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A Study into Learning Losses of Preschool Children in Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: The purpose of the current study was to determine the learning losses at preschool children in Covid-19 pandemic period. For that reason, a case study, a qualitative research method, comprised the model of the study. The working group of the study was made up of 19 preschool teachers determined by means of a face-to-face interview or telephone talk. The interviews were realized with the teachers using an interview form with semi-structured questions either face-to-face or by telephone. As a result of the content analysis of the findings obtained, it was found that children mostly experienced psycho-motor, social-emotional and linguistic losses. The children having learning losses the most were determined as the ones whose developments were not followed by their parents, experiencing insufficiencies in reaching technological devices, foreign students and those with a special need. It was found that teachers firstly benefited from such activities as game, mathematics and art in order to stop learning losses. To prevent learning losses, it is recommended that low-income households receive support in terms of providing tablets, internet access, etc. They should also be trained in using platforms such as Zoom, EBA, etc., and a curriculum for distance education should be developed.

Keywords: Preschool education, Covid-19 pandemic, online education, learning loss.

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Introduction

It is of necessity that educational activities are carried out in a program in order to reach the desired target in education. However, it is likely to suspend education under some compulsory conditions. One of them is the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic led to significant problems in education systems all over the world. This case brought about some problems in terms of education.

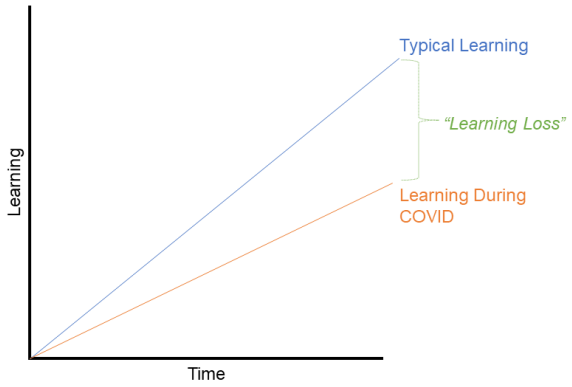
With the announcement of the Covid-19 outbreak by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Ministry of Health, 2021), the educationallives of students around the globe were affected by the pandemic (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). Every country tried to find a solution for this case within the bounds of its own possibilities. As the primary precaution in Turkey, school closure was applied for two weeks from March 16 onwards (Ministry of National Education, [MoNE], 2020a) and following that, distance education was initiated at every stage of education (MoNE, 2020b). By making some amendments in the regulations of MoNE preschool education and primary education institutions, necessary precautions were taken regarding the fact that education could be stopped temporarily because of such reasons as diseases / pandemics (Article 7), distance education could be made in cases of school closures and some makeup studies could be carried out regarding the subjects of teaching programs that cannot be taught through face-to-face education and the attainment of outcomes regarding them (Article 2) (MoNE, 2020c). In this period of being away from school, some learning losses appeared in children and face-to-face makeup education was initiated to prevent them (MoNE, 2020d). In the new academic year of 2020-2021, face-to-face education started with non-contact games at schools (MoNE, 2020e, MoNE, 2020f). Live courses started on EBA which is an internet portal and mobile application to support the education of preschool children. Besides that, television broadcasting was made at certain times on certain days on the TRT EBA Kindergarten channel by the Turkish Radio and Television Agency (TRT) (Anatolian Agency [AA], 2020). At certain periods of this new academic year, face-to-face education was halted, and distance education was initiated (MoNE, 2020g; MoNE, 2021a; AA, 2021) and hybrid (blended) education was applied for a certain time (MoNE, 2021b). In this process where education was carried on at intervals, it is believed that some learning losses appeared in preschool children who were just encountered with school in all other children.

Learning Loss

Pier et al., (2021) defined "learning loss" by linking it to time as a dramatic drop in the information and skills of students (Figure 1.). Depending on this definition, it is likely to enlarge it to include the suspension of the learning process, the recession of information, outcomes and skills learned because of such reasons as changes in the motivation and psychological conditions of children and not being able to learn what would be learned within the scope of the curriculum.

Figure 1.

Relationship Between Covid 19 Period and Learning Loss (Pier et al., 2021)



There are some studies in the related literature indicating that the Covid-19 period led to learning losses for students. It was pointed out in their study by Çelik and Kardaş İşler (2020) depending on teacher views that children with special needs having a language and speaking problem became introverted during the pandemic and Colvin, Reesman and Glen, (2021), on the other hand, saw a decrease in the learning outcomes of children with special needs. Pier et al., (2021) investigated how the learning rates of almost 100.000 students in 7 groups between 4th and 10th grades in California, the United States of America differed between the period starting from 2019 autumn to 2020-21 winter and the one before Covid-19 period in the courses of mathematics and English by using their mid-term scores and they determined learning losses in all groups. Engzell et al., (2021) investigated the effect of an eight-week suspension of education, although relatively short, in the quarantine period on the school performance of 350.000 primary school students and found a learning loss of almost 3% or 0.08 standard deviation compared to the last three years. In addition, they pointed out that the learning losses of the students with the parents of a low-level education were higher and that they made very little or no progress through distance education. Kaffenberger (2021) indicated that as the suspension in education expanded longer and the rates of remaining behind the curriculum or program increased, so did learning losses and complementary education became essential for the compensation of learning losses. In this process, it was found that the children of the parents allocating time to the child with high and digital literacy had less learning losses (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020; Sezgin et al., 2020). Baz (2021) explained that the suspension period has a negative effect on children in social and cognitive terms and leads to learning losses. Upon the evaluation of these studies and their conclusions, it is likely to be seen that having certain intervals in educational activities in Covid-19 pandemic process played a determinant role in learning losses.

Education was suspended at all stages at certain intervals during the pandemic. Distance education was initiated in Turkey in nursery schools first and then in kindergartens at certain periods in the academic year of 2020-2021. In this process, educators and parents felt anxious about the possibility that learning losses would be permanent for children who were deprived of peer learning and face-to-face education.

In the literature; it was found that the breaks of semester and summer times led to learning losses (Cooper, 2003; Elihami, 2021; Kuhfeld, 2019; McEachin & Atteberry, 2017; Menard & Wilson, 2014; Sezgin et al., 2020; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2017; Turner, Hughes & Presland, 2020; Wilson, 2014), most of the studies regarding the relation between Covid-19 period and learning loss were in foreign literature (Barnett & Jung, 2021; Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020; Colvin et al., 2021; Dorn et al., 2020; Engzell et al., 2021; Gonzales et al., 2022; Kaffenberger, 2021; Pier et al., 2021; Pisano et al., 2020; Tout, 2021) there is a very limited number of studies in the domestic literature (Çelik & Kardaş İşler, 2020; Sezgin et al., 2020) and into distance education with preschool children (Yıldırım, 2021) and that there is no study directly into learning loss. It is believed that knowing the effect of Covid-19 pandemic process on the learning losses of preschool education will make a significant contribution to the related literature.

Based on all of these; The question of "What are the learning losses of preschool children during the Covid-19 pandemic period?" was determined as the problem of the research.

In line with the general problem of the research, answers were sought for the following subproblems:

- What are the development fields, concepts, and skills where learning losses are encountered the most?
- What are the types of activities you do to overcome learning losses?
- Who are the children experiencing learning losses the most?
- What are the ways/strategies you do to use to keep learning losses to a minimum?
- What are your recommendations to to keep learning losses to a minimum?

Depending on the results, the methods, and techniques to be used to decrease learning losses at preschool-agedchildren to a minimum level and the views of the participants about the response and makeup education programs with alternative strategies likely to be developed were given places.

Method

Research Model

The current study was planned with a preference for case studies, which is one of the qualitative research methods. A Case study is a methodological approach that allows one to investigate and define one or more limited case with the benefit of qualitative

data collection tools (observation, interview, document etc.) (Creswell, 2013; Merria, 2013).

Working group

In determining the participants of the research, snowball sampling, a sampling technique of purposeful sampling in nonprobability sampling strategies, was used. Snowball sampling starts by reaching the first individual among the others with whom the study will be carried out. After the interview with the first participant, other individuals, and individuals who were recommended by the first one, are interviewed and the research is carried out with the individuals recommended by them (Şahin, 2014). When the data obtained from the participants reaches the saturation point, the data collection stage is over (Kerlinger & Lee, 1999). In the current study, the persons who were thought to have the most information were focused on the case investigated with the selection of snowball sampling to reach the richest data (Creswell, 2013; Flick, 2014).

The working group for the research was made up of preschool teachers working actively at a kindergarten in the academic year 2020-2021. The data was collected through face-to-face and telephone interviews using semi-structured interview questions developed by the researchers. The demographic information regarding the participants is given in the table below.

Table 1.

Demographic Features of the Teachers

Codes	Gender	City	Age	Occupational Seniority	Age Group Worked	Number of Children in Class
T1	F	İzmir	34	8	5-6	12
T2	F	Ankara	33	8	5-6	11
T3	F	Ankara	29	6	5-6	9
T4	F	Rize	29	7	5	13
T5	F	Kütahya	34	12	5-6	14
T6	F	Mersin	35	12	5-6	15
T7	F	Antalya	32	12	5-6	12
T8	F	Mersin	35	12	5-6	10
T9	F	Van	29	7	4-5	5
T10	F	Bitlis	29	4	4-5	17

T11	F	Diyarbakır	29	5	5-6	15
T12	F	Adıyaman	27	4	5-6	17
T13	M	Mardin	29	3	5-6	27
T14	F	Mersin	37	13	5-6	14
T15	M	Eskişehir	31	6	4-5	11
T16	F	Ankara	34	9	5-6	11
T17	F	Ankara	30	5	5-6	9
T18	F	Ankara	49	24	5-6	10
T19	F	Hatay	29	6	5	4

As is given in Table 1, 89.5% of the preschool teachers participating in the study werewomen with an average age of 32.3 and an average professional seniority of 8.5. It was also found that 84.2% of the preschool teachers worked with the children in the 5-6 age group, the average child in the class was 12.4 and the preschool teachers participated in the study from 13 different cities.

Data Collection Tool

In order to determine the views of preschool teachers over the learning losses of preschool children in the Covid–19 pandemic, a "Form for Determining Learning Losses of Preschool Children" was prepared. In the preparation of interview questions, national and international literature was reviewed and questions regarding learning losses in the Covid-19 pandemic were prepared. The form prepared by the researchers was made up of two parts. The First part comprised the gender of preschool teachers, the city in which they worked, their professional experience, and the age and number of children in their classes. The items in the second part comprised the observed learning losses of the preschool children of the teachers, the activity types they applied to eliminate the learning losses, the development fields where learning losses were encountered the most, concepts and skills, children having learning losses the most, the ways/strategies mostly applied to reduce learning losses to a minimum level and the recommendations given to reduce learning losses to a minimum level.

Data Collection

In order to determine the learning losses of preschool-agedchildren, a semi-structured *"Form of Determining the Learning Losses of Preschool Children"* with five questions was developed by the researchers. The developed form was examined by three experts in preschool education and finalized. By means of this form, data was collected from 19 preschool teachers. The interviews were conducted by telephone. Firstly, teachers were informed about the content of the study, then their consents were taken verbally, and

the semi-structured interview questions were asked. With the permission of the teachers, the interviews were recorded, and the interview lasted almost 30 minutes.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was made with the data obtained through interviews. Content analysis comprises the formation of themes by giving codes to the data obtained and the evaluation of the data in this sense (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The data obtained was read by two researchers three times and the codes were written across the expressions by marking the meaningful parts. Following that, the repeating codes were examined with an inductive approach and the themes were formed. In this way, the reliability of the data obtained was studied with the reliability calculation formula by Miles and Huberman (1994) (Reliability = consensus /consensus+disagreement). Miles and Huberman (1994) regard reliability values of 70% and over as reliable. The reliability value in this study was found to be 94%.

Ethics

In this study, all the rules specified to be followed within the scope of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were complied with. None of the actions specified under the title "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics", which is the second part of the directive, have been taken.

Before starting the study, necessary consent was obtained from Kütahya Dumlupınar University (Meating Date: 16.06.2021, Meeting No: 2021/04).

Findings

1. The fields of development where learning losses were encountered the most in the process of distance education, concepts, and skills

Regarding psycho-motor development, teachers pointed out that children remained inactive in this process, accordingly, putting on weight and they were not able to develop their big muscle motor movements (T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"I did not observe anything regarding gross and fine motors. I always assigned homework. We then tried to develop small muscle motor skills through materials and experiments. Big muscle motor skills remained uncompleted. Parents told us that their children put on weight but did not act too much at home." (T18)

"Children staying away from the materials used to make big muscles active in the playground of the school were not normally able to develop their big muscle motor skills since they always stayed at home. Even though we used small muscle motor skills in our art studies, unfortunately, they fell behind as we had less weekly time compared to that of face-to-face periods" (T19).

Regarding the social-emotional development field, teachers pointed out that children stayed away from their friends for the sake of the rule of distance (T3, T5, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"They were not able to make friends, one was not able to know another. If two children had known each other, they played together and did not play with others" (T5).

"Even when they came together in face-to-face education, we warned them not to play with the same toys. We were telling them to help each other and share. Children could not break some ties for the sake of keeping a safe distance. It is likely to say the pandemic led to a social disconnection in this sense" (T18).

With regard to the field of language development, teachers indicated that children had difficulties expressing themselves so they abstained. They also pointed out that they couldn't give more space for Turkish language activities because of the limited time of the lessons (T1, T3, T4, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"It was difficult to carry out and maintain Turkish language activities on screen. If I taught more tongue twisters, say 60, in a normal period, I would be able to teach only 20-25 tongue twisters and finger games this year. When children spoke at the same time, they could miss something" (T18).

"Turkish language activities remained limited due to time. In particular, I believe that they fell behind in terms of learning new vocabulary, using it in a sentence, and early literacy skills" (T19).

With regard to self-care skills, teachers expressed children exhibited suitable behaviours for only hygiene rules but y fell behind in self-care skills (T4, T6, T7, T8, T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T19).

"They were deprived of peer education, finishing the dish, waiting for friends, and following them in terms of nutrition" (T4).

"When they arrived in the class, they just wanted to use disinfectant because of the pandemic. Besides that, I did not observe that they exhibited such behaviours as dressing, tying their shoelaces etc." (T14).

Concerning preparation skills for primary education, teachers pointed out that children attained such behaviours as sitting on their desks, waiting in the queue, holding pencils etc. a little late or did not attain them (T1, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8, T11, T12, T13, T15, T16, T19).

"Even though we made our education a distance education, they were not able to learn how to behave at school, how to sit on a desk or how to leave it" (T3).

"Although they had learned how to hold a pencil at the end of the 1st semester last year, they just learned to do it at the end of this year" (T16).

Regarding the cognitive development field, teachers mentioned that they encountered lack of attention and experiencing forgetfulness at such concepts as colour, shapes, numbers etc. in this period (T2, T4, T6, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T15, T16, T18).

"I believe that distance education brought about a lack of attention amongchildren. It is because children are puzzled about what to focus on the computer screen" (T10).

"Forgetting geometric shapes, numbers etc. is frequently experienced in distance education…" (T15).

Regarding peer relations, teachers indicated that children were not able to socialize with their peers since the time they came together was limited (T3, T4, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T16, T19).

"I reminded children to say hello when they saw each other on the screen. It was always me setting the games. Children exhibited very timid and shy behaviours in distance education" (T3).

"They socialized less. Their screen interactions were rather limited since they saw their friendsfor limited times" (T16).

With regard to self-regulation skills, teachers pointed out that children had losses depending on the decrease in the number of stimulants they met as they were not at school (T5, T7, T9, T12, T13, T14, T15, T19).

"Stability should be obtained through self-regulation skills. I could just observe adaptation in those attending classes" (T12).

"Lack of school environment decreased the number of stimulants and naturally experience at child. For that reason, there must have been different developments or losses among children concerning self-regulation skills at home" (T19).

Teachers pointed out that the concepts where learning losses were encountered the most were numbers, colours, right and left directions, and the processes of addition and subtraction in mathematics (T2, T10, T11, T13, T16, T18).

"1 or 2 children had difficulties recognizing numbers. We revised them more, but I do not know how successful it was. Addition and subtraction were also like this" (T2).

"We would have difficulties with the concepts of right and left every year but it was more difficult this year" (T10).

"They forgot counting skills, geometrical shapes, colours and all the vocabulary had taught" (T11).

There were teachers explaining that they did not have enough impressions about which fields or concepts and skills learning losses were experienced the most (T6, T7).

"Children go out to drink water but do not come back. Later, their sister comes back, and they prevent classes. Clearly, I do not know completely what and to what extent they learned since we did not spend the year touching them and seeing what they did" (T6).

"We couldn't make a complete evaluation as the parents involved in the classes. You ask a question to the child, but the parent answers it behind. Therefore, I cannot answer it clearly" (T7).

There were teachers who thought that there was no learning loss (T8).

"Children had already known the concepts. We studied for hours. We did not have much learning loss …" (T8).

2. Children having learning losses the most

Children having the greatest learning losses are the children whose development is not followed by their parents, who are not given enough stimulants, who do not fulfill the assignments given by the teacher and the children of families where the regular course book is not followed (T2, T5, T6, T7, T10, T13, T18, T19).

"A child of mine whose parent worked at a hospital never participated in the classes, I could not have any feedback. I think learning losses were totally because of parent indifference" (T5).

"I observed success at children at average level or below average level when parents were interested, but when they weree not interested, I had problems with the children of the families who did not make them do what I sent" (T18).

Teachers indicated that children having the most learning losses in the second place were the children of families with low-economic status, the families having a limited number of TVs, tablets, telephones etc., or the ones who could not participate in the classes at all or at irregular intervals because of a lack of internet infrastructure in their region (T3, T9, T10, T11, T12, T,15, T19).

"There was no internet infrastructure. Even though we tried to arrange the time of the classes to be suitable for everybody, we did not have full participation. The internet supplied by the state was not enough for the parents" (T15).

"Most of the ones having learning losses felt behind since they had financial impossibilities" (T19).

It was found that one of the children having the most learning losses was the student of mainstreaming (T3, T4, T8, T16, T19).

"One of my students with a special need had a language and speaking retard at the minimum level. As he had an internet access problem, he couldn't join the courses. I wanted his father to carry on daily education flows" (T3).

"My mainstreaming student had some difficulties in expressing himself, remembering what he had learned and internalising on the screen" (T16).

Refugee children were another group with the greatest learning losses. (T1, T8, T14, T17, T19).

"These insufficiencies were encountered most often in Syrian and other foreign children. Language education, Turkish, and understanding were not enough so they had difficulties in other fields as well" (T1).

"Even though I told the mother of the Syrian child how to use zoom program in detail, he could only join the course once and did not do it again" (T14).

When the courses of the elderly children of the parents and those of the preschool-agedchildren were taken at the same time, it was found that they allowed their elderly children to use a limited number of technological devices (T12, T13, T15).

"If a child has both an elder brother and an elder sister, parents care for them more. They wouldn't join the courses saying that you send us activities and we do them at home" (T12).

"If parents have children at a primary or secondary school, they would rather these children use mobile phones" (T13).

It is believed that the only child and younger children suffered learning losses in the process of distance education as well. (T11, T17, T18).

"I do not think that the children in the age group of 4 learned anything. If we were in face-to-face education, children would normally allow younger children to join in their games but younger children stayed alone in distance education" (T11).

"Only children experienced this process through such devices as TV, tablet etc. Since there were no children around, they were not able to interact" (T17).

3. The activity types used to eliminate learning losses

The activity types that teachers used most to eliminate learning losses were made up of various game activities such as individual, group, dynamic and virtual ones (T2, T3, T6, T8, T12, T14, T16, T17, T18).

"Normally I applied for the program as an online one. I tried to include games where children could ask questions to each other and interact with each other" (3).

"We mostly benefited from game activities. We mostly played games in order to increase the interaction of children with each other. We also included the interactive game on the computer" (T16).

It was found that teachers applied mathematical activities in the second place (T5, T6, T8, T10, T15, T17, T18).

"We made a great many mathematical activities, addition, subtraction, whatever you think." (T5).

"I would tell students to bring tangerines from the kitchen into our mathematic activity. I would ask them how many parts there were inside it and they would count one by one. Besides that, we did coding activities. I handed out photocopies. We studied the directions of bottom, top, left, and right. I would ask them to bring cloth pegs. I made them listen to music and dance while counting the cloth pegs. We studied hours with rhythm bars." (T9).

It was also found in this process that teachers benefited from art and drama activities but that some teachers sent homework to parents over the WhatsApp program since the time was limited (T2, T6, T7, T9, T11, T17, T18).

"We tried to do activities regarding all fields in the courses. I sent drama and art studies through the WhatsApp program and was interested in their feedback one by one" (T9).

"Since they are in front of the screen, even the good students can be distracted cognitively. For that reason, they were interested in drama and game activities. So, we did a great many drama activities" (T18).

It was found that teachers used Web 2.0 tools and kept up with digitalization through such applications as coding, interactive games, and virtual applications in order to eliminate learning losses (T1, T4, T8, T13, T16, T19).

In order to eliminate learning losses during the pandemic, I used activities dealing with cognitive development. I also benefited from virtual applications, robotic coding. I made the students do paintings on the screen with their fingers by giving them digital painting activities (T1).

"I tried to include all activities. In addition, I sent videos and science experiments to the parents. I made them do activities such as wheel games andpuzzle, benefiting from the devices like Web 2.0 on their computer. I realized such studies as counting numbers by using these devices" (T4).

It was found that teachers used Turkish language activities in order to prevent learning losses (T5, T6, T11, T12, T14).

"We mostly used Turkish and mathematical activities academically. We made puppets and told them stories. We did not do more in the field of psycho-motor" (T10).

"We gave to much place to language activities, stories and music. I had access to games, stories etc. that are likely to be used online by means of a Telegram group. A great many

stories were shared in theTelegram group. We shared them with the children in the group. They always asked when to take courses. We spent enjoyable time" (T14).

It was also found that teachers were inclined to music activities besides other activities (T2, T6, T8, T14, T18).

"We are inclined to group games, drama and music activities where they can express themselves" (T2).

"We gave places to songs, music and puppets" (T18).

It was determined that teachers benefited from science activities as well (T4, T7, T13, T15).

"Science activities attracted children. So, we mostly used science experiments" (T7).

"We would watch science experiments in the courses. I would show them. It was just me doing them because of a material shortage" (T13).

4. The methods applied to minimize learning losses

In order to prevent all learning losses, teachers indicated that they did some activities to communicate and collaborate with parents (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"We made use of EBA. I sent the study pages. Wetook courses on WhatsApp and Zoom. Communication with parents was good but I believe that I was not able to pay full attention since the number of children per household was high" (T11).

"I forced children to be involved in the course. Once I did my course at 11 p.m. when the father arrived home by calling him. I always sent a text message to my parents" (T13).

The majority of the teachers pointed out that they sent parents study pages for their children or left photocopies of the study pages at school for them to collect (T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T17, T18, T19).

"We sent study pages to parents. I sent the WhatsApp group a great many studies, writings and pictures varying from how to hold a pencil to preparation for primary school" (T16).

"We photocopied documents and left them at school for parents. We did the courses on Zoom. We set up a WhatsApp group and shared something" (T19).

Most of the teachers expressed that they made use of EBA in their courses or led parents to EBA (T2, T3, T6, T7, T8, T9, T11, T12, T15, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"We did a full course for 40 minutes. We did 3 activities every day. We made use of EBA. I would send them activities every day and they would send their assignments back. We

made artificial snow, puppets, and a winter corner together. They took pictures and sent them to me, and I uploaded them to EBA" (T8).

"There was in-service training and I made use of EBA. In general, we did video chats on WhatsApp. We used Zoom. I gave them study pages. I had a set of activities and I sent photocopies of them" (T12).

There were teachers who couldn't use EBA because it was too busy (T4, T5, T10, T13).

"EBA was too busy, and the system would generally drop us out" (T4).

"I was not able to use EBA in online courses and the children couldn't have access to it as it was too busy" (T5).

Teachers expressed that they shared articles with parents to read, and videos, activities etc. with children (T1, T3, T6, T7, T8, T9, T12, T16, T17, T18, T19).

"In order to reduce learning losses, I insisted that children should carry on their education at home. I tried to eliminate learning losses by sending some activities which were used in face-to-face or online courses and were interesting to children to their parents" (T1).

"Parents used the program 'MinikTema' (Mini Theme) at home as well" (T15).

Some of the teachers pointed out that they assigned homework to children (T3, T6, T8, T10, T12, T15, T17).

"I assigned homework from our course book. I handed out photocopies. I enclosed some activities through EBA. I sent them art activities over WhatsApp" (T6).

"I assigned homework for children. I asked parents to send me videos" (T17).

Besides that, some teachers indicated that they worked in coordination with the guidance service and that they also guided children to TRT Anaokulu (Kindergarten) (T2) and held meetings with parents (T3).

"We were always in cooperation with the parents, we telephoned each other. We multiplied the study pages in our plan every fifteen days and sent them to the parents. We worked in coordination with children and parents and with the guidance service 3 or 4 days a week. We guided children to EBA and TRT Anaokulu" (T2).

"I shared the daily education flow with the parents over WhatsApp. I assigned homework over EBA. I sent them videos and activities. I also assigned homework in our course books. I held an online meeting with the parents twice (T3).

5. Recommendations to minimize learning losses

Teachers pointed out that children needed technological support to eliminate economic insufficiencies, have digital material support and have improved internet infrastructure in this period (T2, T3, T6, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T15, T17, T19).

"Low-income parents should be given the necessary support" (T3).

"Parents have economic income but there is no internet connection or infrastructure, or parents have low income but there is internet. Technological problems should be solved" (T15).

Teachers expressed that they needed education for parents on how to support their children in distance education process and how to use online tools such as computers, tablets, EBA, Zoom, etc. (T1, T3, T5, T6, T7, T17).

"Parents should be given education on how to use informatics tools and applications so that the distance education of children will be complete and continuous" (T1).

"Presentations can be prepared for parents in order that they are aware of the fact that the Zoom program is a classroom environment and education can be given to them" (T17).

Teachers are recommended to develop a new curriculum to use in the distance education process or to form a new education systemfor this purpose (T1, T9, T15).

"A separate curriculum can be determined for distance education. The program to be developed should be based on the sense of maximum product in distance education (T1).

"I want our preschool education to turn into a systematic model" (T9).

Teachers indicated that all preschool-agedchildren should have face-to-face education regardless of nursery or kindergarten in preschool education (T6, T11, T16).

"It is hard when you are at home. Children, meals, and housework are handicaps for the courses at home. Let preschool education be face-to-face" (T6).

"I do not believe in distance education in the preschool period. I am for face-to-face education" (T11).

Teachers pointed out that the number of applications like TV, tablets, and telephones for preschool children should be increased to eliminate learning losses and that web-based sources should be increased (T12, T15, T18).

"The number of web-based sources should be increased" (T15).

"The number of videos for children should be increased. It is because I will go on sending videos to parents to make their children watch even though there is no distance education" (T18).

Teachers expressed that children who will start primary education should be given makeup education (T4, T5).

"Makeup education should be given.

"Makeup program will be good" (T5).

Teachers drew attention to the continuation of the pandemic process with a hybrid (blended) education model (T2, T18).

"The hybrid model should be carried on and the infrastructure should be improved. I believe that children should be involved in distance education at least on Wednesdays" (T2).

"A model of 4 days of school and 1 day of distance education could be applied as a hybrid model" (T18).

Teachers focus on the need for increasing the number of digital contents for teachers and having education regarding distance education progress (T14, T17).

"The groups of teachers on WhatsApp and Telegram were quite useful. As I followed them and used what was shared there in my courses, it was so enjoyable. Children never wanted to turn the screen off. Such kinds of networks could be expanded" (T14).

"Some presentations for teachers could be prepared to explain that the Zoom program is not just for chatting" (T17).

One of the teachers recommended that preschool education be compulsory (T12) and another recommended that computer-assisted education be introduced to places that do not have adequate possibilities (T19).

"Preschool education should be compulsory. In this way, parents might pay attention to what they give to their elderly children" (T12).

"The towns with inadequate possibilities could be determined and thenecessary support could be given. Children in towns could be given education through a mobile kindergarten" (T19).

Discussion & Conclusion

According to May 2020 data from the United Nations, almost 40 million children were deprived of childhood education and care services in the pandemic process (Gromada et al., 2020). In this process, there were some troubles in the daily education and care routines of children (Barlett et al., 2020; OECD, 2020). With the closure of the schools

in the Covid-19 period, distance education strategies were applied in order that children would not retard in education and that they would get rid of this process in a healthy way at home (Baily, 2020). However, the study by Stites Sonneschein and Galczyk, (2021) carried out with parents of children in preschool, indicated that distance education had almost no benefit for children and that social interaction was rather low. Studies carried out with parents in Hong Kong (Lau & Lee, 2020) and China (Dong et al., 2020) revealed similar results. As a matter of fact, it is likely to be said that distance education in the Covid-19 period led to some learning losses among children (Barnett & Jung, 2021; Tout 2021). The findings obtained at the end of the study showed that children experienced learning losses mostly in the fields of psychomotor, social emotional, self-care and language development. It is likely to say that the results obtained are consistent with the literature (Barnett & Jung, 2020; Gonzales et al., 2022; Stites et al., 2021). The study by Yıldırım (2021) carried out with preschool teachers also showed that the pandemic process had a negative effect on the social, emotional and mental development of children, and on their preparation for primary school. In addition, parent views in the study supported this case, and it was pointed out that their academic skills decreased.

In the current study, it was found that teachers assigned art activities as homework because of the limited course time. The fact that the questions asked of children were answered by the parents was mostly a question mark about whether children did their homework on their own. Teachers thought that since distance education duration was at a rate of 1/12 compared to that of normal education, children who would start primary education would not have enough fine motor development at an adequate level. In addition, teachers indicated that children had losses not only in fine muscle motor development but also in gross muscle motor skills. A study by Dunton et al., (2020) showed that children's inactivity for a long time has a negative effect on their physical development. Teachers observed that as they were always inactive at home, the energies of the children were low, and they were reluctant to move during the period when they were at school. Parents shared the idea that their children put on weight duringthis period, they were inactive, and they spent all their time in front of computer with the teachers. A study by Gencer and Diker (2021) pointed out that such negative effects as staying at home for a long time, being away from social fields increased the exposure of children to that digital setting. A study by Sonnenschein et al., (2021) indicated that children in the USA spent more time with digital activities from the beginning of Covid-19 onwards, and children at the ages of 2-5 allocated 2-3 hours to digital tools. Meoded Karabanov et al., (2021) pointed out in their studies that Arab and Jewish children at the ages of 2-8 spent 2-3 hours with digital tools.

Children had to experience such behaviours as making friends, chatting, and adapting in terms of social emotions in distance education not face-to-face but from one screen to another. Not having experience with distance education before resulted in having to adapt to screens just before not adapting to school for children (Çaykuş & Çaykuş, 2020). Teachers indicated that doing the courses on the screen brought about such difficulties for children as the mixing of voices when they talked at the same time, with

some children remaining silent, and becoming puzzled about where to look and what to do. A study by Kim (2020) revealed that preschool teachers had problems with the late coming sound during the activities in the distance education process. Findings showed that children preferred remaining silent since they were afraid of making mistakes, they exhibited introverted, shy and timid behaviours, were not confident. It is thought that what lies under these behaviours of children is that they were deprived of their regular interaction with the peer groups supporting their social and emotional development for one year or more (Jalongo, 2021). What's more, there were some teachers who thought that distance education led to a lack of interest and attention among children resulting from not knowing where to focus. In a study carried out by Sunshine and Stites (2021) with parents, it was pointed out that given the limited attention spans of children, they had some anxieties as to whether distance education is suitable for this age group.

Many of the teachers pointed out that they couldn't directly deal with self-care skills in their courses and besides that they couldn't have the chance to make an observation. It is likely to be seen that children were left under the initiative of their parents with regard to self-care. Yoshikawa et al., (2020) indicated that the pandemic period has some serious risks for preschool children such as urgent health services, nutrition, care, and education. Teachers indicated that even though children attained awareness about hygiene, cleanliness, disinfectant, mask, and distance, they did not have enough idea regarding what the children learned and what they did not learn about nutrition, dressing, hand washing, and tooth brushing. Arslan et al., (2021) pointed out in a study carried out with parents of children in preschool that children washed their hands more compared to pre-pandemic periods. In another study carried out by Duran (2021a) with 58 preschool children at the ages of 3-5, it was found that children paid attention to such issues as healthy nutrition and hand washing in order to protect themselves from viruses.

Findings showed that children used mostly the same words in communication in the field of language development in pandemic period. Similarly, it was indicated in a study by Pisano et al., (2020) that the vocabulary capacity of the children at the age of 4-10 decreased. In addition, other studies pointed out that Syrian and Kurdish children were retarded in Turkish learning. A study by Çelik and Kardaş İşler (2020) pointed out that distance education was initiated without solving the language problem of immigration-victim children well enough and it brought about some problems. Such reasons as the economic insufficiencies of the families, the fact that they do not know the language, the great number of households, and children's taking role in housework brought about little learning experience for children and a decrease in their efficiency. Studies showed that distance education started before the language problems of immigrant victim children were solved in face-to-face education, which caused bigger problems. Such reasons as the economic situation of the parents, not knowing the language, the large household members, and assigning housework to children led to having less experience or low efficiency. Additionally, teachers pointed out that children with special needs who had problems in the field of language and speaking became more introverted and

forgot what they had known. In another study by Colvin et al., (2021), it was pointed out that the outcomes of children with special needs who are at risk in terms of educational inequality in the process of Covid-19 weakened.

Teachers pointed out that there was not a suitable environment in the distance education process to attain such skills as waiting for their turn, being in the queue, and sitting on their desk, and that such skills as holding a pencil were attained later compared to those in face-to-face education. They also expressed that many children were insufficiently prepared for primary education and that they needed makeup education. Given the fact that primary school readiness has decreased in recent years (Duncan et al., 2007, 2020), it is assumed that the current situation will affect the school readiness of children in the preschool period in a negative way (Gonzales et al., 2022). The results of a study by Ogelman et al., (2021) carried out with preschool teachers showed that preschool teachers predicted that a great many children would have problems in terms of adaptation to school.

Teachers expressed that peer relations in distance education were rather limited compared to those in face-to-face education and that particularly, children with no siblings were more affected in this situation. As a matter of fact, the lack of social signal experienced by children who cannot talk face-to-face with their relatives, friends and teachers led to losses in social and emotional development (Araújo vd., 2020 ; Shorer & Leibovich, 2020). More loneliness was observed in children whose parents had to work and stayed at home during quarantine (Brown et al., 2020). They observed that children experienced problems expressing themselves and setting games when they came together with their peers because they would generally be in contact with adults in this process. It is thought that children felt anxious to come together because of the pandemic (Loades et al., 2020) and this is reflected in their game-setting skills.

Regarding self-regulation skills, teachers expressed that the behaviours exhibited by children varied from one family to another and that they were not able to observe unattended children. Teachers made an inference about the fact that there could be differences among children regarding adaptation with a decrease in stimulants coming from the school. With respect to self-regulation, some teachers pointed out that children had some problems with their skills such as paying attention and focusing. With regard to emotion regulation, one of the sub-dimensions of self-regulation, there are some views concerning the fact that children have difficulties expressing their emotions. In a study by Alonso-Martínez et al., (2021) parents of preschool-aged childrenin Spain pointed out that there was an increase in antisocial, depressive, and anxious behaviours. Similar findings were obtained in a study by Di Giorgio et al., (2020), and parents in Italy indicated that their children became more undisciplined, exhibited hyperactive behaviours and their self-regulation skills worsened because of such reasons as the fact that they could not attend school, their daily routines were broken and their ties with their peers were cut. In a study by Chaabane et al., (2021), it was found that increasing stress, sadness, disappointment, hyperactivity and undiscipline were encountered inchildren.

According to the teachers the perceptions of parents related to the preschool period, and the fact that children do not pay the necessary attention to their courses are the main reasons for learning losses. As a matter of fact, it was observed that parents would rather deliver their telephones to their elderly children in the case of overlapping courses than to their preschool children. Such a case is an indication that economic insufficiencies could also lead to learning losses. It is likely to be said that economic possibilities are of a determining role in the education of children in this process. It is also likely to be said that the children of families with economic insufficiencies are the ones who had the least efficiency in the distance education process and the most learning losses. The studies by Morgan (2020) and Carrillo and Flores (2020) also support the idea that children with no access to computers are retarded in education in this Covid-19 process Bennett et al., (2020) asserted that this case created an inequality of opportunity. There are some studies in the literature expressing that technological insufficiencies decrease efficiency in education (Abuhammad, 2020; Bakioğlu & Çevik, 2020; Bayburtlu, 2020; Çakın & Külekçi Akyavuz, 2020; Demir & Kale 2020; Foti, 2020). In addition, teachers believe that another reason for learning loss is that children develop an addiction to such digital devices as TV, tablets, and telephones to a great extent. Studies support this case and mention that the pandemic duration of using virtual games, the internet and social mediaincreased (King et al., 2020; Mart & Kesicioglu, 2020; Yersel et al., 2021; Witt et al., 2020).

Other children with whom learning losses are observed the most were determined to be the mainstreaming students, foreign students, only children and young children. The United Nations Report (2020) indicates learning gaps for children with special needs during this period. Neece et al., (2020) pointed out in the study that parents expressed their anxiety because of the disruption in the educational services of their children with special needs at the ages of 3-5. Mengi and Alpdoğan (2020) indicated in their study carried out with special education teachers that with the start of distance education, children became deprived of special education methods and techniques realized in face-to-face education.

It was found that teachers mostly used (educational game activities in the pandemic process. The study by Duran (2021b) is similar to the results of the current study and it was found in the study that preschool teachers benefited from the game activities the most. In the second place, they benefited from mathematics activities, followed by art activities and web-based activities assigned as homework. In second place come mathematics activities followed by art activities and web-based activities assigned as homework. It is likely that teachers will keep up with the technology on the way to be digitalized to eliminate learning losses. In this process, it was found that teachers benefited from web 2.0 tools, web-based contents such as Minik Tema (Mini Theme), Babanın Okulu (Father's School), platforms and virtual applications such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Instagram, Zoom. According to the data obtained from five different national questionnaires in March-July 2020 (FCC/F. Lemann/FR Marinho/I. Península/Itaú Social), it was indicated that 82% of teachers used WhatsApp to communicate with

children and parents, 34% used social networks, 21% used telephone talks, 11% used e-mail and 5% used YouTube (Malta Campos & Vieira, 2021).

It was found that teachers could not find enough time for the studies regarding developing early literacy skills in Turkish language activities. Most of the teachers expressed that the course duration ended when they completed reading the story and that they did not have any time to talk about the story. Wheeler and Hill (2021) pointed out that parents in the USA read books to their children at the ages of 2-4 more frequently compared to the pre-pandemic period but they allocated less time to ask questions regarding the book.

Findings show that teachers shaped their courses in line with their own initiatives in the process of distance education and focused on different kinds of activities. This is mostly dependent on cognitive development and academics. Nevertheless, the concepts where learning loss was experienced the most were numbers, geometric shapes, colours, right and left and addition and subtraction processes in mathematics. In the study of Stites et al., (2021), parents who have children in the preschool period stated that their children need additional support in all academic fields, especially in mathematics. Teachers believe that this is because children do not learn by touching, doing, and experiencing. As an example, teachers indicated that learning losses happened for such reasons as children not touching them while teaching thin and thick or not touching their hands while they were holding the pencil. Since children in the early childhood period need more interaction and experience by doing to learn, distance education naturally does not offer enough and suitable opportunities for them (Kim 2020). It is thought that given that the time preschool students spend 4.000 hours in learning centers (Bullard, 2017), the fact that children are exposed to limited home opportunities in terms of learning centres, game areas, equipment, content etc. (Barbour, 2020) is effective in reducing learning losses.

All of the teachers communicated with the parents through WhatsApp groups or mobile phones. In their study, Novianti and Garzia (2020) indicated that teachers communicated with parents mostly by means of WhatsApp. The expressions of teachers indicate that as long as parents take care of their children, they improve in their courses. In the process of distance education, the support of parents for the education of their children was felt more. According to teachers, the children supported by their parents were less affected by this process. In their study, Burgess and Sievertsen (2020) and Sezgin et al., (2020) pointed out that the children of parents who spent enough time with their child, had a high education level with technological literacy experienced less learning loss.

Most of the teachers expressed that they used EBA in their courses or that they guided parents to EBA. As for the children who did not have access to EBA, not knowing how to use it, having various technical problems, they dropped out of the system, and those living in towns where there was no internet infrastructure were deprived of EBA infrastructure. In their studies, Demir and Özdaş (2020) emphasized that there is a need

to improve EBA infrastructure, solve the problems on the platform, offer an easier possibility for their participants to use it and that there should be free and unlimited internet access to log in. For that reason, teachers tried to make the distance education process active with the photocopies they left at school, the activities they sent to parents, study pages, daily education flows, videos, articles, and assignments. A research group from Bahia State University indicated that teachers handed out materials to reach parents with children between the ages of 0-5 and they sent audio and visual materials (Malta Campos & Vieira, 2021). In a study by Akkaş Baysal vd., (2020), it was found that teachers sent visual and easy-to-reach materials to parents using various internet sharing sites and teaching settings. Besides that, some teachers indicated that they guided the parents to TRT Anaokulu (Kindergarten) and held meetings with them.

The recommendations that teachers made to eliminate learning losses were mostly about overcoming the economic impossibilities of the parents. In their study Kalil et al., (2020) indicated that parents' loss of income and jobs in the period of the pandemic affected their relations with their children. The limited access of parents to technology is a negative predictor of children's participation in distance education (Sunshine & Stites, 2021). Teachers pointed out that parents need education regarding the use of technology and how to support their children in this process. They expressed that developing a new curriculum or education system aiming at distance education in the preschool period would be a handicap in terms of the appearance of new learning losses. In a study by Alan (2021) carried out with preschool teachers, it was pointed out that since teachers must improve their technological competences in order to increase the quality of distance education, they need trainings, and they must have some services for user-friendly programs and services of this program. Teachers recommended having a face-to-face education in preschool education in the next academic year or a hybrid model as one day distance education. Lee et al., (2021) indicated that the suspension of schools was a significant loss for children. Teachers emphasized that web-based contents and the number of applications should be increased even though distance education is carried on. Teachers believe a 2–3-week makeup program for the children who will start primary education will be useful. In addition, there is a demand for training and seminars regarding digital content for teachers. Kırmızıgül (2020) pointed out in a study carried out in this case that teachers need in-service education for distance education. In addition, it is believed that in-service education is necessary in order to make distance education successful (König et al., 2020). As a matter of fact, it is thought that the education to be given for the purpose of in-service education will be useful to support the course not only for this period but also throughout the following academic years (Balaman & Hanbay Tiryaki, 2021; Paydar & Doğan, 2019; Yılmaz et al., 2020). The necessity that preschool education must be compulsory, and computer assisted mobile kindergartens for the children having no possibilities are among other recommendations.

Recommendations

In order to improve the basic movement skills of children and prevent diseases such as obesity, more open-air activities, field trips and active games should be included in preschool and primary education.

An education program should be prepared for Turkish learning for the children whose skills in understanding and speaking Turkish are not developed before they start primary education.

Makeup programs should be prepared for the children who will start primary education to eliminate their learning losses.

When it comes to the fact that one of those who is affected by this process the most is individuals with a special need, mainstreaming students who will start primary school should be supported more.

The towns without internet infrastructure should be determined and the necessary infrastructure should be provided.

The internet quota provided for families free of charge should be increased and a resource should be allocated to offer the necessary technological possibilities.

It is believed that the seminars and in-service educations to be given to both parents and teachers regarding the use of technology will be useful in order to direct children towards the individuals producing, not towards those consuming.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Örgün eğitim faaliyetlerine eğitim yılı programı dâhilinde ara verilen ara tatil ya da yaz tatili dönemlerinde (Cooper, 2003; Elihami, 2021; Kuhfeld, 2019; McEachin ve Atteberry, 2017; Menard ve Wilson, 2014; Sezgin vd., 2020; Shinwell ve Defeyter, 2017; Turner vd., 2020) ve zorunlu hallerde (deprem, sel, yangın, salgın hastalık, kar tatili vb.) verilen aralar çocuklarda öğrenme kayıplarına yol açabilmektedir.

Pier vd., (2021), "*öğrenme kaybı*" nı, öğrencilerin bilgi ve becerilerindeki belirgin düşüş olarak tanımlamıştır. Bu tanımdan hareketle öğrenme kaybını; öğrenim sürecine ara verilmesi, çocukların motivasyon ve psikolojik durumlarındaki değişim vb. nedenlerle öğrenilen bilgi, kazanım ve becerilerin gerilemesi, müfredat dahilinde öğreneceklerini öğrenememeleri olarak genişletebiliriz.

Dünya Sağlık Örgütü'nün (DSÖ) Covid-19 sebebiyle pandemi kararını duyurmasıyla (Sağlık Bakanlığı, 2021) dünya genelinde çocukların eğitim hayatı salgından olumsuz etkilenmiştir (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2021). Her ülke bu duruma kendi imkânları çerçevesinde çözüm bulmaya çalışmıştır. Türkiye'de ilk tedbir olarak, 16 Mart tarihinden itibaren iki hafta süreyle okullar tatil edilerek eğitime ara verilmiş (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı [MEB], 2020a) ardından tüm eğitim kademelerinde uzaktan eğitime geçilmiştir (MEB, 2020b). 2020-2021 eğitim-öğretim yılında belli dönemlerde önce anasınıfları ardından anaokullarında uzaktan eğitime geçilmesiyle birlikte akran öğreniminden ve yüz yüze eğitimden yoksun kalan çocukların öğrenme kayıplarının kalıcı hale gelmesi gündeme gelmiştir.

Ulusal ve uluslararası literatürde öğrenme kayıplarıyla ilgili yapılan çalışmalar incelendiğinde ulaşılan sonuçlar Covid 19 pandemi sürecinde yüz yüze ve uzaktan eğitim faaliyetlerine erişim sorunlarının öğrenme kayıplarında belirleyici rol üstlendiğini göstermektedir. Bu bilgiler ışığında araştırma okul öncesi öğretmenlere yöneltilecek yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme soruları ile çocukların gelişim alanlarındaki öğrenme kayıplarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu bakımdan Covid-19/pandemi sürecinin okul öncesi dönem çocuklarının öğrenme kayıplarına olan etkisinin bilinmesinin literatüre önemli katkılar sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Çalışma nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden biri olan durum çalışması deseni tercih edilerek planlanmıştır. Araştırmanın katılımcılarının belirlenmesinde olasılıksız örnekleme stratejilerinden amaçlı örnekleme tekniklerinden olan kartopu örneklemesi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 2020-2021 eğitim-öğretim yılında aktif olarak anasınıfında görev alan 19 okul öncesi öğretmeni oluşturmuştur. Araştırmada veriler araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan ''Okul Öncesi Dönem Çocuklarının Öğrenme Kayıplarını Belirleme Formu'' aracılığı ile okul öncesi öğretmenlerinden yüz yüze veya telefon görüşmeleri aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Görüşme soruları okul öncesi dönem çocuklarının uzaktan eğitimde gözlemlenen öğrenme kayıplarını, öğretmenlerin öğrenme kayıplarını gidermek için başvurduğu etkinlik türlerini, öğrenme kayıplarının en çok görüldüğü gelişim alanlarını, kavramları ve becerileri, öğrenme kaybının en çok

rastlandığı çocukları, öğrenme kayıplarını en aza indirmek için başvurulan yolları/stratejileri ve öğrenme kayıplarını en aza indirmek için tavsiyelerini kapsamaktadır. Araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilmiş olan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme formu için üç alan uzmanından görüş alınarak forma son şekli verilmiştir.

Yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda elde edilen veriler içerik analizine tabii tutulmuştur. Elde edilen veriler iki araştırmacı tarafından üçer defa okunarak anlamlı bölümler işaretlenerek ifadelerin karşısına kodlar yazılmıştır. Ardından tekrar eden kodlar tümevarımcı yaklaşımla incelenerek temalar oluşturulmuştur. Bu şekilde ulaşılan verilerin güvenilirliğine Miles ve Huberman'ın (1994) güvenirlik hesaplama formülü ile bakılmıştır (Güvenirlik=Görüş Birliği/(Görüş Birliği+Görüş Ayrılığı)). Miles ve Huberman (1994), %70 ve üzeri güvenirlik değerleri güvenilir kabul etmektedir. Bu araştırmada güvenirlik değeri %94 bulunmuştur.

Verilerin yorumlanmasında okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin görüşlerinden doğrudan alıntılar yapılarak betimsel analiz tekniğinden yararlanılmıştır. Alıntı seçimlerinde çarpıcılık öne çıkmıştır. Görüşme yapılan okul öncesi öğretmenlerine Ö1, Ö2, Ö3.... şeklinde kodlar verilerek görüşleri paylaşılmıştır.

Elde edilen bulgular çocuklarda en çok psikomotor, sosyal duygusal, özbakım ve dil gelişim alanlarında öğrenme kayıpları olduğunu göstermektedir. Bunun yanı sıra ilkokula hazırlık becerilerinde, bilişsel gelişimlerinde, akran ilişkilerinde ve öz düzenleme becerilerinde de kayıplar göze çarpmaktadır.

Öğretmenler ekran üzerinde ders işlemenin çocuklar açısından aynı anda konuşarak seslerin karışması, kimisinin hiç ses çıkarmaması, nereye bakacaklarını ne yapacaklarını şaşırmaları gibi zorluklara yol açtığını belirtmektedir. Bulgular çocukların yanlış yapmaktan korktukları için genelde sessiz kalmayı tercih ettikleri, içine kapanık, utangaç ve çekingen davranışlar sergiledikleri, özgüvensiz oldukları yönündedir. Hatta uzaktan eğitimin çocuklarda neye odaklanacağını bilmemekten kaynaklı ilgi ve dikkat eksikliğine yol açtığını düşünenler öğretmenler de vardır.

Öğretmenlere göre ebeveynlerin okul öncesi döneme ilişkin algıları ve çocuklarının derslerine gereken önemi vermeyişleri öğrenme kayıplarının en başta gelen nedenidir. Nitekim öğretmenler ilkokul ya da ortaokula giden çocukları ile okul öncesi dönemde eğitim alan çocuklarının derslerinin çakışması durumunda ebeveynlerin telefonlarını büyük yaş grubu çocuklarına vermeyi tercih ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bu durum aynı zamanda maddi yetersizliklerinde öğrenme kaybına yol açtığının göstergesidir. Bu süreçte maddi olanakların çocukların eğitiminde belirleyici bir rol üstlendiğini söyleyebiliriz. Maddi olarak yetersiz olan ailelerin çocukları uzaktan eğitim sürecinden en az verim alan en çok öğrenme kaybına uğrayan çocuklar olmuştur diyebiliriz. Öğrenme kaybının gözlemlendiği diğer çocuklar ise kaynaştırma öğrencileri, yabancı uyruklu öğrenciler, tek çocuklar ve küçük yaş grupları olarak belirlenmiştir. Birleşmiş Millet Raporu (2020) da bu dönemde özel gereksinimli çocuklardaki öğrenme boşluklarına işaret etmektedir.

Öğretmenlerin öğrenme kayıplarını gidermek için dijitalleşme yolunda çağa ayak uydurdukları görülmektedir. Bu süreçte öğretmenlerin web 2.0 araçlarından, Minik Tema, Babanın Okulu gibi web tabanlı içeriklerden, whatsapp, telegram, instagram, zoom gibi platformlardan ve sanal uygulamalardan yararlandıklarına ulaşılmıştır. Öğretmenlerin hepsi whatsapp grupları üzerinden ya da telefonla arayarak velilerle iletişime geçtiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenlerin pek çoğu derslerinde EBA'ya yer verdiği ya da ebeveynleri EBA'ya yönlendirdiğini söylemiştir. Öğretmenler okula bıraktıkları fotokopiler, ebeveynlere gönderdikleri etkinlikler, çalışma sayfaları, günlük eğitim akışları, videolar, makaleler, ödevler ile uzaktan eğitim sürecini aktif kılmaya çalışmışlardır. Bunların dışında bazı öğretmenler ebeveynlerini TRT Anaokuluna yönlendirdiklerini ve veli toplantıları yaptıklarını da eklemiştir.

Öğretmenlerin öğrenme kayıplarını gidermek için önerdikleri tavsiyeleri ailelerin madde imkânsızlıklarının giderilmesi yönündedir. Öğretmenler, uzaktan eğitim süresince ebeveynlerin teknoloji kullanımı ve bu süreçte çocuğuna nasıl destek olacağına ilişkin de eğitimlere ihtiyaç duyduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Öğretmenler okul öncesi dönem için uzaktan eğitime yönelik yeni bir müfredat tasarımı ya da eğitim sisteminin geliştirilmesinin de yeni öğrenme kayıplarının oluşmasının önünde engel teşkil edeceğini ifade etmişlerdir. Öğretmenler gelecek dönem okul öncesi eğitimde yüz yüze ya da bir gün uzaktan olacak şekilde hibrit model eğitime geçilmesini tavsiye etmişlerdir. Uzaktan eğitim devam etmese bile web tabanlı içeriklerin ve uygulamaların sayısının artırılması gerekliliğine vurgu yapmışlardır. Öğretmenler tarafından birinci sınıfa başlayacak olan çocuklar için 2-3 haftalık bir telafi programının yararlı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Ayrıca öğretmenlere yönelik de dijital içerikler hakkında bilgi verilmesine ilişkin eğitimler ve seminerlere yönelik talep bulunmaktadır. Okul öncesinin zorunlu olması gerektiği ve imkânı olmayan çocuklara yönelik bilgisayar destekli mobil anaokulları da diğer öneriler arasında yer almaktadır.

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