



Changes in Children's Play During COVID-19 Pandemic: Parents' Views

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Abstract

This study examines parents' views on the changes in their children's play at the beginning of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) process. The study sample consists of 38 parents, twenty mothers, and eighteen fathers who reside in different city centers (Trabzon, Istanbul, Bursa, and Ankara) in Turkey and have children between three and six. The data were collected with "demographic information form" and "open-ended question form" created by the researchers. Data were collected online via 'Google Forms.' Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of the data. As a result of the research, it was found that children's play differs according to the type of play, play area, material type, and playing time with parents. The change in the type of play consisted of an increase in pretend play, an increase in educational plays, an increase in board games, an

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increase in plays involving art activities, a decrease in play behaviors that requires being physically active, an increase in building plays, and an increase in science and nature knowledge plays. The change in material type consisted of an increase in the use of technological tools. The change in the play area consisted of a decrease in outdoor play and an increase in indoor play. These results are discussed with the relevant literature. Change in playing time with parents consisted of increase in playing with mother and increase in playing with father. These results are discussed within the framework of the relevant literature.

Keywords: COVID-19, parents' view, play, preschool children.

COVID-19 Salgını Sırasında Çocukların Oyunlarındaki Değişiklikler: Ebeveyn Görüşleri

Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Coronavirüs salgını (COVID-19) başlangıcı sürecinde çocuklarının oyunlarındaki değişikliklere ilişkin ebeveyn görüşlerini incelemektir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu Türkiye'nin farklı il merkezlerinde (Trabzon, İstanbul, Bursa ve Ankara) ikamet eden, üç ile altı yaş arasında çocuğu olan 38 ebeveyn (20 anne ve 18 baba) oluşturmaktadır. Veriler araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanmış olan "Demografik Bilgi Formu" ve "Açık Uçlu Soru Formu" ile toplanmıştır. Veriler 'Google Formlar' aracılığıyla çevrim-içi olarak toplanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde betimsel analiz kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, salgın sürecinde çocukların oyunlarının "oyun türü, oyun alanı, materyal türü ve ebeveynlerle oynanan zaman" açısından farklılaştığı belirlenmiştir. Oyun türündeki değişimin incelendiğinde, sembolik oyunlarda artış, eğitsel oyunlarda artış, masa başı oyunlarda artış, yapı oyunlarında artış, sanata dayalı oyun etkinliklerinde artış, fiziksel olarak aktif olmayı gerektiren oyunlarda azalış, bilim ve doğa bilgisi oyunlarında artıştan oluştuğu belirlenmiştir. Oyun alanındaki değişim açık hava oyunlarında azalma ve kapalı alan oyunlarında artış olarak belirlenmiştir. Materyal türündeki değişim ise teknolojik araç kullanımında artışı kapsamaktadır. Ebeveynlerle oynama süresindeki değişim, anne ile oynamanın artması ve baba ile oynamanın artmasından oluşmuştur. Bu sonuçlar ilgili literatür çerçevesinde tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: COVID-19, ebeveyn görüşleri, oyun, okul öncesi çocuklar.

1. Introduction

The coronavirus pandemic, which was first reported in the Wuhan province of China in December 2019, is a crisis that affected all countries globally. The pandemic affected countries in terms of health and terms of physical, social-emotional, psychological, and educational well-being. The virus has caused many people to suffer severe illnesses (and, in many cases, die), put their education on hold, and experience economic hardships due to losing their jobs. This has deeply affected human lives. To reduce the impact and course of this pandemic, countries have taken many measures and put various practices into motion. To reduce the negative impacts of this pandemic, as of March 11, 2020¹ the date of first COVID-19 case was reported in Turkey, a series of measures were put into effect, such as making wearing a mask outside mandatory, maintaining social distance, closing schools, creating flexible and remote working opportunities, and closing crowded places like restaurants, cafes, shopping malls, cinemas, and theaters.²

One of the most significant impacts of the pandemic process has undoubtedly been on children's life. Since children lack experience and skills in accessing resources to meet their own developmental, social-emotional, spiritual, and behavioral needs independently, they are vulnerable groups to traumatic events such as pandemics and natural disasters.³ It is stated that disasters such as pandemics cause adverse effects on children's lives, such as losing their relatives, getting away from social support, getting away from routines, stress, and confusion.⁴

To have healthy development in social, physical, and psychosocial terms, children should have a structured and planned day.⁵ However, at the beginning of

- 1 Republic of Turkey Ministry of Health, *COVID-19 Information Page*, 2020; Retrieved from <https://COVID19.saglik.gov.tr/TR-66935/genel-koronavirus-tablosu.html> on November 10, 2020.
- 2 Republic of Turkey Ministry of Interior, *Under the Circular on Coronavirus Measures, 149.382 Workplaces Suspended Their Activities for a Temporary Period*, 2020; Retrieved from <https://www.icisleri.gov.tr/koronavirus-tedbirleri-genelgesi-kapsaminda-149382-is-yeri-geci-ci-sureligine-faaliyetlerine-ara-verdi> on January 15, 2021.
- 3 David J. Schonfeld – Thomas Demaria – Disaster Preparedness Advisory Council and Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health, "Providing Psychosocial Support to Children and Families in the Aftermath of Disasters and Crises", *Pediatrics*, vol. 136, no. 4, October 2015, p. 1120-1130.
- 4 Guanghai Wang – Yunting Zhang – Jin Zhao – Jun Zhang – Fan Jiang, "Mitigate the Effects of Home Confinement on Children During the COVID-19 Outbreak", *The Lancet*, vol. 395, no. 10228, March 2020, p. 945-947.
- 5 Keith Brazendale – Michael W. Beets – R. Glenn Weaver – Russell R. Pate – Gabrielle M. Turner-McGrievy – Andrew T. Kaczynski – Jessica L. Chandler – Amy Bohnert – Paul T. von

the pandemic process, both the closure of schools, playgrounds and parks and the fact that children stay away from teachers and friends, have caused changes in children's routines and uncertainty in their lives. This has brought about a change in the general plans of the children. To support the development of children in a disastrous situation, the caregiver must perform them. In cases where they are absent or cannot take an active part, extended family members should provide this care. The development of children needs to maintain such care and daily life routines as much as possible.⁶ However, it became challenging to achieve this in the early stages of the pandemic. First, some parents were unemployed, and some had to work from home. Thus, there has been difficulty taking care of and caring for the children. Likewise, getting help from extended family members like grandparents has become difficult due to family members who cannot contact each other due to the epidemic and contagiousness threat. This situation could disrupt the children's plans/routines and make children more vulnerable in their psychosocial well-being.

It is essential to use practical tools to help children cope with the difficult situations they face during the pandemic and have psychosocial well-being. Play is one of these tools.⁷ Play has an essential role in helping children cope with stress and anxiety in unexpected crises and psychosocial well-being and making many psychosocial, physical, and social-emotional contributions to children's lives.⁸ In times of disasters like the recent pandemic, play encourages children to express their feelings.

In other words, play is one of the ways children adapt to change. On the other hand, the pandemic process has led to many changes in the plays.⁹ At the

Hippel, "Understanding Differences Between Summer vs. School Obesogenic Behaviors of Children: The Structured Days Hypothesis", *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 14, no. 1, July 2017, p. 1-14.

6 Brazendale et al., *ibid.*

7 John S. Murray, "Collaborative Approach to Meeting the Psychosocial Needs of Children During an Influenza Pandemic", *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, vol. 15, no. 2, April 2010, p. 135-143.

8 Sudeshna Chatterjee, "Children's Coping, Adaptation and Resilience through Play in Situations of Crisis", *Children, Youth and Environments*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2018, p. 119-145.

9 Courtney Beers Dewhirst – Casey Cascio – Erin M. Casey, "Young Children's Play During a Time of Social Distancing", *Early Child Development and Care*, October 2021; Kelsey M. Graber – Elizabeth M. Byrne – Emily J. Goodacre – Natalie Kirby - Krishna Kulkarni – Christine O'Farrelly – Paul G. Ramchandani, "A Rapid Review of the Impact of Quarantine and Restricted Environments on Children's Play and the Role of Play in Children's Health", *Child: Care, Health and Development*, vol. 47, no. 2, March 2021, p. 143-153; Sarah A. Moore – Guy

beginning of the pandemic, spending most of their time at home created some differences in the structure of children's play. Many children move around at home without enough space to play, limiting children's play and physical activities at home.¹⁰ The fulfillment of these activities is dependent on the parents' abilities, their relationship with the children¹¹, and the opportunities they provide to them. The pandemic measures implemented in daily life have caused some changes¹² in terms of where, when, how, and with whom children play.

Play, everyday activity in a child's life, is sensitive to unexpected stress or traumatic events.¹³ Previous studies on adverse events such as war, sudden illness, or natural disasters have also shown that such events change children's play.¹⁴ Pandemics, as unexpected events in life, can change children's daily flow and routines. This will inevitably cause a change in children's play. In other words, the pandemic has caused some changes¹⁵ in terms of where, when, how, and with whom children play. These changes in their plays may cause children to be

Faulkner – Ryan E. Rhodes – Mariana Brussoni – Tala Chulak-Bozzer – Leah J. Ferguson – Raktim Mitra – Norm O'Reilly – John C. Spence – Leigh M. Vanderloo – Mark S. Tremblay, "Impact of the COVID-19 Virus Outbreak on Movement and Play Behaviours of Canadian Children and Youth: A National Survey", *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, vol. 17, no. 1, July 2020, p. 1-11; Ayşen Tükel, "COVID 19 Sürecinde Evde Oyun Etkileşimli Baba Katılımı", *Kapadokya Eğitim Dergisi*, cilt 1, sayı 2, Aralık 2020, s. 1-13.

- 10 Moore et al., *ibid*; Lauren C. Bates – Gabriel Zieff – Kathleen Stanford – Justin B. Moore – Zachary Y. Kerr – Erik D. Hanson – Bethany Barone Gibbs – Christopher E. Kline – Lee Stoner, "COVID-19 Impact on Behaviors across the 24-Hour Day in Children and Adolescents: Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior, and Sleep", *Children*, vol. 7, no. 9, September 2020, p. 138.
- 11 Maria Spinelli – Francesca Lionetti – Annalisa Setti – Mirco Fasolo, "Parenting Stress During the Covid - 19 Outbreak: Socioeconomic and Environmental Risk Factors and Implications for Children Emotion Regulation", *Family Process*, vol. 60, no. 2, June 2021, p. 639-653.
- 12 Graber et al., *ibid*.
- 13 Cynthia Torres González – Gilberto Galindo-Aldana – Ibza America García León – Luis Alfredo Padilla-López – Daniel Nikolaus Alvarez Núñez – Yojana Irlanda Espinoza Gutiérrez, "COVID-19 Voluntary Social Isolation and its Effects in Sociofamily and Children's Behavior", *Salud Mental*, vol. 43, no. 6, November 2020, p. 263-271.
- 14 Leo Wolmer – Daniel Hamiel – Lee Pardo-Aviv – Nathaniel Laor, "Addressing the Needs of Preschool Children in the Context of Disasters and Terrorism: Assessment, Prevention, and Intervention", *Current Psychiatry Reports*, vol. 19, no. 7, July 2017, p. 40; Katherine Stenman – Jennifer Christofferson – Melissa A. Alderfer – Jessica Pierce – Carrie Kelly – Elizabeth Schifano – Samantha Klaff – Jennifer Sciolla – Janet Deatrick – Anne E. Kazak, "Integrating Play in Trauma-Informed Care: Multidisciplinary Pediatric Healthcare Provider Perspectives", *Psychological Services*, vol. 16, no. 1, February 2019, p. 7-15.
- 15 Graber et al., *ibid*.

deprived of the mentioned benefits of the play. For this reason, it is imperative to examine the changes in the plays during the pandemic process. Examining the changes in children's play at the beginning pandemic period is a fundamental issue. Since the children reflect on what happened in their lives in his game, thanks to the game, the child can get clues about their life and information about what they need in a difficult process such as a pandemic. When studies¹⁶ which are related to play in the COVID-19 pandemic process, are primarily conducted in western societies. A limited number of studies on this subject in Turkey.¹⁷ Considering that the play concepts are influenced by culture¹⁸, it is important to examine this process in Turkey. By taking into account all the mentioned factors, it is thought that the present study will contribute to the literature. This study examines parents' views on the changes in their children's play patterns at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study addresses the following main research question and sub-questions:

What are parents' opinions about changes that occurred at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in children's play?

- What changes have occurred in children's play in terms of play type?
- What changes have occurred in children's play in terms of play area?
- What changes have occurred in children's play in terms of play materials?
- What kind of changes has occurred in children's play in terms of playing time with parents?

16 Bates et al., *ibid.*; Genevieve F. Dunton – Bridgette Do – Shirlene D. Wang, “Early Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behavior in Children Living in the U.S.”, *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, no. 1, September 2020, p. 1351; Suzanne M. Egan – Chloe Beatty – Clara Hoyne, *Play-Impact of COVID-19 Restrictions on Young Children's Play Learning and Development: Key Findings from the Play and Learning in the Early Years (PLEY) Survey*, Ireland, Mary Immaculate College, 2020; Moore et al., *ibid.*

17 Oğuz Kaan Esentürk, “Parents' Perceptions on Physical Activity for their Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders During the Novel Coronavirus Outbreak”, *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, vol. 67, no. 6, May 2020, p. 1-12; Mehmet Mart – Oğuz Serdar Kesicioğlu, “COVID-19 Pandemi Sürecinde Ailelerin Evde Oyun Oynamaya İlişkin Görüşleri”, *Electronic Turkish Studies*, cilt 15, sayı 4, 2020, s. 945-957; Tükel, *ibid.*

18 Suzanne Gaskins, “Children's Daily Lives in a Mayan Village: A Case Study of Culturally Constructed Roles and Activities”, (in) *Children's Engagement in the World: Sociocultural Perspectives*, ed. Artin Goncu, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p. 25-60.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study, which aims to examine parents' views on the changes in their children's play during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic process, was designed as qualitative research. Qualitative research is an approach to discovering and understanding the meanings attributed to a social or human problem by individuals or groups.¹⁹

In the current study, phenomenology was used. This design is aimed at expressing the experience, perception, and meaning that people have about a phenomenon. In phenomenology, which is frequently used in interview-based studies, experiences are described and explained and themes are revealed in the analysis of data.²⁰ In addition, direct quotations from experiences are included.²¹ By choosing this research design, we aimed to examine parents' experiences, perceptions, and meaning of the changes in their children's play at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2. Participants

Convenience sampling was used in determining participants. This sampling method is a purposeful method that includes sample units that will serve the purpose of research to collect detailed information about the research subject and to ensure high-quality data²², and it provides fast and easy access to sampling and saves time, energy, and financial resources.²³

Participants included 38 parents (20 mothers, 18 fathers) between the ages of 27 and 41. The parents resided in different cities (Trabzon, Istanbul, Bursa, and Ankara) in Turkey. Three parents had a secondary school degree, four had a high school degree, 23 had an undergraduate degree, and eight had a graduate degree. Twenty-nine parents were working while nine of them did not work in any job Parents reported that they have one to four children in their family.

19 John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, California, Sage Publications, 2017.

20 Sharan B. Merriam, *Nitel Araştırma: Desen ve Uygulama İçin Bir Rehber*, Ankara, Nobel Yayınları, 2018; Ali Yıldırım – Hasan Şimşek, *Sosyal Bilimlerde Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri*, Ankara, Seçkin Yayıncılık, 2016.

21 Creswell, *ibid.*, 2017; Merriam, *ibid.*

22 John W. Creswell, *Nitel Araştırma Yöntemleri: Beş Yaklaşım Göre Nitel Araştırma ve Araştırma Deseni*, Ankara, Siyasal Kitabevi, 2013.

23 Michael Quinn Patton, *Nitel Araştırma ve Değerlendirme Yöntemleri*, Ankara, Pegem Akademi, 2014.

More than half of the children in the study were boys (n=21). Children's ages were differ from four to six. Before the pandemic, participants' children attended preschools.

2.3. Instruments

In this study, two instruments were used as data collection tools. The first one is the "Demographic Information Form" created for retrieving the personal information of the parents and their children. The second tool was the "Open-ended Question Form," which was prepared to examine the views of parents on the subject.

Demographic Information Form: This form includes variables such as the parents' gender, age, educational status and working status, number of children, and preschool children's ages.

Open-Ended Question Form: In constructing this form, some steps were taken. Firstly, Before the preparation of the Open-Ended Question Form, the studies on the plays played by children during the pandemic²⁴ were examined, and later the questions serving the purpose of the study were created. Secondly, this form was submitted to experts for review to ensure the content validity of the questions and test their comprehensibility. Two of the experts were from the field of preschool education, one was from the field of Turkish language education, and one was from the field of physical education and sports. The form was shaped according to the opinions of experts. Thirdly, to test whether the participants understood the questions in the form, a pilot study was conducted before starting data collection. For this purpose, the form was applied online to five parents (three mothers and two fathers) who did not participate in the study. After getting feedback from the participants, this form took its final form. Open-ended questions which were asked to parents are given below:

1. Have any changes occurred in your child's play during the COVID-19 pandemic process in terms of play type? If your answer is yes, please explain.
2. Have any changes occurred in your child's play during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of play area? If your answer is yes, please explain.

24 Dunton et al., *ibid.*; Egan et al., *ibid.*; Graber et al., *ibid.*; Moore et al., *ibid.*; Mart and Kesicioğlu *ibid.*; Semiha Yüksek-Usta – H. Nur Gökcan, "Çocukların ve Annelerinin Gözünden Covid-19", *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education Research*, cilt 6, sayı 2, Haziran 2020, s. 187-206.

3. Have any changes occurred in your child's play during the COVID-19 pandemic process in terms of play materials? If your answer is yes, please explain.
4. Have any changes occurred in your child's play during the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of playing time with you? If your answer is yes, please explain.

2.4. Research Process

The process in which the study took place consisted of a process that could be counted as the the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020, when the first case was seen in Turkey.

In this process, crowded places such as schools, theaters, cafes, cinemas, shopping centers, play areas, and parks were closed. In addition, the government often urged people not to leave the house unless necessary. Additionally, there was a full-time lockdown on certain days of the week. In addition, vaccines had not yet been used.

2.5. Data Collection Process

Below is a visual representation of the data collection process.

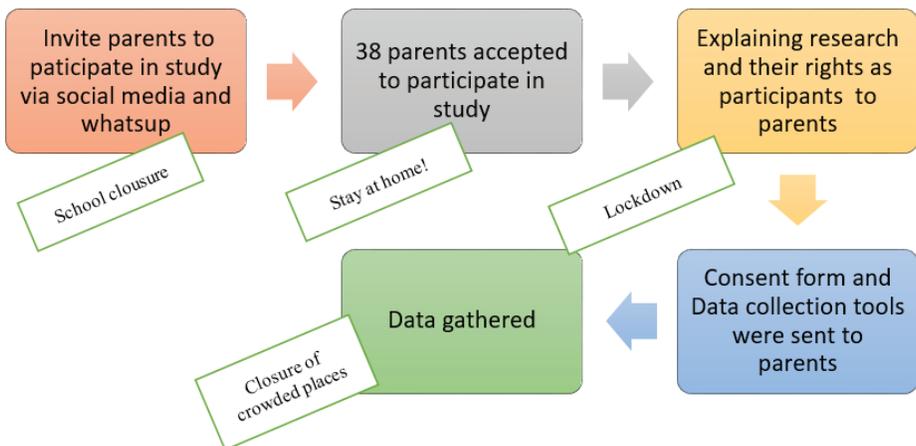


Figure 1. Data Collection Process

As shown in Figure 1, parents were invited to participate via social media (Instagram and WhatsApp) at the beginning of the study. In this announcement, research and research aim were explained to parents. Thirty-eight parents were ac-

cepted to participate in the study. Demographic Information Form and Open-Ended Question Form were sent to parents. Participation in the study was based on voluntariness. A written Consent Form was obtained from the participants. Data were obtained through Google forms between June 19 and July 10, 2020.

2.6. Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, descriptive analysis was used, which covers the process of associating, interpreting, and causing and effect relationships according to the previously determined themes.²⁵ In this type of analysis, the data can be presented in terms of the themes revealed by the research problems or by considering the questions or dimensions used in the interview and observation.²⁶ The data obtained in this study were organized according to the themes revealed by the research questions. In this study, four stages suggested by Yıldırım and Şimşek²⁷ were followed in the analysis of the data.

a. Creating a framework for analysis

Within the scope of the research questions in the study, four themes were created the change in the types of play, the change in the play area, the change in material types, and the change in playing time with parents. Data were analyzed and reported on these four themes. At this point, in line with the answers they gave to open-ended questions in the individual interviews with the parents, it was determined how the changes in the types of games played by the children during the COVID-19 pandemic, the change in the playground, the change in the play materials, change in playing time with parents.

b. Data processing according to the descriptive analysis framework

At this point, the answers given by the parents were examined and arranged according to their suitability for the themes created. The answers regarding the increase in pretend plays, increase in educational plays, increase in board games, increase in plays containing art activities, increase in building plays, increase in science and natural knowledge plays and decrease in play behaviors that require being physically active were included in the “Change in Type of Play” theme. The answers regarding the decrease in outdoor games and the increase in indoor games were included in the “Change in the Play Area” theme. The answers regarding the increase in the use of technological tools were processed in the “Change in Material Type” theme. The answers regarding the increase in playing mother

25 Yıldırım - Şimşek, ibid.

26 Yıldırım - Şimşek, ibid.

27 Yıldırım - Şimşek, ibid.

and increase in playing with father were included in the “ Change in playing time with parents” theme.

c. Description of findings

Research findings are defined, explained, and supported by direct quotations.

d. Interpretation of the findings

Then, the obtained findings were interpreted. As a result of the analysis performed by researchers separately, the percentage of agreement was calculated as 90%.

2.7. Validity and Reliability Measures

In this study, an expert review was conducted to ensure internal validity. Online interviews were conducted with a researcher who is an expert in the field of qualitative research. In this meeting, the whole process of the research, the data collected, and the results reached were presented to the expert verbally. In this way, the researchers aimed to confirm the validity of their approach and way of thinking with an expert. Since the transferability of the results of qualitative research depends on the adequate description of the data²⁸, direct quotations about the findings are frequently included in the study. The data in the Open-Ended Questionnaires containing the opinions of the participants were written down following ethical principles. Numbers from P1 to P38 were assigned to each participant form instead of the names of the participants. Thus, the coding process was started.

2.8. Researchers' Role

Each researcher actively participated in the research process. In addition to these, the second author transferred the data in Excel format from Google form to Word. Each of the authors took an active role in the coding process. Firstly, the first, second and third authors coded the data separately. Then they came together on Zoom, an online platform, and realized their coding together.

2.9. Ethical Considerations

Some steps were taken to provide ethical consideration. Parents' consent to participate in the study was obtained via Google forms. Parents were informed about the aim and process of the study. In addition, they were informed about their rights; that their and their kids' personal information would not be shared with anyone, and their identities would be kept strictly confidential, and they could withdraw from the study at any time and without consequences.

28 Yıldırım - Şimşek, *ibid.*

This research was carried out with the permission of Trabzon University's Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee with the decision dated 18/06/2021 and numbered 2021-6/2.4.

3. Findings

In this section, findings regarding the views of parents on the changes in children's play at the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic process are included. In this context, the views of parents on the changes in children's plays are classified under specific themes, and the findings are presented in Table 1. These themes are; the change in the type of play, the change in the play area, the change in material types and the change in playing time with children.

These themes are presented under each theme, with the findings related to that theme. In addition, the findings are supported by direct quotations.

Below are the themes and sample statements regarding the findings under the themes.

Table 1. Parents' Views on Changes in Children's Play During the Pandemic

Change in type of play	Change in the play area	Change in material types	Change in playing time with parents
Increase in pretend plays "For example <i>cooking, sew a dress for a doll, playing house, play teaching and doctor themed imaginative role play</i> "	Increase in indoor plays	Increase in the use of technological tools	Increase in playing with mother
Increase in educational plays "For example: <i>reading story, doing a puzzle, math activities, teaching letters and numbers, riddle sayings, using activity books</i> "	Decrease in outdoor plays		Increase in playing with father
Increase in board games "For example: <i>intelligence games, playing with memory cards</i> "			
Increase in plays containing art activities "For example: <i>finger painting, drawing, playing with leftover material, making shapes with play dough</i> "			

Increase in building plays
Increase in science and natural
knowledge plays
Decrease in play behaviors which
requires being physically active

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the theme of change in the type of play consists of an increase in pretend plays, an increase in educational plays, an increase in board games, an increase in plays containing art activities, an increase in building plays, increase in science and natural knowledge plays and decrease in play behaviors which requires being physically active. The theme of change in the play area consists of increase in indoor play and decrease in outdoor play. Change in material types consists of increase in the use of technological tools. The theme of change in playing times with parents consists of increase in playing mother and increase in playing father.

Below are the themes and sample statements regarding the findings under the themes.

3.1. Change in the Type of Play

In this theme, the change in children's play types during the COVID19 process was tried to be explained. According to this, it has been determined that there is an increase in pretend play, increase in educational plays, increase in board games, increase in plays containing art activities, increase in building plays, increase in science and natural knowledge plays. However, it has been determined that there is a decrease in games that require being physically active. Parents who took part in the study mentioned that children frequently played "cooking, sew a dress for a doll, playing house, play teaching and doctor themed imaginative role-play" as pretended plays "reading story, doing a puzzle, math activities, teaching letters and numbers, riddle sayings, using activity books" as educational plays, "intelligence games, playing with memory cards" as board plays, "finger painting, drawing, playing with leftover material, making shapes with play dough" as art activities, "growing plants" as science and natural knowledge plays". Also, there is a decrease in play behaviors which requires being physically active.

Some parents mentioned that they play pretend to play with their children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"My children started to play a lot of the doctor game in this process. They wear masks and give medicine to each other" (P13).

“We play teaching. So, draw pictures on the board and talk” (P21).

Increasing educational games is found as another activity during the pandemic.

“We are trying to do more educational activities to make up for the lack of learning with the closing of the schools” (P9).

Some parents said that board games had taken place in their life during the pandemic.

“We play intelligence games with my child these pandemic days” (P23).

Recently, we have had much time to play with my kid. Generally, we play with memory cards” (P20).

An increase in art activities is found as another result of the study. Some parents said that they care about making art activities with children.

“We did daily activities to create different stimuli. We played with playdough and worked on ceramics” (P34)

Another parent stated that there had been a decrease in play behaviors requiring physical activity.

“We played mind plays that do not require much physical activity but require more attention” (P17).

“We do not play games such as running and jumping in order not to disturb the neighbors. We played mostly games that can be done at home and can be played while sitting” (P23).

Some parents mentioned that they played building plays at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We made different shapes with wooden blocks in pandemic process” (P20).

“During this process, we directed our child to play with lego and blocks, and he loved it” (P11).

Another parent stated that they were interested in nature more and raised plants with their child during the pandemic.

“We spend much time at home. So, we are breeding plants these days” (P20).

3.2. Change in Play Area

The theme of Change in Play Area consists of an increase in indoor plays and a decrease in outdoor plays according to parents' views. Accordingly, parents reported that while their children played less in outdoor games, which are important

for the development of large motor skills such as climbing, running, jumping, and rolling, in areas such as parks, shopping malls, playgrounds, picnic areas, and gardens, they played indoor games more than.

Most parents said that some changes have occurred in the play area.

“While we were spending more time in places such as playgrounds outside the house, children's playgrounds of shopping centers, and nature and picnic areas before the quarantine, as such areas were not accessible during the quarantine, we were more inclined to play inside the house” (P2).

“My child cannot go to the park during this period because we need to have as little contact with other people as possible” (P37).

3.3. Change in Material Types

The theme of Change in Material Types consists of an increase in the use of technological tools according to parents. Accordingly, parents stated that their children are more interested in materials such as phones, computers, and tablets in the home environment. Accordingly, parents stated that their children mostly play computer games, and watch cartoons and videos.

Most parents stated that an increase has occurred in using technological tools. One of the participants stated the following about this issue:

“Some differences happened with the toys our child played with during the pandemic. For our child, who is staying at home all the time, his interest in phone and computer increased” (P29).

“In this process, my child increased to watch cartoon movies and playing technological games a lot, I sometimes strict restrictions (P35).

3.4. Change in Playing Time with Parents

The theme of Change in Playing Time with Parents consists of an increase in playing with the mother and an increase in playing with the father according to parents' views. Accordingly, they reported that there was an increase in the play times with both parents since parents mostly work in the home environment and the compulsory stay at home during the quarantine period. Most of the mothers and fathers stated that there was an increase in spending time with their children.

“As working parents, we had the opportunity to spend more time with our children during the pandemic. Therefore, we did different activities. Together we baked cakes, sewed clothes for her babies, made different shapes with wooden blocks, and drew more pictures” (P23).

“In this process, we spend more time at home as we must work at home. Therefore, both I and his mother spent more time playing games with our child” (P38).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic process, which has become the focus of the world agenda since March 2020, has caused some changes in play, which is defined as the child’s work. This study examined parents’ views on the changes in their children’s play habits at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The answers received from the parents constitute the findings of the study. In line with the answers gained from the parents, the changes in children’s plays were evaluated under the themes of “change in the type of play, change in the play area, change in material type, and change in playing time with parents.”

Within this context, the theme of change in the type of play consists of an *“increase in pretend plays, increase in educational plays, increase in board games, increase in plays containing art activities, decrease in play behaviors which requires being physically active, increase in building plays, and increase in science and natural knowledge plays.”* change in the play area consists of *“decrease in outdoor plays and an increase in indoor plays.”* Change in the material types consists of an *“increase in the use of technological tools.”* Finally, change in playing time with parents consists of *increase in playing mother and increase in playing father.*

Increase in pretend plays may have resulted from children wanting to use the pretend to play as a tool to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic²⁹, which pushes children into a tough place physically, psychologically, socially, and emotionally. When the pretend plays played by the children in this process were examined, it was seen that most of the participants stated that they played doctor with their children and thanked the healthcare professionals. Similarly, Egan et al.³⁰ determined in their study that children included coronavirus and restrictions in their plays during the pandemic. In addition, Dewhirst et al.³¹ find that children play

29 Gözde Akoğlu – Bedriye Tuğba Karaaslan, “COVID-19 ve İzolasyon Sürecinin Çocuklar Üzerindeki Olası Psikososyal Etkileri”, *İzmir Katip Çelebi Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi*, cilt 5, sayı 2, Haziran 2020, s. 99-103; Elisa Di Giorgio – Daniela Di Riso – Giovanna Mioni – Nicola Cellini, “The Interplay between Mothers’ and Children Behavioral and Psychological Factors During COVID-19: An Italian Study”, *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, vol. 30, no. 9, September 2021, p. 1-23.

30 Egan et al., *ibid.*

31 Beers Dewhirst et al., *ibid.*

sociodramatic and perform role-plays like playing doctor, veterinarian, and house during the social distancing process. Furthermore, Tambling et al.³² and Torres González et al.³³ find their studies, which were performed during the pandemic process, that children play make believe play and role play. Similarly, Kourti et al.³⁴ mentioned that children pretend to play during the COVID-19 pandemic. Silverman and La Greca referred to³⁵ when children repeat the play of that state after a disaster or crisis. Similarly, it was found that some children who had Hurricane Katrina, which is a natural disaster, played evacuation-related plays in their plays.³⁶ UNICEF³⁷ also suggests that preschool children can learn about the COVID-19 pandemic through play and that they can be shown what the symptoms of COVID-19 are by using dolls. IPA³⁸ stated that plays are essential for children to cope with difficult times. They argued that encouraging children to play effectively decreases their stress and anxiety levels.

Increase in board games is another important finding. This finding is like that of the findings of Beers et al.³⁹ and Torres González et al.⁴⁰ When the literature is examined, there are studies with similar findings. Kurt-Demirbaş and Sevgi-

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- 32 Rachel R. Tambling – Alexandria J. Tomkunas – Beth S. Russell – Abigail L. Horton – Morica Hutchison, “Thematic Analysis of Parent-Child Conversations about COVID19: ‘Playing It Safe’”, *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, vol. 30, no. 2, January 2021, p. 325-337.
- 33 Torres González et al., *ibid.*
- 34 Anastasia Kourti – Androniki Stavridou – Eleni Panagouli – Theodora Psaltopoulou – Maria Tsolia – Theodoros N. Sergentanis – Artemis Tsitsika, “Play Behaviors in Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review of the Literature”, *Children*, vol. 8, no. 8, August 2021, p. 706.
- 35 Wendy K. Silverman – Annette M. La Greca, “Children Experiencing Disasters: Definitions, Reactions, and Predictors of Outcomes”, (in) *Helping Children Cope with Disasters and Terrorism*, eds. Annette M. La Greca – Wendy K. Silverman – Eric M. Vernberg – Michael C. Roberts, USA, American Psychological Association, 2002, p. 11–33.
- 36 John Stephen Murray, “Children of Hurricane Katrina: Six Years Later, Mental Health Effects are Still Evident in Gulf Coast Children”, *American Journal of Nursing*, vol. 111, no. 8, 2011, p. 50-53.
- 37 UNICEF (United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund), *Ebeveynlerin Koronavirüs Hastalığı (Covid-19) Salgınında Çocuklarına Destek Olabilecekleri 6 Yol*, 2020; Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/turkey/hikâyeler/ebeveynlerin-koronavirus-hastal%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1-covid-19-salg%C4%B1n%C4%B1nda-%C3%A7ocuklar%C4%B1na-destek-olabilecekleri> on June 24, 2021.
- 38 IPA (2020)
- 39 Beers Dewhirst et al., *ibid.*
- 40 Torres González et al., *ibid.*

li-Koçak⁴¹ stated in their study that parents played games that require mental effort, such as mind games, at the beginning of their activities with their children during the pandemic process. In addition, Mart and Kesicioğlu⁴² found in their study that children increased their play with mind games and board games during the pandemic compared to before. These findings may have resulted from the rapid and dangerous course of the pandemic and the government's call for people to stay home. This may have caused children, like adults, to spend more time at home, and therefore, children's activities and games such as social gatherings and interactions, sports, and playing in the parks and playgrounds may have decreased. In other words, children may have turned to event board games, which can be counted as more individual games.

In addition, parents' directing their children to activities and games that are quieter in order not to disturb the neighbors due to the noise that may arise from the active games may have caused this result. Participants P1 and P2 in the study group stated that they encouraged physically inactive play during the pandemic process in order not to disturb their neighbors.

Increase in plays containing art activities is another result of the current study. Similarly, Moore et al.⁴³ determined that children's activities related to art activities and puzzle making increased during this period. In their study, Mart and Kesicioğlu⁴⁴ determined that, based on parents' opinions, the rates of memory attention, mind games, virtual games, and board games increased, and the rate of outdoor games decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic process in preschool children. In their study, Egan et al.⁴⁵ stated that some parents spent more time with painting, creative games, and hands-on activities such as art activities and gardening during the pandemic period. Engaging in art activities allows children to "express their feelings, perceptions, thoughts, and memories in a way that words cannot."⁴⁶ For this reason, it can be said that it is important for children to be interested in art activities at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic for their psychosocial development.

41 Neşe Kurt-Demirbaş – Seda Sevgili-Koçak, "2-6 Yaş Arasında Çocuğu Olan Ebeveynlerin Bakış Açısıyla Covid-19 Salgın Sürecinin Değerlendirilmesi", *Avrasya Sosyal ve Ekonomi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, cilt 7, sayı 6, Haziran 2020, s. 328-349.

42 Mart and Kesicioğlu, *ibid.*

43 Moore et al., *ibid.*

44 Mart and Kesicioğlu, *ibid.*

45 Egan et al., *ibid.*

46 Cathy A. Malchiodi, *Expressive Therapies*, New York, Guilford Press, 2005.

It was found that there was an increase in indoor play and a decrease in outdoor play at the beginning of the pandemic. This finding is similar to the results of many other studies.⁴⁷ The decrease in outdoor games and the increase in indoor games may be due to the parent's desire to keep their children away from crowded places, such as parks, that would expose their children to other children and adults to maintain social distance. Göl-Güven et al.⁴⁸ mentioned that the primary concern of parents during the pandemic process is to maintain social distancing, and they do not leave the house unless they must. Government calls to "stay at home" unless necessary may be the reason for this. Another possible reason for the decrease in outdoor games may be that children reduced their daily physical activities such as walking to school, doing sports, playing, or spending time on the playground.⁴⁹

Another important finding regarding the study is that children's educational play and toys during the pandemic increased. Many studies⁵⁰ have similar results. This may be due to the anxiety and fear of both parents and children that their education would be disrupted, as children could not attend school at the beginning of the pandemic.⁵¹ In the current study, one mother said that they are trying

47 Victor Arufe-Giráldez – Javier Cachón-Zagalaz – Alberto Sanmiguel-Rodríguez – Mluisa Zagalaz-Sanchez – Gabriel González Valero, "Equipamiento y Uso de Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicación (TIC) en los Hogares Españoles Durante el Periodo de Confinamiento. Asociación con los Hábitos Sociales, Estilo de Vida y Actividad Física de los Niños Menores de 12 Años", *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, vol. 78, October 2020, p. 183-204; Moore et al., *ibid.*; Raktim Mitra – Sarah A. Moore – Meredith Gillespie – Guy Faulkner – Leigh M. Vanderloo – Tala Chulak-Bozzer – Ryan E. Rhodes – Mariana Brussoni – Mark S. Tremblay, "Healthy Movement Behaviours in Children and Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Exploring the Role of the Neighbourhood Environment", *Health Place*, vol. 65, September 2020, p. 102418.

48 Mine Göl-Güven – Vuslat Şeker – Fetiye Erbil – Merve Özgünlü – Gizem Alvan – Bahar Uzunkök, *Covid-19 Pandemisinin Aile Yaşantısına Yansımaları (Covid-19 Aile) Rapor-2*, August 2020; Retrieved from <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/7cc36312-26f1-4303-a5b4-0d1598c91028/Covid-19%20Aile%20Rapor%202%20-0001.pdf> on July 29, 2021.

49 Hongyan Guan – Anthony D. Okely – Nicolas Aguilar-Farias – Borja del Pozo Cruz – Catherine Draper – Asmaa El Hamdouchi – Alex Florindo – Alejandra Jauregui – Peter Katzmarzyk – Anna Kontsevaya – Marie Lof – Wonsoon Park – John J. Reilly – Deepika Sharma – Mark Tremblay – Sanne Veldman, "Promoting Healthy Movement Behaviours among Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic", *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, vol. 4, no. 6, June 2020, p. 416-418.

50 Egan et al., *ibid.*; Torres González et al., *ibid.*; Tambling et al., *ibid.*

51 Emir Tufan Çaykuş – Tansu Mutlu-Çaykuş, "Covid-19 Pandemi Sürecinde Çocukların Psikolojik Dayanıklılığını Güçlendirme Yolları: Ailelere, Öğretmenlere ve Ruh Sağlığı Uzmanlarına

to do more educational activities to make up for the lack of learning with the closing of the schools. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization reported that 1.38 billion children did not attend school and could not benefit from childcare centers during the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵² In addition, home activities that support in-school learning, which was given to children before the COVID-19 pandemic, had a role in enabling children to learn alone, as there was no in-school learning after the pandemic.⁵³ In their study on family life during the pandemic, Göl-Güven et al.⁵⁴ found that parents were worried about their children's academic work during this process. As an educational play and activity, some parents stated that they read stories during the pandemic. During those stressful days like a pandemic, reading stories is very important in supporting children's psychosocial development.⁵⁵

The increase in the use of technological tools is another important finding of the research. This situation may have been caused by technological devices being more visible due to children spending most of their time at home in the process, parents' handling of responsibilities such as work and shopping via online platforms, and online conversations with family elders or friends in a virtual environment. Similarly, when the literature is examined⁵⁶, children are exposed to screens and play with technological devices such as computers, tablets, or phones during the pandemic. Oosterhoff et al.⁵⁷ mentioned an increase in screen time

Öneriler", *Avrasya Sosyal ve Ekonomi Araştırmaları Dergisi*, cilt 7, sayı 5, Mayıs 2020, s. 95-113; Sonia Gupta – Manveen Kaur Jawanda, "The Impacts of COVID-19 on Children", *Acta Paediatrica*, vol. 109, no. 11, July 2020, p. 2181-2183; Yüksek-Usta – Gökcan, ibid.

- 52 Lucie Cluver – Jamie M. Lachman – Lorraine Sherr – Inge Wessels – Etienne Krug – Sabine Rakotomalala – Stephen Blight – Susan Hillis – Gretchen Bachman – Ohad Green – Alex Butchart – Mark Tomlinson – Catherine L. Ward – Jennifer Doubt – Kerida McDonald, "Parenting in a Time of COVID-19", *Lancet*, vol. 395, no. 10231, April 2020, p. 64.
- 53 Çaykuş and Mutlu-Çaykuş, ibid.
- 54 Göl-Güven et al., ibid.
- 55 Cathy Grace – Elizabeth Shores, *After the Crisis: Using Storybooks to Help Children Cope*, Lewisville, Gryphon House, 2010.
- 56 Mehmet Başaran – Ayşe Belgin Aksoy, "Anne-Babaların Koronavirüs (COVID-19) Salgını Sürecinde Aile Yaşantılarına İlişkin Görüşleri", *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, cilt 13, sayı 71, 2020, s. 667-681; Dunton et al., ibid.; Mart and Kesicioğlu ibid.; Marta Martínez Muñoz – Ivan Rodríguez Pascual – Gabriela Velásquez Crespo, *Infancia Confinada: ¿Cómo Viven la Situación de Confinamiento Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes*, Madrid, Enclave de Evaluación, 2020, p. 110–112; Moore et al., ibid.; Tambling et al., ibid.
- 57 Benjamin Oosterhoff – Cara A. Palmer – Jenna Wilson – Natalie Shook, "Adolescents' Motivations to Engage in Social Distancing during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Associations with Mental and Social Health", *Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 67, no. 2, August 2020, p. 179-185.

among children during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to them, children use technological devices as leisure time and educational activities.

In addition to this, due to the parents' obligation to manage both work and home life simultaneously, the fact that they gave technological devices to the children as a distraction may have caused this situation. Indeed, the opinions of participants support this argument. Parents' desire to support their children's disrupted education lives with the closure of schools during the pandemic process may have caused this situation.⁵⁸ Besides, this may be due to the technology's many play opportunities cinema for children to play at home.⁵⁹

The increase in science and natural knowledge plays is another finding of the research. Spending time at home rather than outside at the beginning of the pandemic led to less traffic, pollution, and noise reduction. This provided more opportunities for children to see and appreciate nature.⁶⁰ Parents may have encouraged their children to grow plants to reduce anxiety and make their children feel better about the coronavirus⁶¹ that causes stress and anxiety for both themselves and their children. Studies in the literature state that spending time on nature and growing plants has positive benefits on the psychology of individuals; it reduces stress⁶² and improves the emotional state.⁶³

58 Gabriel Gustavo Bergmann – Gabriel Barros da Cunha – Gicele de Oliveira Karini da Cunha – Julie Hellen de Barros Cruz – Lorena Rodrigues Silva – Gustavo Dias Ferreira – Eraldo dos Santos Pinheiro, “Changes in Body Weight and Health Behaviors of Overweight Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic”, *Revista Brasileira de Atividade Física & Saúde*, vol. 25, 2020, p. 1-7.

59 Beers Dewhirst et al., *ibid.*

60 Gupta and Jawanda, *ibid.*

61 Graziella Orrù – Rebecca Ciacchini – Angelo Gemignani – Ciro Conversano, “Psychological Intervention Measures during the COVID-19 Pandemic”, *Clinical Neuropsychiatry*, vol. 17, no. 2, April 2020, p. 76-79.

62 David N. Cole – Troy E. Hall, “Experiencing the Restorative Components of Wilderness Environments: Does Congestion Interfere and does Length of Exposure Matter?”, *Environment and Behavior*, vol. 42, no. 6, January 2010, p. 806-823; Terry Hartig – Gunn Johansson – Camilla Kylin, “Residence in the Social Ecology of Stress and Restoration”, *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 59, no. 3, July 2003, p. 611-636.

63 Clare Cooper-Marcus – Marni Barnes, *Healing Gardens: Therapeutic Benefits and Design Recommendations*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1999; Jeremy Schmutz – Phillip E. McClean – Sujan Mamidi – G. Albert Wu – Steven B. Cannon – Jane Grimwood – Jerry Jenkins – Shengqiang Shu – Qijian Song – Carolina Chavarro – Mirayda Torres-Torres – Valerie Gefroy – Samira Mafi Moghaddam – Dongying Gao – Brian Abernathy – Kerrie Barry – Matthew Blair – Mark A. Brick – Mansi Chovatia – Paul Gepts – David M. Goodstein – Michael Gonzales – Uffe Hellsten – David L. Hyten – Gaofeng Jia – James D. Kelly – Dave Kudrna – Rian

Another finding of the research is the change in playing time with parents. This situation is thought to be caused by the parents' changing living and working conditions during the pandemic. Some parents stated that they could spend more time with their children compared to the pre-pandemic period due to their flexible and remote working conditions. This finding is in line with many studies in the literature.⁶⁴ Many parents stated that they spent much time with their children during the pandemic. It is thought that this is due to the schools closing and the fact that children spend more time at home. However, the fact that parents could work from home and more flexibly may have also caused this situation. This finding is also like other studies in the literature.

To sum up, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic has created some changes in children's play. Findings showed that children play different kinds of plays (pretend play, art activities, science, and natural knowledge plays, etc.) which are beneficial for coping with the negative impact of the global crisis. It is a well-known fact that many children worldwide are disadvantaged in academic life since many schools are closed, and educational activities cease. According to parents, engaging in educational activities can also benefit children's educational life at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, many parent-child dyads had a chance to share much more time at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, some unfavorable situations have occurred in children's play activities. The current study found that children were engaged in many sedentary activities like increased use of technological tools and digital plays.

Lee – Manon M. S. Richard – Phillip N. Miklas – Juan M. Osorno – Josiane Rodrigues – Vincent Thareau – Carlos A. Urrea – Mei Wang – Yeisoo Yu – Ming Zhang – Rod A. Wing – Perry B. Cregan – Daniel S. Rokhsar – Scott A. Jackson, “A Reference Genome for Common Bean and Genome-Wide Analysis of Dual Domestications”, *Nature Genetics*, vol. 46, no. 7, July 2014, p. 707-713; Sandra A. Sherman – James W. Varni – Roger S. Ulrich – Vanessa L. Malcarne, “Post-Occupancy Evaluation of Healing Gardens in a Pediatric Cancer Center”, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 73, no. 2-3, 2005, p. 167-183; Sandra Whitehouse – James W. Varni – Michael Seid – Clare Cooper-Marcus – Mary Jane Ensberg – Jenifer R. Jacobs – Robyn S. Mehlenbeck, “Evaluating a Children's Hospital Garden Environment: Utilization of and Consumer Satisfaction”, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2001, p. 301-314.

64 Beers Dewhirst et al., *ibid*; Hadi Pajarianto – Abdul Kadir – Nursaqinah Galugu – Puspa Sari – Sofia Februanti, “Study from Home in the Middle of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Analysis of Religiosity, Teacher, and Parents Support against Academic Stress”, *Journal of Talent Development and Excellence*, January 2020, vol. 12, no. 2, p. 1791-1807.

WHO⁶⁵ mentions that preschool children should do 180 minutes of physical activity daily for healthy development. In addition, it mentions that they should not have more than 1 hour of screen time a day. In the literature⁶⁶, it is mentioned that activities such as walking, doing sports, and cycling during stressful times can help children calm their emotions and temporarily distract young children's thoughts and emotions from stress. Therefore, it can be said that the decrease in activities will negatively affect the psychosocial development of children during the pandemic. Moreover, a decrease in outdoor play is another important finding in the study. It is a well-known fact that a decrease in outdoor play and activity creates some problems in children's lives.

Moreover, during the ongoing pandemic, researchers have shown that children spend much time in front of the screen and using technological devices due to leisure time activities and educational purposes. In other words, it has become indispensable for children not to use such tools. For this reason, it has become a critical issue for children to use such tools under the guidance of parents and educators. There is a beneficial guide for parents and educators which The American Pediatric Association provides to regulate children's screen time usage.⁶⁷

As can be seen, the COVID-19 pandemic process has created both advantages and disadvantages in children's play. Play is an integral part of his life, providing numerous benefits to the child. It is important to maintain the play routine in the child's life. On the other hand, the reality created by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in children's games has changed it. For this reason, parents, teachers, health professionals, and policymakers must work collaboratively to strengthen children's indoor and outdoor play and to support children at this point.⁶⁸

65 World Health Organization (WHO), *Guidelines on Physical Activity, Sedentary Behavior and Sleep for Children under 5 Years of Age*, 2019; Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/guidelines-on-physical-activity-sedentary-behaviour-and-sleep-for-children-under-5-years-of-age> on December 17, 2020.

66 Betty Pfefferbaum – Carol S. North – David E. Pollio – Nancy E. Wallace – Rebecca Smith – Haekyun Jeon-Slaughter, “Focus Groups with Children after the World Trade Center Attacks”, *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, vol. 12, 2007, p. 349-363; Mitchell J. Prinstein – Annette M. La Greca – Eric M. Vernberg – Wendy K. Silverman, “Children's Coping Assistance: How Parents, Teachers, and Friends Help Children Cope After a Natural Disaster”, *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, vol. 25, 1996, p. 463-475.

67 Ellie Brown – Richard Gray – Samantha Lo Monaco – Brian O'Donoghue – Barnaby Nelson – Andrew Thompson – Shona Francey – Pat McGorry, “The Potential Impact of COVID-19 on Psychosis: A Rapid Review of Contemporary Epidemic and Pandemic Research”, *Schizophrenia Research*, vol. 222, August 2020, p. 79-87.

68 Kourti et al., *ibid.*

4.1. Limitations and Future Directions

It can be said that there are some limitations to the study. Firstly, it is limited to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (June 19 and July 10, 2020). Nevertheless, the current study provides initial data for understanding the changes in children's play during the COVID-19 pandemic process in Turkey. Secondly, an open-ended interview form was obtained from the parents of preschool children between 48 and 60 months living in the provinces of Trabzon, İstanbul, Bursa, and Ankara in Turkey. The lack of diversity in the city of the sample is a limitation of this study. Since this study took place in big cities in Turkey, the results do not represent the rural areas in the country. Thirdly, the changes that occurred in the plays children played during the pandemic were determined based on interviews with parents. In future studies, it is recommended to conduct studies in which children's opinions are gathered.

Since the lives of women and men in both work and home environments during the pandemic process may change differently, it is recommended to carry out studies comparing the opinions of mothers and fathers.

Another limitation is using the interview technique in collecting the data. Therefore, future studies should be conducted using different data collection methods such as questionnaires and diaries keeping obtain more extensive data.

It is suggested that similar studies should be carried out with parents and children from different socioeconomic levels and that these different groups should be compared in detail. Also, it is suggested to carry out studies in which parents' views are taken to examine the changes in the games of girls and boys during the COVID-19 process.

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Araştırmacıların Katkı Oranı

Araştırmacıların her birisinin mevcut araştırmaya katkı oranı aşağıdaki gibidir.

Yazar 1: %45

Yazar 2: %30

Yazar 3: %25

Çatışma Beyanı

Araştırmada herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

