Int. Journal on Child Malt. (2023) 6:431–451
https://doi.org/10.1007/s42448-023-00152-1

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Experiences of Children During the Pandemic: Scrutinizing Increased Vulnerabilities in Education in the Case of Turkey

Serra Müderrisoğlu[1] · Başak Akkan[2] · Pınar Uyan Semerci[2] · Emre Erdoğan[2]

Accepted: 16 January 2023 / Published online: 27 January 2023

Abstract

The lengthy time of school closure was one defining factor in understanding child well-being during the pandemic in a context where school as a relational space holds great importance for children, particularly those from a low socioeconomic background. Considering this significant aspect of lengthy school closure during the pandemic in Turkey, this article explores children's experiences concerning their day-to-day access to education, digital inequalities, housing conditions, and changing context of relations with peers and teachers. The article also explores the meaning that children attribute to school as a relational space where they shape their intergenerational and generational relations. The absence of the school in children's lives for almost 2 years has been a major source of longing for such significant childhood space. Following our earlier work on the children's negotiation of well-being within the boundaries of the relational spaces of home and school, this article looks into how children negotiate their well-being in a pandemic environment where school as a relational space has changed its meaning and where children's caretakers' (teachers, parents, and other) vulnerabilities have also increased. The analysis draws on the qualitative fieldwork carried out with 50 children during the summer of 2020 in Turkey. We aim to reflect on the experiences from children's perspectives within the boundaries of the constraints that the pandemic has generated. This article also discusses how COVID-19 has widened the gap and increased vulnerabilities among the already disadvantaged groups and gender in terms of available resources and their allocation as it is reflected in time use that portrays the meaning that children attribute to their own experience during the pandemic.

Keywords Child well-being · Pandemic · COVID-19 · Education · School closures · Turkey

Serra Müderrisoğlu is a retired member of Boğaziçi University Psychology Department, Istanbul, Turkey.

✉ Başak Akkan
basak.akkan@bilgi.edu.tr

Extended author information available on the last page of the article

-What do you want to do first when the corona is over?

- I want to go to school and during the break, I want to cry out "I am freeeee" Selim-m/mid/6th G[1]

Introduction

It has been 2 years since the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic. The mounting research and international reports have revealed that such a global health crisis has increased the inequalities around the world and has paved the way for new vulnerabilities among already unprivileged groups in society. Children are one of the groups affected most by the pandemic as their contact with their schools, teachers, peers, and other childhood spaces and social networks have been interrupted severely. According to international organizations' rapid assessments, child poverty has increased drastically during the pandemic.[2] Educational vulnerability, technological and learning inequalities, and children's mental health conditions have emerged as significant issues that require the attention of scholars, politicians, policy-makers, and activists.

Concerning children's well-being, one of the evident results of the pandemic was the reaffirmation of the significance and indispensability of school as a relational space in children's lives. The longer the schools stayed closed, the pandemic generated more profound vulnerabilities for children concerning educational losses and their interrupted access to generational and intergenerational solidarity networks (Zierer, 2021). School closure had detrimental effects on children's mental well-being (Lehmann et al., 2022). The inadequate home conditions, difficulties accessing online education platforms, and prolonged isolation from peers accompanied by mental issues have emerged as child well-being deterioration processes that children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds experienced at different levels (Cordini and De Angelis, 2021; Herrenkohl, 2021; Remiers, 2021). Parents, other caretakers, and teachers have also become more vulnerable due to the increased uncertainties, financial insecurities, and amplified anxiety and distress among the caretakers (Huebener et al., 2021; Patrick et al., 2020).

Turkey is one of the countries with the most extended periods of school closures, as the schools were physically closed for almost 2 years. The lengthy time of school closure was one defining factor in understanding child well-being during the pandemic in a context where school as a relational space holds great importance for children, particularly those from a low socioeconomic background (Uyan Semerci et al., 2012). Considering this significant aspect of lengthy school closure during the pandemic, this article explores children's experiences concerning their day-to-day

[1] All through the text, the names and the abbreviations after the quotes provide information about the participant child. The first name is a pseudonym. F/m refers to gender f/female and m/male. High; mid (middle) and low refers to socioeconomic status. The number (7th G) refers to the grade.

[2] (https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/the_hidden_impact_of_covid-19_on_child_poverty.pdf/.)

access to education, digital inequalities, housing conditions, and changing context of relations with peers and teachers. The article also explores the meaning that children attribute to school as a relational space where they shape their intergenerational and generational relations. The absence of the school in children's lives for almost 2 years has been a primary source of longing for such significant childhood space. Hence, understanding the experience of the pandemic from the children's standpoint provides new insights to childhood scholars in locating such spaces as safety ecosystems that define children's well-being. In a rapidly changing world where child spaces are at constant risk due to climate change, war, global pandemics, and economic shocks, one needs to revisit the meaning of child well-being in a world of crisis and uncertainty. Accordingly, following our earlier work on the children's negotiation of well-being within the boundaries of the relational spaces of home and school (Akkan et al. 2021), this article looks into how children negotiate their well-being in a pandemic environment where school as a relational space has changed its meaning and where children's caretakers' (teachers, parents, and other) vulnerabilities have also increased. Building on the literature on child well-being and the authors' earlier extensive work on child well-being in Turkey, the article aims to scrutinize increased vulnerabilities in education that define the features of child well-being. We aim to reflect on the pandemic experiences from children's perspectives regarding the constraints generated by the pandemic.

Child Well-Being as a Framework for Understanding Children's Experiences of the Pandemic

The article draws upon our earlier work where we dealt with the school as a relational space that holds importance in children's everyday negotiations of their well-being (Akkan et al., 2021; Uyan Semerci et al., 2012). Regarding *relational spaces of children*, we refer to places where generational and intergenerational experiences occur. Home and school emerge as two central childhood spaces where children negotiate their well-being within intergenerational relations. The pandemic has demonstrated that shifts in the boundaries of the public life of children at school and the private life of children at home have paved the way for new vulnerabilities being explored in the article.

In our earlier study on child well-being, on the one hand, home as a relational space is identified as a site of intergenerational and generational relations, a place of in/security and support, and a place where the child controls aspects of her everyday life, particularly as the freedom of action in everyday life, especially concerning time use (Akkan et al., 2021). On the other hand, school as a relational space holds a significant role in children's subjective well-being. School is identified as a relational site of generational and intergenerational relations and an important site for children's socialization with their peers and teachers (Akkan et al., 2021). Our earlier work also reveals other relational sites of childhood, including neighborhoods, sports facilities, and clubs (Akkan et al., 2019; Uyan Semerci et al., 2012). Yet our contextualized child well-being research manifests that in Turkey, school as a relational space is one significant site of freedom for children, particularly for

girls who are bounded by the restricted, sometimes oppressive space of the home (Akkan et al., 2021). The research conducted amid the pandemic provided further information on the importance of school for the mediation of child well-being in Turkey, where particularly children who come from disadvantaged families have limited spaces for socialization outside of school. Hence, the pandemic has shifted the meaning of these spaces for children.

The pandemic has created considerable vulnerabilities for children from all social milieus. Yet, still, it could be argued that children have not been affected equally by the pandemic. In understanding how child well-being relates to inequality experienced in childhood, we refer to vulnerability as an explanatory concept. The vulnerability could be defined in relation to the structural and individual levels (Andresen, 2014). The lack of access to resources (health, education, other) and conditions of poverty at the structural level are sources of vulnerability, and they adversely affect child well-being. The vulnerability could be exacerbated at the individual level as a result of maltreatment, violence, poor family relations, and lack of solidarity networks. Individual and environmental factors interact and pave the way to different forms of child vulnerability (OECD, 2019).

Children who are already vulnerable due to certain factors (including their socioeconomic status, gender, race, and migration history) are more severely affected by the destructive consequences of the pandemic. Since the pandemic's beginning, mounting research has put effort into understanding the effects of the pandemic on children, particularly concerning the lockdowns, school closures, mental well-being, digital inequalities in access to education, and housing conditions of children (Norman et al., 2022; Samji. et al., 2022; UNESCO 2020). Child well-being scholars are particularly interested in understanding the effects of school closures on children's educational outcomes and subjective well-being (Stoecklin et al., 2021). Studies that aim to receive children's views are significant in understanding the vulnerabilities among children that the pandemic has created. Accordingly, such studies demonstrated that during school closures and lockdowns, children are forced to stay indoors as part of the containment measures, and this had adverse effects on children's physical well-being. The loss of physical contact with peers and teachers has also had negative outcomes on the relational well-being of children (Stoecklin et al., 2021).

The literature also demonstrates that COVID-19 had adverse effects on children's well-being concerning the aggravation of poverty and socioeconomic disadvantages (Fore et al., 2020; United Nations, 2020), deterioration of their mental health (Almeida et al., 2022; Thakur et al., 2020), and intensification of digital and educational inequalities (Whitley et al., 2021). Hence, the child well-being research approach towards understanding the experiences and meaning-making processes from children's standpoint (Fattore et al., 2019) holds great importance in analyzing the pandemic experiences. For instance, children's perspective is vital in demonstrating how the pandemic has led to child rights abuses and mistreatment worldwide (Campbell et al., 2021). Furthermore, when we consider the prioritized topics of childhood research in the course of the pandemic, we see that the deteriorating mental health of the children and children's psychological and emotional well-being have been given priority in the last 2 years (Groarke, J. et al., 2020; Imran et al.,

2020; Lee, 2020; Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2021). Numerous empirical work has demonstrated that the impact of the pandemic on children's mental health has been a complex experience of anxiety, feelings of loneliness, stress, and sleeping disorders (Mitra et al., 2021; Theberath et al., 2022). The pandemic had adverse effects not just on the mental well-being of children but also on their parents (Patrick et al., 2020).

The studies showed that the children's socialization and interaction with friends and school peers had been disrupted; in many ways, virtual communication has failed to create the socialization environment that face-to-face interaction provides (Whitley et al. 2021). The school has a crucial place in children's socialization which has lost its presence in children's daily lives (Whitley et al. 2021). School's importance as a safe place and support mechanism for children has also been revealed during the pandemic (Cowie and Myers, 2021). In countries where school lockdowns lasted longer, the containment measures' adverse effects on children have increased. The school closures' adverse effects also showed differences concerning the children's socioeconomic status. According to a study carried out in Ireland (which was one of the countries with a long duration of school closure), the children with better home resources (parent help, technological equipment) had a better engagement with education and learning compared to children with scarce resources (Chzhen, 2022). Hence, a wide range of studies has exposed the inequalities that children faced concerning their home environment and the resources of the family when the home became the learning environment (Andrew et al., 2020; Armitage and Nellums, 2020; Bacher et al., 2021; Bayrakdar and Guveli 2020; Becker et al., 2020; Bol, 2020; Del Bono et al. 2021;Dietrich et al. 2021; Richardson et al., 2020).

Turkey

In Turkey, the first COVID-19 case was confirmed on March 11, 2020. As of April 2020, a lockdown for individuals under the age of 20 was declared, followed by universal lockdowns. Starting in June 2020, the lockdowns for 18 and under were lifted. The second wave of lockdowns covering the elderly (65+) and children under the age of 20 was introduced in November 2020 and continued until March 2021, and the third wave of lockdowns took place between April and May 2021. One of the most critical issues affecting children's well-being is the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 epidemic in their educational processes (ERG, 2021; OECD, 2021). Face-to-face education only became possible in the 2021–2022 academic year. Following the shutdown of schools on March 13, 2020, the week of March 16–20 was declared the winter break. Afterwards, March 23–27 was declared to be the date when the distance education through EBA would commence in the first phase. Distance education was prolonged twice. During this period, education was provided through EBA TV channels (TRT EBA TV Elementary School, TRT EBA TV Middle School, TRT EBA TV High School) and via the Internet. Distance education was implemented first on a "volunteer" bases between March and June 2020 and then on a "mandatory" bases between September 2020 and June 2021. The 2020–2021 academic year started with "mandatory" distance education for all levels on August 31,

2020. On September 21, 2020, it was announced that face-to-face training would be introduced. However, face-to-face training could not be fully implemented.

On March 1, 2021, the Ministry of National Education announced that the status of schools would be decided according to the risk level of the provinces they are located in. Schools in all regions and levels were closed for 44.4% of the academic year, which is 87 days (all schools were closed between August 31 to September 18, 2020, November 23, 2020, to February 12, 2021, and April 29 to May 14, 2021). Between March 2 and April 28, 2021, the status of schools was decided according to the risk level of the provinces. Preschool level (109 days), 1st grades (99 days), village schools (95 days), and special education schools (94 days) were the levels and institutions that remained open the longest. The 6th, 7th, 10th, and 11th grades were the stages that continued face-to-face education for the shortest time.[3] In the 2021–2022 academic year, face-to-face teaching started in Turkey after approximately 1.5 years. In distance education, the technological equipment of children in their homes was also essential for children's access to education. According to "The Distance Education by Numbers" data shared by the Ministry of Education General Directorate of Innovation and Education Technologies (YEĞİTEK), 12,873,739 students became active in EBA between September 21, 2020, and June 18, 2021. According to the EBA usage data in this study, 31% of the students had access to distance education via computer and 9% via tablet, while 60% of the students used mobile devices.[4]

Turkey is already one of the OECD countries with the highest child poverty rate at 23%[5]. As one of the consequences of the epidemic, the rate of child poverty is expected to rise even more. In 2020, the poverty rates of nuclear families (taking into account 50% of the median income) increased by 0.7 compared to the previous year. They increased from 13.8 to 14.5%, while material deprivation among households was 26.3% in 2019. It rose to 27.4% in 2020[6]. In the studies carried out during the epidemic, it is emphasized that due to the economic and social effects of the epidemic, families suffered job losses; they were unable to pay their rent and bills and even had difficulty accessing food. It has been shown that families working in precarious and temporary jobs are more affected by this process and experienced economic losses. Undoubtedly, quarantine processes and curfews have increased job losses in low-income families, job losses and income losses among families have become more permanent as the curfews are prolonged, and food insecurity has become one of the main concerns of families. In connection with the financial deprivation of families, child poverty creates negative processes that determine the well-being of children, such as job losses and deterioration of the economic situation

[3] https://www.egitimreformugirisimi.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/EIR21_OgrencilerveEgitimeErisim.pdf

[4] https://www.egitimreformugirisimi.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/EIR21_OgrencilerveEgitimeErisim.pdf

[5] https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm

[6] https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Gelir-ve-Yasam-Kosullari-Arastirmasi-2020-37404

in the family, malnutrition, increased anxiety about the future, disconnection from education, and deterioration of mental health (Habitat 2021).

According to the interview conducted by the Deep Poverty Network with 103 poor households in Istanbul, children in 58% of the households were not able to continue distance education. Not having technological devices (60%), not having internet access (45%), not having information about accessing distance education (39%), and having to work can be listed among the reasons for disconnecting from education during the epidemic[7]. Again, the same study shows that 85% of the 100 families interviewed do not have access to sufficient food. Forty-nine percent of households stated that they did not have access to clean drinking water during the epidemic, and 39% of families are at risk of losing their homes. Vulnerable children had difficulties in accessing distance education. Regional infrastructure differences, lack of internet access, and lack of technological equipment created barriers to access to education. It can be mentioned that there is serious food insecurity for children in Turkey at present. It seems that the vulnerable groups of society are affected more deeply by the pandemic.

Method

It is crucial to listen to how children tell their experiences of interrupted access to education and changing relations with peers and teachers during the pandemic. The analysis draws on the qualitative fieldwork carried out with 50 children during the summer of 2020 in Turkey[8]. Twenty-eight female and 22 male children aged between 10 and 13 from different socioeconomic backgrounds (high (9), middle (30), and low (11)) participated a semi-structured in-depth interviews. Eight of the interviewed children are students of private high schools, and 42 children are students of public schools.

It is generally accepted that collecting data from children has several difficulties. Hence, there is a common tendency to exclude the views of children, as they are taken as "non-adults" or "adults in waiting" (James and Prout, 1997; Platt, 2016). However, parallel to the recent developments in childhood studies, children had the chance to voice their opinions about their lives. Thanks to enlarging a number of empirical studies in the field of education, methodological pitfalls in traditional data collection methods have been discovered. New and innovative data collection techniques are developed, such as "draw-and-use" techniques, using vignettes or different methods (Irwin & Johnson, 2005).

Following a series of online meetings during the early years of the pandemic, an international team of academics created the instrument. Each team member

[7] https://derinyoksullukagi.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/21443_DYA_CocukYoksullugu_BilgiNotu_Web-1.pdf

[8] As the authors of this article, we would like to thank students of the course PSY48M Qualitative Analysis 2019 cohort of Bogazici University for their voluntary participation to the research after their graduation. We also like to thank Lara Yılmaz for her help for the search of recent literature on pandemic and child well-being.

contributed to the development of the guide for in-depth interviews. The instrument's final version was translated into Turkish. Our team then performed pilot interviews with twenty children. On the basis of our prior knowledge, we attempted to comprehend how youngsters process questions and develop responses. In addition, we incorporated relevant prompts to improve the interview's flow. Training for the interviewers, who are fourth-year psychology students, focuses on the instrument's flow, potential problems to be encountered during the interview, and interviewing approaches to engage youngsters in conversation. We utilized role-playing activities to prepare interviewers for anticipated interview-related challenges.

Due to the epidemic, our interviewers performed the vast majority of in-depth interviews using online platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, or Teams; we only had one in-person interview. There are various drawbacks to online interviewing, including difficulty in interpreting the participant's body language, the short time of focus, the presence of third parties during the interview, and, most crucially, the quality of the technical communication. This type of interview could be extremely taxing for participants. In addition, considering the low cognitive capacity of youngsters may cause children to lose concentration throughout longer interviews. Under pandemic conditions, online interviewing was and is the most popular method of data collection (Borgers et al., 2000; James and Busher, 2006; Janghorban et al., 2014; Saarijarvi and Bratt, 2021).

During our interviews, we attempted to ask concise questions and opted to use further prompts to address these issues. When we transcribed our interviews, however, we actually noticed how the children's concentration changed and how they grew tired during the interviews.

After completing the transcription of interviews, we utilized MAXQDA for coding and identifying similar themes. The interviews included a range of subjects, including material well-being, household situations, family and friend relationships, and perspectives on the pandemic. The focus of this article was on their perceptions of school and education.

Research Findings: Changes in the Experiences of Learning

Schools are indispensable for children's lives; they are relational spaces where they interact with their peers and teachers, socialize, and have fun alongside education. Children were affected by the pandemic as their contact with their schools, teachers, and peers was interrupted severely. The experiences of learning changed as face-to-face learning suddenly changed to distance learning. Educational vulnerabilities, technological inequalities, and learning and motivational and resilience differences affected the way children adapted themselves. By elaborating on this new educational space, in the first part, we will first reflect on the difficulties of distance learning-how children felt in this new experience of learning and how already existing inequalities affected access. Secondly, we will focus on how children see their teachers behind the screens and how their relations change through online teaching tools. In the second part, we will discuss the theme of "miss"ing school with two different focuses: first as "longing" and second as "not having the chance to be at school."

And in the last part, how this new experience affects children's relations with their friends will be elaborated on as this is one of the most underlined topics during the interviews.

The New Educational Space

The children attributed several meanings to the new educational space while they compared the new digital space with the physical environment of the school. They refer to the advantages and disadvantages of the new space.

> How it felt? It actually felt bad. It was more fruitful in fact when we went to school. At least I was able to go near to the teachers and ask questions. But it's not really efficient right now. Because online education is a bit difficult and boring.
> Ayşe-f/mid/7th G

"A bit difficult and boring" is a moderate formulation of the common feeling that was repeatedly told by the participant children. The decision for school closure was first not regarded as a negative development; actually as stated, they were "first happy" with the decision for online education; it was regarded as a kind of holiday:

> … at first I was very happy to attend the online classes via zoom…
> Fatma-f/low/6th G

> Actually, at first, I was a little bit happy because as the schools were on holiday, now I could rest a little. I was happy... but then this holiday has been too long, I want the school to open now Melis-f/low/6th G

However, the continuity of education no longer felt like a holiday; quite contrary, no interaction with teachers and friends, online lessons, and breaks without friends to play turned out to be a burden.

The Difficulties of Online Learning

In our qualitative research, children have extensively reflected on their experiences with access to education which demonstrated disparities according to children's socioeconomic status, housing conditions, and technological means in hand. The research compellingly demonstrates that the socioeconomic resources of children determined their experience of education in a digital space, which indicates inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. Children, particularly those coming from low socioeconomic groups, indicated difficulties concerning having proper technological equipment in accessing education, working internet access (the internet interruptions), and a proper home environment to follow the online courses.

A girl from a low socioeconomic family expressed her difficulties in accessing online education where her internet access is being interrupted continuously:

> Sometimes, I have difficulties in access. For example, my computer is very slow, so I enter EBA from my phone. For example, you drop out of the course

> as the connection is broken. Sometimes the electricity goes off, the internet starts over, and then the lesson is almost over. In fact, there was a problem with our modem for a while so I couldn't attend most of the classes. If my mother did not have internet, I could not attend any classes. Melis-f/low/6th G

She also stated that when there were "visitors and guests," she could not participate in online education as there was no extra space in their home where she could access and follow the courses. Going to school and being in the same classroom, in a way, provide an equal opportunity for the most vulnerable groups, at least during school hours. Another participant from a low socioeconomic background underlined her difficulties as the following:

> Frankly I cannot follow zooms properly as there is the baby, and my siblings also have courses to follow, I gave them a priority, then my courses are over Aysel-f/low/6th G

Her quote summarized two important problems. Although she was only 11, she was responsible for taking care of a baby, and also, as she had other siblings, she had to find ways to share their access to zoom classes. Although the outcome of our research shows that all children had difficulties adapting themselves to the changes during the pandemic, the gender and socioeconomic background of children indicated diverse experiences. There are socioeconomic differences with respect to children's resources at home and to what extent they are engaged in household duties. The difference between children concerning their household duties is a gendered issue; usually, girls are engaged in household duties that define their access to online education. When parents have to work, or they have health problems and/or there is a single parent in the household, housework and caring for family members, particularly their younger siblings, become a responsibility for girls. This has often been observed particularly in low-income families as this unpaid work is the only available source, and during the pandemic, this deepened the gendered vulnerabilities.

The inadequate home conditions (small house, no extra space, limited or no internet access, etc.), difficulties in accessing education through technological means, and also lack of support from parents and care responsibilities multiplied the inequalities in education. Limited home space is also a problem for middle-class families. A girl from a middle-class family is provided opportunities for home space reserved for her to follow her online classes.

> My mother warns my sister, "Don't come in, let that kid do his lesson, then get in. Cemre-f/mid/6th G

Furthermore, understanding and focusing on online courses were "not easy"/"difficult"/"not productive" even without these limitations:

> … I felt like I couldn't understand my courses better. For example, I sometimes say to myself, 'I did not understand this course, for example, I will not pass.' When I was at school, I was at minimum listening, but when I was on Zoom, for example, some noises were heard at home. There was no similar sound at school. I could do better. I was able to focus. But when I'm

at home, for example, I can't focus because of some sounds...But during school days, I usually focus, I mean, I concentrate on listening to my lectures. (background voices increased.) Melike-f/mid/6th G

-Why is it not efficient?
-It's not very efficient because I can't focus very much, that's it.
- What prevents you from focusing?
- Not one thing, I can't understand what the teachers are saying, that's all because we are not face to face.…
-Well, can you follow the lectures? Do you feel you have learned?
- I don't feel like I'm learning Merve-f/low/6th G

In the absence of school, the home space has become a major relational space where children negotiate their well-being. Children were behind the scene between the house walls: They refer to different and usually conflicting feelings about their home space.

At first, I was able to spare more time for myself and sleep more, because, at that time, online education was not fully certain. Well, I was sleeping and sleeping all day, but then I didn't have that desire anymore. I tried to do other activities, then the online training had already passed. Now I'm getting bored. At home, the walls come down on me, one feels stuck like that. You can't go out after all. So overall, I'm a little bored. I have nothing else to do at home. Although at school, I go to class and sit for a while, but then I can go out and run with my friends and play games. But now it's not like that, at most I can walk, I can walk around the house. The kitchen, the living room, my room. Lara-f/high/6th G

"Boredom" at home is conveyed by the children who find themselves locked down for long periods. They try to develop several resilience mechanisms, trying to motivate themselves behind the walls of the home environment. Boredom is a typical symptom experienced by children and adults during the pandemic, as shown in the meta-analysis of Panda et al. (2021). It is among the three most frequently observed psychological problems, along with fear and sleep disturbance. Boredom has several consequences affecting the well-being of children, such as academic failure, in addition to depression and anxiety, loneliness, anger, aggression, overeating, and binge eating (Eastwood et al., 2012).

When my motivation is lost, for example, I listen to a song, but I am unhappy. Well, I'm unhappy to make myself miserable, it's not like that, I don't know, I listen to a song, my motivation gets better or, uh, well, my toy's name is Maymuş, for example, I'm talking to Maymuş, he's good for me, or that's how I close the door to my room, I hold him in my lap. This is how I move forward - so I motivate myself by walking. Sometimes I motivate myself by walking quickly around the house and thinking. It's going well, and there are times when I'm motivated, but there are times when it drops. But this period really makes it a bit more difficult for me to motivate,

> uh, provide, that is, balance. But I'm balancing it, so I'm succeeding. It's going well, I mean, it's going well; I'm dreaming. It's going well. Zeynep-f/mid/7th G

Last but not least, the physical effects of being in front of the screen for learning also were stated:

> … it is very difficult for seven hours on the phone screen, sir. (hmmm) Our eyes, (hmm hmm) our heads, our backs. … a lesson like this, so I wouldn't want anything to change.
> …
> Sometimes teachers do block lessons. We have a chance to rest for two hours then, but …, for example, we had seven lessons today. I had quite a headache or something in the last lesson. Eyes, like this, can't see the writings anymore... Mert-m/mid/6th G

A combination of lack of motivation, boredom, and sometimes physical pain was summarized by one of the participant children as the following:

> Lessons used to be lively; used to have a spirit…. Nobody has a soul, everybody is dead inside Emir-m/high/6th G

Boredom is more than an individualistic experience; it is influenced by sociological conditions such as cultural and organizational norms, individuals' position in society, and interaction processes (Ohlmeier et al., 2020). Apart from intercultural differences, the interactional dimension of boredom has a very important meaning in the context of the pandemic; boredom is defined as the "disengagement from an interaction" or a "semiotic" breakdown in communication, and "role distancing," giving away roles we are performing in our everyday lives (Ohlmeier et al., 2020). Consequently, isolation and homeschooling created a foreign environment for the children, disengaged from interactions with teachers and friends, the breakdown of communication with their peers and children, and, most importantly, the missing of studentship as a social identity. Moreover, not only boredom but coping strategies are based on gender, social class, and other factors. Resources owned by children and parental monitoring are also negatively correlated with the frequency of experiencing boredom (Spruyt et., 2018). Although lessons are "no longer lively" and "everybody is dead inside" is a common complaint that crosscuts all socioeconomic differences, housing conditions still play an important role in finding ways of motivation, and economic difficulties limit finding academic support such as private tutoring. Students of low-income families experience digital inequalities and the effects of housing conditions more, and they are more vulnerable to changing contexts of relations with peers and teachers.

Teachers Behind the Screen: Loss of Control or to Become a Controller?

It is not just students but teachers faced difficulties in both usage of technological means and access to the internet and also in teaching in a digital environment. This sudden shift from classroom space to internet space was also a major

challenge for teachers who do not have much experience with technological means. Teachers had to adapt themselves, and most of them also had to learn various new methods to teach more effectively in the distance learning in an increasingly uncertain environment. This variation was reflected in children's experiences. Some of the participant children stated that teachers lost control of the class or were not able to follow every reaction, and interestingly some underlined how some teachers became "controllers," having the power of "muting everyone."

> Since many teachers are not very good with technology , …, if someone makes a noise, they can't turn it off. Uh, so every-, there's always that, uh, rustle. Well, since teachers don't understand much about technology, as I said, well, they can't intervene. Since it is distance education, we cannot understand much from the lessons. We are currently dealing with the subject of history, especially in social science courses. It was very confusing. The teacher was able to read from the book. In this distance education, they can't teach well via the computer, so the subject of history still hasn't fully settled in my mind at the moment. Demir-m/mid/6th G

The digital divide between the students is also being reflected among the teachers. Depending on the teachers' ability to use technological means, control over the class varied. The teachers had the risk of losing control of the class:

> We have a social science teacher. My teacher is 66 years old, and he doesn't know all about Zoom like turning off Chat. There are times when he does not look at Chat; there are times when he cannot see it. For example, it happened a couple of weeks ago, and my friends from Chat had a fight. They wrote some swear words. Of course, the teacher could not completely prevent this because my teacher did not know. 10 minutes of our lesson was spent there… Mert-m/mid/6th G

> There was more seriousness in the class (huh -confirmation-). And when the teachers said something, they immediately shut up. Now, even if the teachers get angry on the screen, I mean, it's loudest. We are not nearby my friends talk comfortably (hmm hmm), they don't listen to the teachers like that. . My teacher cannot provide discipline. Mert-m/mid/6th G

Contrary to the above examples, the following quote demonstrates how a teacher became a total controller:

> Usually, you know, it's usual, (laughs) how can I say, we could usually talk to our friends in whispers like this, now don't take it like slacking off from class, but I mean. Now the teacher cancels the 'chat' when he sees we are messaging. After that, when he hears that we are talking, he mutes everyone. That's how teachers became 'controllers' (laughs). It's totally like this, especially if we move to a 'real' school, then I think most teachers will want online education to come again (laughs) (M: Hm...) They can silence us all with a single button. Emir-m/High/6th G

"Silencing all with a single button" is a striking expression of how some of the tools of online education have a strong disciplinary power. "Muting" all students with one click may be a scene from a dystopia.

Furthermore, the close interaction with the teachers is interrupted during online education. As the previous research shows, the student's close interaction with their teachers holds great importance. The students convey that the interruption of the interaction with the teachers is a negative aspect of online education. Being able to interact with the teachers is particularly important for students who come from low socioeconomic families:

> It was better at school, of course. We show our test results, and the teacher checks them, signs them, etc., but we do not have such an opportunity here. For example, showing our notebook? We can't do it as the cameras don't do much, they can be blurry. He (teacher) can't control it as he doesn't see it. Feride-f/Low/5th G

The close interaction with the teachers at school is a manifestation of how school functions as a relational space for children. The interruption of such interaction is not just related to the learning processes but the loss of an intergenerational relationship where students interact with the teachers on several other levels. For instance, being able to talk to teachers about their personal issues is important for the students, which is also interrupted during school closures. The children also express their longing to interact with their peers.

> I felt the absence of my friends. Later on, I felt the absence of my teachers. It was better in face-to-face training. We were able to talk to our friends. We had breaks. We talked to our teachers. It was better. Eda-f/mid/6th G

> When we compare education versus online education, I, uh, would be torn between the two, but of course, I would choose the school. School is a very good place for me. Here's what happens online, uh, there's a button, you raise your finger from there. I mean, I use it a lot, but sometimes it happens, I don't know, it freezes, and sometimes I don't understand some part of the lesson. I ask, the voices get mixed up, uh, Zoom can throw me out of class. Then we reconnect… Zeynep-f/mid/7th G

> There, sometimes I could, at least, ask the teacher. During the break, I could go near the teacher and ask something. It's not like that online, you can't ask the teacher directly, so the teacher leaves, but the image is there- he turns off the computer. Sevil-f/mid/7th G

> I was in more interaction with my teacher at school, but I could see my teacher more at school, for example, before going to the teacher's room, the teacher stayed with us when there was a break, we asked questions, it was better.. Ela-f/mid/7th G

Not to be seen on the screen is also stated as a limitation of class participation:

> I raise my hand, if the teacher does not see me, obviously, he cannot give me the right to speak. But when someone, who dives right in, answers 'well done, right answer.' Because he didn't see me… Lara-f/High/6th G

Lastly, children also underline that they also had the chance to see their teacher's home and teacher's family members, even pets which were "different but not in a bad way":

> For example, our Turkish teacher is usually a serious teacher, but she has a one-and-a-half-year-old son at home and she attends online classes from her home. He was coming to the lessons, he was saying something to his mother. (She laughs) For example, the teacher takes attendance and asks if we have done our homework. If a girl says 'I didn't do it', he says something like 'Why didn't I do it?' (both laughing), the lessons were so sweet….
> … our math teacher has a bird in her house, we saw it in online classes. He kept whistling in the lessons, and at the end of the day we said, ' we hear such a sound in every lesson of yours, what is it?'. The teacher said, 'It's my bird, I put it in the opposite room, but still we hear the sounds from there.' Melis-f/Low/6th G

Missing school

The absence of school in children's lives for almost 2 years has been a major source of longing for a childhood space. Children missed school, not only longing but also not being there meant missing what school had provided or what school had fulfilled, particularly for children who had no other means of socialization.

Longing for School-School as a Relational Space

The students express their longing for school. As we already demonstrated with different quotes above, the school is being missed as a relational space where students interact with their peers and teachers. The school also provides a place of freedom for children from their families, which is also being missed during the pandemic.

> It feels really bad because I can't hug my friends. We used to joke, but it's not like that right now, if we make jokes in class, the teacher gets angry and we can't see each other during the breaks anyway. that's why it doesn't work. My favorite place is my school. I really love it. It's very nice. I missed going there.
> E: Yes, what do you think makes you love school so much?
> D: The reason I love school is I love my teachers, first of all, I love my friends and school is better for me, and sometimes being away from my family that's how I like it.
> Ayşe-f/mid/7th G

Children were longing for their daily routine and what school had provided to them. Although limited, the school still may be the only space for most children where they experience their agency, socialize, and play.

Lack of School: What Is Missing in Children's Lives?

Stoecklin et al. demonstrated that during the school closures, being forced to stay indoors had adverse effects on children's physical and relational well-being (2021). The impact of missing school risks not only current well-being but also future well-being. In terms of education, children underlined the fact that they did not learn properly missed the "essence"/"half of the topics":

> How can I say it, sir, it seems like I'm missing things... Mert-m/mid/6th G
> I started to have difficulties in my courses, I started not to understand, most of my courses Selim-m/mid/6th G
> But the worst part is, what can I say? I finished the fifth grade with half a knowledge! I started sixth grade, and never went to school! On top of that, I couldn't learn in the sixth grade the way I learned in one, two, three, or four. I did not learn properly, the brain did not digest properly. What are you going to do? Open the book, what is it, memorize! This much! (speaks furiously). Only the brain can do that right now. No understanding! Only in math, I can understand why, here is the tutor coming every Monday. Emir-m/High/6th G

School is also a space where students have fun and socialize. Particularly missing "breaks" were repeatedly stated—"being at home during breaks" was a common point of complaint:

> So in my school day, well, the courses weren't much different, but mostly, breaks were different. Right now, um, we can't do much when there is a break, but for example, we could go outside during breaks, sometimes there could be a basketball there, we could play basketball even if it were 10 minutes. At least we were able to exercise, but right now, we're bored (M: huh). In between, uh, it's boring to sit here and wait. Demir-m/mid/6th G

Going to school routinely also meant being active for children, particularly girls from low socioeconomic groups. In the absence of school, they lose their chance to go out of home routinely, and they lose their place of freedom where they socialize with their friends independent of their home duties. The school trips are also important, particularly for students from low socioeconomic groups, which the children stated they are also missing.

> Well, in regular school days, I was going out every day we were taking a breath, Well, at school, I was walking with my mother at a distance of fifteen minutes. We would be doing more sports, we would be walking more, we were going out more… At school, breaks were very fun, we were having a study party or something in the last days of the study….
> Melis-f/Low/6th G

During the pandemic, the school closure made students from low socioeconomic groups more vulnerable as schools are their only opportunity to get extra academic support from teachers and to enjoy any extra curriculum activity.

Friends from a Distance: Losing Contact with School Friends

Understanding how peer relations in this transformed space of children is crucial for understanding the subjective well-being of children. Not being able to spend time with friends and teachers, talking to them in person, or even hugging them drops the motivation of children in their relation to education.

> My motivation dropped; I couldn't see my friends. Normally, we used to play games during breaks. But now, when you go to the toilet and drink water in between lessons, the break is already over. So there isn't much. We were able to play games together before, right now, for example, there is nothing we can do in between. We are so bored… Selen-f/mid/6th G

> For example, we are at home during these breaks. We were alone, don't have a friend with us, and we were able to play during breaks, that's how it was in face-to-face training. We were able to play various games with a lot of friends. In other words, it is not as nice as seeing face-to-face, after all, you see face-to-face. Because sometimes it gets stuck in online education. You can't even understand what he's saying or doing. That's why it's not as nice as face-to-face training Maya-f/high/7th

> My favorite thing at school is to go out to the garden and talk to my friends. Sometimes we mail each other to see how we are doing, but, it is not like at school. Even though we are very close, he is a classmate of mine, and even if he is in my opposite building, we could not be close like in those days. Beste-f/mid/6th G

> I can't see my friends, of course, I'm sad because I was having fun with them. Now I only can see them on the internet, so I can't have fun like that. Besides, we can't meet and joke on the internet like before… Defne-f/mid/6th G

Close interaction with their peers at school meant solidarity, "supporting each other through their school work, playing games, and making jokes" which were also being missed during the pandemic.

> In other words, it is better when we sit side by side with our friends; for example, we were sharing something in class that we could not do. Now we cannot do such a thing. We try to do it with our own efforts when we are at home. Well, if we were at school, we could do something better by sharing with each other with our friends. Eda-f/mid/6th G
>
> We are not as close as we used to be. Just like that, we can talk from computer to computer, from phone to phone, we only study, but when we are at school, we can play games when a lesson is over, or we joke or tell each other what we went through, we were laughing. Defne-f/mid/6th G
>
> It feels really bad because I can't hug them,… we used to joke, but it doesn't work like that right now, if we joke during class, the teacher gets angry and we can't meet at break anyway Ayşe-f/mid/7th G

As the narratives of children reveal, school as a physical space of education plays an important role in children's interaction with their peers, having a joyful time during the day and being able to create emotional ties with their friends.

Conclusion

As we explore in this article, children's narratives of the pandemic disclose a peculiar experience of interrupted interaction with the school as a relational space. We first tackled the inequalities in accessing this new educational space. In Turkey, the long duration of school closures due to strict containment measures has exposed childhood vulnerabilities concerning technological inequalities (lack of technological devices, internet access) and inadequate home conditions. Our research demonstrates that existing socioeconomic inequalities are exacerbated during the pandemic as children's vulnerabilities have increased with a lack of access to technological means and educational material. The conditions of the home environment as determinants of children's well-being defined the boundaries of children's access to education. As narratives of children demonstrated, the care responsibilities of girls had affected their access to online education within the restricted space of a home.

While children extensively conveyed the adverse effects of the pandemic, one of the striking findings of our research is the reaffirmation of the significance of school as a relational space for children. Although many children expressed their happiness about school closures, in the beginning, the long duration of school closures had been expressed as a negative experience and boredom for children. The interrupted interaction with the school demonstrated that the school, with its relational character, provided children with the free space for interactive learning, socialization with their peers, and solidaristic relations with their teachers. The meaning that children attributed to school as a relational space are being manifested even more strongly during the pandemic when such space is inaccessible. Such findings incite childhood scholars to rethink that school is an indispensable part of an ecosystem where children negotiate and construct their well-being within its relational boundaries. Yet, one needs to see how school interacts with other childhood spaces like home, neighborhood, and others. Children's vulnerabilities emerge as a result of the available resources and solidaristic networks in such spaces. As our research demonstrates, the pandemic also increased the vulnerabilities of children's caretakers (parents, teachers, and others). Any policy towards child well-being should consider the increased vulnerabilities of children's intergenerational relations. As this research has put effort into understanding the scale of vulnerabilities at the structural and individual levels, it would contribute to building the links between child well-being and childhood inequalities.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest The authors declare no competing interests.

References

Akkan, B., Müderrisoglu, S., Uyan-Semerci, P., & Erdogan, E. (2019). How do children contextualize their well-being? Methodological insights from a neighborhood based qualitative study in Istanbul. *Child Indicators Research, 12*(2), 443–460.

Akkan, B., Müderrisoğlu, S., Uyan-Semerci, P., & Erdoğan, E. (2021). Does socioeconomic status matter? Exploring commonalities and differences in the construction of subjective well-being of children in the relational spaces of home and school in Istanbul. In T. Fattore, S. Fegter, & C. Hunner-Kreisel (Eds.), *Children's Concepts of Well-being: Challenges in international comparative qualitative research*. Springer https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030671662

Almeida, M., Challa, M., Ribeiro, M., Harrison, A. M., & Castro, M. C. (2022). Editorial perspective: The mental health impact of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 63*, 608–612. https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.13535

Andresen, S. (2014). Childhood vulnerability: Systematic, structural, and individual dimensions. *Child Indicators Research, 7*, 699–713. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9248-4

Andrew, A., Cattan, S., Costa Dias, M., Farquharson, C., Kraftman, L., Krutikova, S., et al. (2020). Inequalities in children's experiences of home learning during the COVID-19 lockdown in England. *Fiscal Studies, 41*(3), 653–683. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-5890.12240

Armitage, R., & Nellums, L. B. (2020). Considering inequalities in the school closure response to COVID-19. *The Lancet Global Health, 8*(5), e644. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(20)30116-9

Bacher-Hicks, A., Goodman, J., & Mulhern, C. (2021). Inequality in household adaptation to schooling shocks: Covid-induced online learning engagement in real time. *Journal of Public Economics, 193*, 104345. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104345

Bayrakdar, S., & Guveli, A. (2020). *Inequalities in home learning and schools' provision of distance teaching during school closure of COVID-19 lockdown in the UK*. ISER Working Paper Series.

Becker, S. P., Breaux, R., Cusick, C. N., Dvorsky, M. R., Marsh, N. P., Sciberras, E., & Langberg, J. M. (2020). Remote learning during COVID-19: Examining school practices, service continuation, and difficulties for adolescents with and without attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 67*(6), 769–777. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.09.002

Borgers, N., De Leeuw, E., & Hox, J. (2000). Children as respondents in survey research: Cognitive development and response quality 1. *Bulletin of Sociological Methodology, 66*(1), 60–75.

Campbell, S., Cicero Oneto, C., Saini, M. P. S., et al. (2021). Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children: An ethical analysis with a global-child lens. *Global Studies of Childhood, 11*(1), 105–114. https://doi.org/10.1177/2043610620976142

Cordini, M., & De Angelis, G. (2021). Families between care, education and work: The effects of the pandemic on educational inequalities in Italy and Milan. *European Journal of Education, 56*, 578–594.

Cowie, H., & Myers, C. A. (2021). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health and well-being of children and young people. *Children & Society, 35*(1), 62–74. https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12430

Del Bono, E., Fumagalli, L., Holford, A., & Rabe, B. (2021). *Coping with school closures: Changes in home-schooling during COVID-19*. Institute for Economic and Social Research Report.

Eastwood, J. D., Frischen, A., Fenske, M. J., & Smilek, D. (2012). The unengaged mind: Defining boredom in terms of attention. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 7*(5), 482–495.

Fattore, T., Fegter, S., & Hunner-Kreisel, C. (2019). Children's understandings of well-being in global and local contexts: Theoretical and methodological considerations for a multinational qualitative study. *Child Indicators Research, 12*(2), 385–407. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-018-9594-8

Fore, H. H., Dongyu, Q., Beasley, D., et al. (2020). Child malnutrition and COVID-19: The time to act is now. *The Lancet, 396*(10250), 517–518. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31648-2

Groarke, J. M., Berry, E., Graham-Wisener, L., McKenna-Plumley, P. E., McGlinchey, E., & Armour, C. (2020). Loneliness in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic: Cross-sectional results from the COVID-19 Psychological Wellbeing Study. *PloS one, 15*(9), e0239698. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239698

Herrenkohl, T. I., Scott, D., Higgins, D. J., Klika, J. B., & Lonne, B. (2021). How COVID-19 is placing vulnerable children at risk and why we need a different approach to child welfare. *Child Maltreatment, 26*(1), 9–16. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077559520963916

Huebener, M., Waights, S., Spiess, C. K., Siegel, N. A., & Wagner, G. G. (2021). Parental well-being in times of Covid-19 in Germany. *Review of Economics of the Household, 19*(1), 91–122. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11150-020-09529-4

Imran, N., Zeshan, M., & Pervaiz, Z. (2020). Mental health considerations for children & adolescents in COVID-19 Pandemic. *Pakistan journal of medical sciences, 36*(COVID19-S4), 67–72. https://doi.org/10.12669/pjms.36.COVID19-S4.2759

Irwin, L. G., & Johnson, J. (2005). Interviewing young children: Explicating our practices and dilemmas. *Qualitative health research, 15*(6), 821–831.

James, N., & Busher, H. (2006). Credibility, authenticity and voice: Dilemmas in online interviewing. *Qualitative research, 6*(3), 403–420.

Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R. L., & Taghipour, A. (2014). Skype interviewing: The new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being, 9*(1), 241–252.

Lehmann, J., Lechner, V. M., & Scheithauer, H. (2022). School closures during the COVID-19 pandemic: psychosocial outcomes in children - A systematic review. *International Journal of Developmental Science, 15*(3-4), 85–111.

Mitra, R., Waygood, E. O. D., & Fullan, J. (2021). Subjective well-being of Canadian children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic: The role of the social and physical environment and healthy movement behaviours. *Preventive Medicine Reports, 23*, 101404. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2021.101404

Norman, H., Adnan, N. H., Nordin, N., Ally, M., & Tsinakos, A. (2022). The educational digital divide for vulnerable students in the pandemic: Towards the New Agenda 2030. *Sustainability, 14*(16), 103–132. https://doi.org/10.3390/su141610332

OECD. (2019). *Changing the Odds for Vulnerable Children: Building Opportunities and Resilience*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/a2e8796c-en

Ohlmeier, S., Finkielsztein, M., & Pfaff, H. (2020). Why we are bored: Towards a sociological approach to boredom. *Sociological Spectrum, 40*(3), 208–225.

Panda, P. K., Gupta, J., Chowdhury, S. R., Kumar, R., Meena, A. K., Madaan, P., et al. (2021). Psychological and behavioral impact of lockdown and quarantine measures for COVID-19 pandemic on children, adolescents and caregivers: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of tropical pediatrics, 67*(1), fmaa122.

Reimers, F. M. (2021). *Primary and Secondary Education During Covid-19: Disruptions to Educational Opportunity During a Pandemic*. Springer.

Richardson, D., Carraro, A., Cebotari, V., Gromada, A., & Rees, G. (2020). *Supporting families and children beyond COVID-19: Social protection in high-income countries*. UNICEF Office of Research–Innocenti.

Saarijärvi, M., & Bratt, E. L. (2021). When face-to-face interviews are not possible: Tips and tricks for video, telephone, online chat, and email interviews in qualitative research.

Samji, H., Wu, J., Ladak, A., Vossen, C., Stewart, E., Dove, N., Long, D., & Snell, G. (2022). Review: Mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and youth – A systematic review. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 27*(173), 189. https://doi.org/10.1111/camh.12501

Spruyt, B., Vandenbossche, L., Keppens, G., Siongers, J., & Van Droogenbroeck, F. (2018). Social differences in leisure boredom and its consequences for life satisfaction among young people. *Child Indicators Research, 11*(1), 225–243.

Stoecklin, D., Gervais, C., Kutsar, D., et al. (2021). Lockdown and children's well-being: Experiences of children in Switzerland, Canada and Estonia. *Childhood Vulnerability Journal, 3*(1), 41–59. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41255-021-00015-2

Thakur, K., Kumar, N., & Sharma, N. (2020). Effect of the pandemic and lockdown on mental health of children. *The Indian Journal of Pediatrics, 87*(7), 552–552. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12098-020-03308-w

UNESCO. (2020). Survey on National Education Responses to COVID-19 School Closures. In *First Round of Data Collection*. UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Uyan-Semerci, P., Müderrisoğlu, S., Karatay, A., Ekim Akkan, B., Kılıç, Z., Oy, B., & Uran, Ş. (2012). *Eşitsiz bir toplumda çocukluk: çocuğun" iyi olma hali" ni anlamak: İstanbul örneği*. İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları.ç.

Whitley, J., Beauchamp, M. H., & Brown, C. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on the learning and achievement of vulnerable Canadian children and youth. *Facets, 6*(1), 1693–1713.

Zierer, K. (2021). Effects of pandemic-related school closures on pupils' performance and learning in selected countries: A rapid review. *Education Sciences, 11*(6), 252. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11060252

Bol, T. (2020). Inequality in homeschooling during the Corona crisis in the Netherlands. First results from the LISS Panel. Center for Open Science.

Chzhen, Y., Symonds, J., Devine, D., Mikolai, J., Harkness, S., Sloan, S., & Martinez Sainz, G. (2022). Learning in a pandemic: Primary school children's emotional engagement with remote schooling during the spring 2020 COVID-19 lockdown in Ireland. *Child Indicators Research, 1-22*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-022-09922-8

Dietrich, H., Patzina, A., & Lerche, A. (2021). Social inequality in the homeschooling efforts of German high school students during a school closing period. *European Societies*, 1–22.

ERG (2021) Eğitim İzleme Raporu 2021: Öğrenciler ve Eğitime Erişim

James, A., & Prout, A. (1997). Re-presenting childhood: Time and transition in the study of childhood. Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood, 230-250.

Lee, J. (2020). Mental health effects of school closures during COVID-19. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health.* https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-4642(20)30109-7

OECD. (2021). Education at a Glance 2021: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/b35a14e5-en.

Patrick, S. W., Henkhaus, L. E., Zickafoose, J. S., Lovell, K., Halvorson, A., Loch, S., Letterie, M., & Davis, M. M. (2020). Well-being of parents and children during the COVID-19 pandemic: A national survey. *Pediatrics, 146*(4). https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-016824

Platt, L. (2016). Conducting qualitative and quantitative research with children of different ages. 29 http://globalkidsonline.net/tools/guides/youngchildren/

Ravens-Sieberer, U., Kaman, A., Erhart, M., Devine, J., Schlack, R., & Otto, C. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on quality of life and mental health in children and adolescents in Germany. *European child & adolescent psychiatry*, 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-021-01726-5

Theberath, M., Bauer, D., Chen, W., et al. (2022). Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health of children and adolescents: A systematic review of survey studies. *SAGE open medicine.* https://doi.org/10.1177/20503121221086712

United Nation. (2020). Rights of children in the time of COVID-19: A policy brief. Retrieved July, 2020, from https://www.haqcrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/rights-of-children-in-times-of-covid-19.pdf

Authors and Affiliations

Serra Müderrisoğlu[1] · Başak Akkan[2] · Pınar Uyan Semerci[2] · Emre Erdoğan[2]

[1] Boğaziçi University Psychology Department, Istanbul, Turkey

[2] İstanbul Bilgi University International Relations Department, Istanbul, Turkey