2020). There are five questions in the form. In order to check the extent to which the prepared interview form serves the research purpose and its applicability, the opinions of field experts were consulted. Corrections were made in the research form in line with the expert opinions received. In order to check the comprehensibility of the forms, a pre-application was made with five parents. The application was started after it was seen that there was no problem.

Expert examination has been applied for the internal validity of the research. In order to increase external validity, the research process and the processes performed in this process are explained in detail. In this context, the research method, the study group, the data collection tools, the collection of data, analysis and how the findings are organized are detailed. To increase the internal reliability of the study some of the findings were given directly and the rest were given in tables. In

order to increase the external reliability of the research, explanations were made about the researcher's locations, participants and the method of analyzing the data. The research findings were encoded and compared by both researchers to calculate consistency.

Data Collection

Research data were collected through a semi-structured interview form. Through the semi-structured interview forms prepared within the scope of research questions, parents were asked to answer by sending e-mail and messaging programs electronically through classroom teachers. Answers from the participants were recorded electronically. After the data collection process was completed, a written transcript of the responses of the participants was made. The data obtained from the parents were analyzed within the sub-objectives of the study. Data analysis was done on this written document.

Data Analysis

Descriptive and content analysis was used in the analysis of the data. The data analysis process was generally analyzed with descriptive analysis according to the research questions. Then, each research question was analyzed with content analysis. The main purpose in content analysis is to reach the concepts and relationships that can explain the collected data. In this context, data are first conceptualized. Later, the emerging concepts are organized logically and the themes explaining the data are determined. The basic process in content analysis is to gather similar data within the framework of certain concepts and themes and to interpret them in a way that the reader can understand (Yıldırım & Şimşek 2013).

Data analysis started with the examination of the written data. In the first stage, the data were coded by the researchers independently from each other, taking into account the research questions. Coding is based on concepts extracted from the data. The resulting codes are significantly divided into wholes. In the second stage, the themes were obtained by examining the codes assembled by the researchers. In the third stage, codes were arranged and defined according to the themes obtained. The data obtained at this stage are presented without interpretation. In the last stage, the findings were interpreted and conclusions were drawn.

Reliability was calculated in order to calculate consistency between coders. In this context, the "agreement percentage formula" developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used. The percentage of agreement indicates "Reliability = Agreement / (Agreement + Disagreement) x 100". According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013), the percentage of compliance being 70% and above indicates that the coding reliability is ensured by the researchers. In the research, the agreement percentage was found to be 0.93 using this formula.

The findings obtained are shown in the tables for research purposes. While the findings were tabulated, codes and themes were shown with numerical data. However, digitization is not done to make generalizations and to look for relationships between variables. Digitization was done to increase reliability and reduce bias. While the opinions of the participants are entered into the codes and given directly, they are abbreviated with the letter "P".

FINDINGS

Below, the findings obtained from the parents are presented within the framework of the sub-objectives of the study.

What are the Educational Activities Parents Carried out during the Epidemic Process?

The opinions of the parents participating in the research on the educational activities they carried out during the epidemic process are presented in Table 2:

Table 2. Educational Activities Carried Out by Parents During the Epidemic Process

Theme	Codes	f
Preparation	Planning (P9, 11, 29)	3
Support	Providing additional resources (P8, 16, 24, 30, 34, 36, 37, 46), Testing, solving questions (P5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 33, 37, 38, 40, 42, 44, 46)	26
Monitoring	Keeping track of assignments (P1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 19, 23, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 44), Keeping track of course work (P1, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 21, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31, 39, 43, 44, 46, 48), Keeping track of live lessons (P4, 6, 10, 12, 14, 17, 22, 26, 37, 40, 42), Keeping track of book (story) reading (P5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 43, 44, 45), Following the teacher's program (P7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 19, 22, 23, 30, 32, 38)	77
Execution	Having them watch EIN TV (P1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14, 19, 22, 26, 36, 37, 40), Repetition of past topics (P7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 19, 38, 39, 48), Handling remaining topics (P16, 21, 32, 38), Implementing the prepared program (P29), Playing games (P10, 23, 31, 39, 44)	33

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the educational activities carried out by parents during the epidemic process are grouped under four themes. These themes are named as preparation, support, monitoring and execution. It was revealed that the parents planned for the process within the scope of *preparation* and provided additional resources within the scope of *support*. Regarding the *monitoring*, it was determined that the they followed students' homework, course studies, books they read, their participation in live lessons and the program prepared by the teacher. As part of the *execution*, it was revealed that the parents had their students watch EIN TV, had them repeat past topics, cover the remaining subjects and implemented the program prepared with the teacher. However, it was also revealed that there were parents who did not perform any activities during the process.

Examples of parents' opinions regarding some of the activities carried out during the epidemic process are as follows:

"I followed the training program on EIN TV. I had my student solve the tests on the subject. I followed up on the homework given by our teacher. I followed my student's book reading in spare time." (P5)

"I followed the program prepared by our teacher for the holiday period, did the general repetition of the books, had my student read story books and do homework for an hour or two every day." (P7)

"We enabled him to follow lessons during live class hours. We ensured that he does the homework his teacher sends on a daily basis in a certain order. During this time, we also had the opportunity to make a general repetition of our topics. We especially focused on testing." (P19)

Evaluating the opinions of the parents who participated in the study, it is understood that the parents generally took an active role in education during the epidemic process. As a requirement of this role, it is seen that they devote time to their students, take care of their education, cooperate with classroom teachers, monitor the process, and have their students study and support them.

How Do Parents Carry Out Educational Activities During the Epidemic Process?

The views of the parents involved in the study on how they carried out the educational activities in the epidemic process are presented in Table 3:

Table 3. Parent Views on How Educational Activities Are Carried Out

Theme	Codes	f
Ensuring participation	Having her/him watch EIN TV regularly (P1, 5, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47), Having her/him participate in live classes (P5, 10, 12, 15, 16, 22, 24, 33, 37, 38, 39, 44), Encouraging her/him to study (P4, 17, 33, 42, 43, 45, 47).	24
Providing a suitable environment	Creating a quiet room (P2), Preparing a study room (P4), Making her/his room single (P10), Organizing her/his workspace (P19), Preparing a daily study schedule (P9, 11, 19, 29).	8
Support	Helping her/him work (P5, 10, 14, 20, 22, 28, 29, 31, 46), operating with the teacher (P7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 23, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 44, 46), Following different websites (P16,30,46).	8

As can be seen in Table 3, it was revealed that the parents' views on how they carried out their educational activities during the epidemic process were gathered under three themes. These themes have been named as *ensuring participation*, *providing a suitable environment* and *support*. As can be seen in the table, it was revealed that parents generally carried out distance education by ensuring the participation of students. It has been determined that parents who participate in distance education activities encourage their students to study, watch EIN TV and participate in live lessons. Some of the parents also stated that they carried out distance education by providing a suitable environment. It was revealed that the parents who carried out distance education activities by providing an environment created a quiet environment for the student to study comfortably at home, prepared a study room, made the room single person, organized a study area and prepared a study program. In addition, some of the parents stated that they carried out distance education by contributing to the student. It has been revealed that parents who carry out distance education by contributing to the student help the student to study, get help from the teacher, and research different websites for education.

Some examples of parents' views on how they carried out educational activities during the epidemic process are as follows:

"We followed EIN lessons on TV and tablet, I made a daily study plan by following the frequent instructions of our teacher and made my child follow it" (P9).

"By attending TV lessons in the early days, then by attending live lessons" (P15).

"I carried it out by encouraging reading books and studying" (P46)

Considering the opinions of the parents participating in the research on how they carried out the educational activities during the epidemic process, it is seen that the parents were integrated into this process, they took an active role in the education of the child and they worked in this context. In this context, it can be said that they prepared a suitable study environment at home, contributed to the education of the student personally and ensured the participation in the distance education activities offered by the ministry.

How Do Parents Evaluate Distance Education Activities During the Epidemic Process?

The opinions of the parents participating in the study regarding how they evaluate distance education during the epidemic process are presented in Table 4:

Table 4. Parents' Opinions on Distance Education Assessment During the Epidemic Process

Theme	Codes	f
Satisfying	The best that can be done (P4), Liked it (P5), Satisfying (P9, 11, 14), Good (P11, 20, 23, 24, 29, 44), Positive (P13, 40), Could not be better (P15), Successful (P16), It was a nice experience (P23), Fine (P24), Very good (P31), Entertaining and instructive (P35), Quite successful (P37, 38).	21
Inadequate	Not enough feedback from students (P7), Very lacking in infrastructure (P10), Useless (P18, 48), Negative (P25, 36), Insufficient (P30, 32, 39, 41, 43, 45), amateurish (P46).	14
Limited	Better than no lessons (P1), Better than nothing (P2), It prevented the student from leaving the school but I did not find it very useful (P3), Moderately successful (P6, 21), Good except for systemic troubles (P17, 42), Not quite sufficient (P19, 47), It was done very fast, but it was not enough. (P22), Good in terms of knowledge, inadequate in terms of emotion and movement (P23), Good but not enough (P33), Shortcomings were resolved with teacher's contribution (P8, 34).	13

As seen in Table 4, it was revealed that the parents' views on how they evaluate distance education are grouped under three themes. These themes have been named as *satisfying*, *inadequate* and *limited*. As seen in the table, some parents are satisfied with distance education. It has been revealed that parents who are satisfied with distance education describe distance education as sufficient, good, positive, successful, nice, very good, entertaining and instructive. However, it was determined that some parents were satisfied with the distance education, but emphasized the shortcomings of the process. These parents, who evaluated the distance education process as limited, stated that distance education is better than its absence, it is not beneficial although it prevents the student from disconnecting from education, it is good, but it has systemic problems, it is done very quickly, but it is insufficient. On the other hand, it is observed that some parents approached distance education negatively and evaluated the activities performed as unsuitable. It was revealed that these parents considered distance education negatively, useless, inadequate, unprofessional and incomplete.

Some examples of parents' opinions regarding the evaluation of distance education during the epidemic process are as follows:

"I find it successful in general. I think that all kinds of difficulties encountered in the face of this situation encountered and realized for the first time are tried to be eliminated as quickly as possible" (P16).

"Cognitively adequate, insufficient in terms of sensory and psychomotor skills" (P27).

"During the epidemic, I found the activities carried out within the scope of distance education very insufficient. I do not think it contributes to children. I think it is a rushed training program" (P32).

Considering the opinions of the parents participating in the study on how they evaluate distance education during the epidemic process, it can be said that the parents are mostly satisfied. However, it is also revealed that some of the parents who are satisfied find the education given incomplete. On the other hand, some parents have completely negatively approached education in the epidemic process and it comes to the fore that they consider the education given to be useless and inadequate. This situation may have been caused by the uncertainty and innovations of the process, as well as the comparison of distance education with face-to-face education.

What are the Problems Encountered in Distance Education for Parents During the Epidemic Process?

The opinions of the parents participating in the research on the problems they encountered in distance education during the epidemic process are presented in Table 5:

Table 5. Problems Parents Encounter in Distance Education During the Epidemic Process

Theme	Codes	f
Problems with infrastructure	Lack of computer (P10, 23), Lack of internet connection (P10, 23, 47), Insufficient internet quota (P20, 38), Having to pay for internet (P46), Lack of education (P48).	9
Planning issues	Live classes being in the early hours (P11, 17, 32, 42), The length of the break time (P13), Class hours are irregular (P16), Covering subjects not covered in school (P16), Short lesson time (P16, 32), Not having every lesson (P18), Too much repetition of past lessons (P19), Topics the student does not understand (P21).	12
Problems with participation	Forgetting and missing class hours (P1), Student not concentrating (P4, 29, 30), Student boredom (P7, 30), Student's inability to wake up early (P14), Adjusting the time (P47), Student avoiding from the lesson (P25), Explaining topics that the child doesn't understand (P35), The process is new (P44).	11
Problems with the EIN Platform	Connection problems (P6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 39, 43, 45), Late connection of the system (P17, 42), Live lesson interruptions (P22), Delay between sound and video (P24).	15
Problems specific to distance education	Lacks effect (P8, 34), Lacks interaction (P6, 9, 11, 28), EIN TV is insufficient (P30, 32, 46), Not as effective as face-to-face training (P2, 33), Lessons are inefficient (P41), Lack of order and discipline (P4).	13

As can be seen in Table 5, it has been revealed that the parents' views on the problems they encounter in distance education activities during the epidemic process are gathered under five themes. These themes are named as *problems with infrastructure, problems with planning, problems with participation, problems with the EIN platform* and *problems specific to distance education.* Regarding the infrastructure, it was revealed that the parents expressed the problems such as the lack of computers and internet, insufficient internet quota, the process being new, and lack of knowledge about distance education. Regarding planning, it was determined that the parents stated the problems such as short lecture times on television, very repetitive and long lecture breaks, early and irregular live lectures, and the teaching of only certain lectures. Regarding participation it was revealed that parents forget the lesson hours, they expressed problems regarding students such as boredom, not being able to concentrate, not waking up on time and not following the lesson. With regard to the EIN platform, it has been determined that parents have problems such as connecting to the system, disconnecting from the system, and audio-video not being synchronized. Finally, it was revealed that parents expressed problems such as lack of effect, lack of interaction, inefficiency of lessons, inadequacy of EIN TV and lack of order and discipline specific to distance education.

Some examples of parents' views regarding the problems encountered in distance education during the epidemic process are as follows:

"One of the biggest problems we encountered was the internet connection, another big problem was the lack of a computer" (P10).

"There were frequent live lesson interruptions. Sometimes there were problems with the internet." (P22).

"I think EIN TV is insufficient in knowledge and learning. The problem was that the lecture hours were not in appropriate hours and the duration was short." (P32).

Considering the parents' views on the problems they encounter in distance education during the epidemic process, it is understood that the parents are not yet ready for the new situation they encounter, the necessary infrastructure at home is not sufficient and they have difficulty in adapting to this process. In addition, the content planned for distance education and the time envisaged for these contents and the problems caused by the EIN platform itself come to the fore. In addition, it is observed that some parents compare distance education with face-to-face education and are not satisfied with distance education.

What are the Parents' Suggestions for Distance Education During the Epidemic Process?

The opinions and suggestions of the parents participating in the study regarding distance education during the epidemic process are presented in Table 6:

Table 6. Parents' Suggestions for Distance Education Activities During the Epidemic Period

Theme	Codes	f
Recommendations Regarding Infrastructure	The infrastructure of online courses should be improved (P16, 17), The infrastructure should be improved (P29, 42) .	4
Recommendations Regarding Preparation	Free internet and computers should be given to each student (P10, 30), Guidelines should be prepared for parents about the process and parents should be informed (P19), Disadvantaged children should be included in the process by being provided tablets and internet (P29), Families should be guided about distance education (P32), Convenience should be provided to those who do not have internet at home (P37, 38), Equality of opportunity should be ensured (P41), Internet problems must be solved (P46).	9
Recommendations Regarding Planning	Training time should be longer (P2, 16, 21, 23, 27), Class hours can be extended (P5, 30, 33), Lessons should not be placed in the early hours (P9, 11, 14, 17, 26, 39, 42), The child's development status should be taken into account when planning live lessons (P9, 11). Daily usage time must be introduced instead of time allocation (P9, 11), Recess time should be shorter (P13), Student should be a participant (P22, 23), Individual and socio-economic differences should be considered (P28), Distance education should be done locally and school-based (P32), Live streaming lessons should be increased (P35, 39), The program must be diversified (P44), Live lessons can be more structured (P47), Distance education should be stopped (P18, 36).	30
Recommendations Regarding Content	More effective contents can be developed on EIN TV. (P4), EIN TV courses should be updated (P12), Homework should be less (P22), EIN TV needs to be improved (P43, 45, 46), EIN TV and EIN portal should be enriched in terms of content (P9, 11).	8
Recommendations Regarding Implementation	Live lessons should be continued (P1), Students and teachers must be in constant communication (P10), A more rigorous education should be given (P48), It should also have compensatory training (P15).	4

As can be seen in Table 6, it was revealed that the parents' suggestions for distance education during the epidemic process were grouped under five themes. These suggestions are named as *recommendations regarding infrastructure, preparation, planning, content* and *implementation.* It was determined that the parents made suggestions for the development of the EIN platform and the infrastructure of the live lessons regarding the infrastructure. Regarding the preparation, it was revealed that they made suggestions to overcome the internet problem, to provide free internet and computers to each student, to inform parents about the process and to prepare a guide for the parents, to include disadvantaged children in the process and to ensure equal opportunity. Regarding planning, parents made suggestions that the education and lesson times is longer than the determined time, the students should be taken into consideration when planning live lessons and lessons should not be put into the early hours, the recess time should be shortened, students should be participated, socio-economic differences should be considered, distance education should be regional and school based, live lessons should be increased and the program should be diversified. Regarding the content, it was determined that the parents suggested less homework, more effective organization of EIN TV content, updating, developing and enriching the lessons. Regarding the implementation, it was revealed that the parents suggested continuing the live lessons, teachers and students should interact constantly, more frequent and remedial training should be provided.

Some examples of parents' opinions regarding the proposals developed for distance education during the epidemic process are as follows:

"EIN TV and EIN portal should be further enriched in terms of content with lectures, question types and sample question solutions. The student should be able to log in to the EIN portal whenever they need, and time period restrictions should be lifted for this. Instead of time restriction, daily usage time can be put into effect. While organizing live class hours, the course time should be determined by

taking the development status of the students into consideration, and the course should not be put too early." (P11).

"The systemic infrastructure needs to be improved more and eight o'clock is too early to start the lesson" (P17)

"In distance education, all students do not have equal opportunities, so equal opportunity should be achieved. First, it is necessary to make sure that the infrastructure is equal and accessible to everyone" (P41).

When the suggestions of the parents regarding distance education during the epidemic process are evaluated, it is seen that they generally make suggestions for the infrastructure of EIN, preparation for distance education, distance education planning, improvement of the content and implementation process of distance education in order for the distance education to function in a healthier way. Based on this, it can be said that parents desire a better functioning distance education system.

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

According to the research findings, parents carried out educational activities such as preparing, supporting students, monitoring and conducting activities during the epidemic process. In this context it is seen that parents planned, provided additional resources, monitored students' homework, lesson studies and books they read, had students participate in live lessons and the followed the program prepared by the teacher, they had EIN TV watched, they made the repetition of past subjects, they taught the remaining subjects and implemented the program prepared with the teacher. Similarly, Yılmaz, Mutlu, Güner, Doğanay and Yılmaz (2020) found that parents used reading books, supplementary educational resources and internet documents during the epidemic period. Demirtaş and Koçak (2020) also found that parents have important roles and responsibilities in helping their children get over the epidemic process. Based on this, it can be said that parents have taken an active role in distance education during the epidemic process. Studies support this finding. It has been found that there is an increase in communication between students, parents and school staff during the distance education process (Eames, Tilston, White, Adams & Edmunds, 2010). Kırmızıgül (2020) also determined that students, teachers, family and education administrators are integrated into the distance education process. However, it is understood from the findings that some parents did not perform any activities during the process. This situation may cause inequality of opportunity among students as well as create or deepen level differences. In this context, it may be made mandatory for all parents to take responsibility for the student's education, to be in contact with the teacher and to fulfill their responsibilities. In addition, informative studies about the roles of parents in distance education can be carried out by the ministry, provincial and district administrations, school administrations and classroom teachers. Similarly, Özer (2020) stated that it is important to support all education stakeholders academically and socially. According to the research data, parents have been found to provide environments for students for distance education activities, participate in the education process and contribute to them. In this context, it comes to the fore that parents encourage students to study, have them watch EIN TV and participate in live lessons, create a suitable room for the student to study comfortably at home, prepare a study room, organize a study area, prepare a study program, help the student study, receive help from the teacher and research different websites for education. Despite the uncertainty, anxiety and fear during the epidemic process, it can be said that parents fulfill their duties to provide students with an appropriate educational environment during the distance education process. Such uncertainties can distract people from the educational process. However, it is seen that the parents make an effort to make their students comfortable and turn the distance education process into an opportunity. The findings support this study. For example, in a study (Yılmaz et al., 2020), it was determined that parents set up or organize an environment at home for students to study efficiently.

According to the research findings, parents evaluate educational activities during the epidemic in three different ways, which are satisfactory, inadequate and limited. While those who are satisfied

consider distance education as successful, motivating, positive, nice, useful, good, efficient, adequate, fun and instructive; those who find limited think that it is better than not having anything, useful but incomplete, something that should be done even though it is insufficient, that it keeps the student in the education even if it is not efficient enough and it is useful but problematic in terms of connecting to the platform. Similarly, Pınar and Akgül (2020) found in their study that parents found distance education useful, Yılmaz et al. (2020) found that 42.7% of the parents were satisfied with the distance education activities during the epidemic period. Those who found distance education dysfunctional stated that this education did not function properly, it was a waste of labor, that it was not sufficient, it lacked infrastructure and that it was making students addicted to technology. It is possible to see similar results in studies conducted in different countries. It has been stated that there are deficiencies such as lack of equipment, lack of technical expertise and inadequate communication (Abuhammad, 2020; Parczewska, 2020). It is acceptable to have criticisms about the distance education process. Because it does not seem possible to open the system to millions of students without any problems in a short time and to operate this system smoothly. However, despite all the criticisms and deficiencies, Ministry of National Education's efforts to putting the distance education system into service in such a short time is a situation that should be appreciated.

According to the research findings, parents have indicated that they face a variety of problems in remote education activities during the epidemic process. These problems are related to infrastructure, participation, planning and the EIN platform. Regarding *the infrastructure*, it was revealed that parents faced problems such as the lack of computers and internet, insufficient internet quota, the process being new and lack of information about distance education. Similarly, Yılmaz et al. (2020) found that technological impossibilities reduce the efficiency of distance education services, and Arat and Balkan (2011) found that the problems experienced in communication infrastructure in distance education negatively affected education. Zhang et al. (2020) also found that there are problems such as the weakness of the online teaching infrastructure, inexperience of teachers, information gaps, and a complex environment at home. Another problem caused by distance education has been internet access. The need for wide-use internet that has emerged even in developed countries has brought an infrastructure problem with it. Especially the infrastructure problem in developing and undeveloped countries constitutes a major obstacle for students and educators to access distance education (Rena, 2007). With regard to *participation*, parents face problems such as forgetting the lesson hours; students getting bored, not being able to concentrate, not being able to wake up and not following the lesson.

The research results revealed that some students faced technical difficulties or emotional problems, and learning motivation decreased for some students (Marin, Bocoş, Călin & Cordoş, 2020). In a similar study, it was determined that there are technical barriers in distance education and this situation prevents distance education (Abuhammad, 2020). In another study (Yılmaz et al., 2020), it was found that students also experienced motivation problems. The reason for all these problems can be explained by situation being unusual. Because this is the first time parents have encountered a distance education system. Therefore, it can be said that attempts to recognize the system and adapt to the system lead to the problems mentioned above. Another reason may be due to the uncertainty of the process and the anxiety, fear and limitations of the epidemic process. Regarding *planning*, parents stated that they faced problems such as short, repetitive and long lecture breaks on television, early and irregular live lessons, and teaching of only certain lessons. Regarding the *EIN Platform*, parents encounter problems such as not being able to connect to the system, disconnections from the system, and the sound and video not being synchronized. Similarly, Can (2020) stated that access to open and distance education via EIN is limited, Yılmaz et al. (2020) also found that 68% of the students had problems connecting and staying connected to live lessons. In addition, it is observed that parents face *problems specific to distance education* such as lack of influence, order-discipline and interaction, inefficient lessons and inadequacy of EIN TV. Demirbaş and Koçak (2020) similarly found that the process was evaluated as temporary.

According to the research findings, parents have made various recommendations for distance educational activities during the epidemic process. It is seen that the suggestions they put forward are

related to *the infrastructure* of the EIN platform, *preparation for the process*, *planning the process*, *the content* used in education and *the implementation* of the activities. Similarly, Can (2020) stated that during the Coronavirus outbreak, the open and distance education system in Turkey should be strengthened from infrastructure, access, security, content, design, application, quality, legislation and pedagogical aspects, and Özer (2020) stated that it is important to support all educational stakeholders academically and socially. Regarding *the infrastructure*, parents suggest that the EIN platform be further developed and the infrastructure of the live lessons should be improved. Regarding *preparation*, parents suggest that the internet problems should be eliminated, free internet and computers should be provided to each student, parents should be informed about the process and a guide should be prepared for parents, disadvantaged children should be included in the process and equal opportunity should be ensured. Regarding *planning*, parents recommend that the training and course time be extended further, that lessons should not be put in the early hours when planning live lessons, shortening the time of recess, making the student a participant, taking into account socio-economic differences, conducting distance education regional-school-based, increasing live broadcast courses and diversifying the program. Regarding *the content*, parents recommend giving less homework, organizing EIN TV content more effectively, updating, improving and enriching the lessons. Regarding *the implementation*, the parents recommend continuing the live lessons, keeping teachers and students in constant interaction, providing more frequent training and making remedial training. According to Arat and Bakan (2011), both individual and institutional demands are increasing in distance education. Because distance education has advantages such as the ability of students to participate in the lesson flexibly whenever they want, and to use different visual and audio sources (Heinich, Molenda, Russell & Smaldino, 2002). Yılmaz et al. (2020) found that 68% of the parents wanted distance education studies to continue after the epidemic period. In this respect, it may be more beneficial to provide distance education together with face-to-face education in the future. During the epidemic, distance education has been a form of education that emerged from the necessity. It is the first time that parents have encountered such an intense and comprehensive distance education system. Despite this, it is observed that the parents adopt the distance education system and make an effort for the healthy functioning of this system. However, parents should take on new and unfamiliar roles and bear instructional responsibility for their children's learning while their children participate in distance education (Liu, Black, Algina, Cavanaugh & Dawson, 2010). Finally, it can be said that despite the uncertainty, anxiety and fear during the epidemic process, parents fulfilled their duties to provide students with an appropriate educational environment during the distance education process. Based on the findings of the research, it is seen that during the distance education process, parents carried out various activities in distance education during the epidemic process. Considering that parents are caught unprepared for this process, it would be beneficial for schools to inform parents about homeschooling and distance education. During this process, it was determined that the parents' level of satisfaction in education was low. Schools can make additional work to solve problems by visiting parents or holding online meetings as much as they can. In this process, it was determined that the parents had insufficient infrastructure (computer insufficiency, internet, etc.) and problems with the EIN platform. Considering that these problems continue to be experienced despite the efforts of the Ministry of National Education and other relevant institutions, it is thought that more cooperation between said institutions is needed.

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