



Teacher Perspectives on the Developmental Domains of Elementary School Students Following Emergency Remote Teaching

Davut Hotaman*

*Assoc. Prof. at Yıldız Technical University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Sciences, Email: davut@yildiz.edu.tr; davuthotaman@gmail.com, ORCID 0000 0002 8715 2650

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ABSTRACT

Sudden changes and interruptions in education can lead not only to learning gaps, but also to developmental differences in students. This may be especially important for students in elementary school who develop through their interactions at school. This study evaluated elementary school students' cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and moral development domains based on teachers' views during the COVID-19 emergency remote teaching period. This study adopted the qualitative research design of the phenomenological approach. Data was collected from twenty-six experienced elementary school teachers regarding the students' developmental domain and tasks via a semi-structured interview form and was analyzed via content analysis aimed at creating themes. According to the elementary school teachers interviewed in this study, many of the students engaged in emergency remote teaching due to COVID-19 have failed to acquire the basic developmental features and to fulfill the basic developmental tasks required in the cognitive, language, social-emotional, moral, and personality domains.

Keywords: Child development, Domain of Development, Emergency Remote Teaching.

Introduction

Just as COVID-19 has negatively affected many sectors, it has also had a significant impact on education systems worldwide. Having been described as a pandemic by the World Health Organization in March 2020, countries across the world introduced serious and dramatic precautions for COVID-19 in an attempt to decelerate and tackle the pandemic. One of those precautions was to switch to emergency remote teaching (ERT). Despite the trying times brought about the COVID-19, it was not easy for societies to put education on hold. Education is an essential part of economic development and social well-being, thus making it an indispensable social phenomenon. Therefore, in order to maintain social reproduction by means of providing the necessary qualified workforce, education is society's sole provider of knowledge, skills, habits, attitudes, values, beliefs, and such. As interruption to education was not an option to societies, emergency remote teaching was a convenient alternative to maintain formal education practices. ERT is originally a form of distance education intended for non-formal education, defined as "a teaching and learning system that takes place over the Internet eliminating the need for teachers and learners to share the same physical environment" (Bozkurt & Sharma 2020; Bennett et al., 2020: 2; Dias et al., 2020: 88). Despite this, distance education can be applied to most instructional environments, allowing societies to maintain educational activities remotely. In this regard, individuals gain access to a particular set of knowledge and skills allowing them to attain better life conditions, which is in the best interest of both individuals and societies. As an educational institution, schools provide not only knowledge and skills but also the social, communal, and cultural behaviors individuals need in life, such as making friends, helping, sharing, and collaborating (Cullinane & Montacute, 2020: 71). Therefore, through education, individuals become social beings equipped with social and cultural characteristics on top of their mere biological existence.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries suspended face-to-face learning and transitioned to online learning. While it enabled continued education, ERT could not provide benefits in communication, interaction, socialization, acculturation, learning from peers, social learning through observing in the community, and learning through modelling, which could be encompassed within the scope of face-to-face education (Ozdemir et al., 2023: 173). The COVID-19 pandemic restricted children's activities, prevented them from going outside, going to school, and playing with their peers. This means that social skills critical for young individuals, such as using language, communication, establishing emotional connections, debating, and engaging in social life naturally and spontaneously without a plan, could not be developed.

Development, by nature, is "the sequence of changes starting with the fertilization and occurring in certain domains bound by certain rules" (Senemoğlu, 2022: 3). The individual's areas of development can be classified as cognitive, language, socio-emotional, moral, and personality development (Bacanlı, 2021: 50-51; Santrock, 2018: 33-571; Senemoğlu, 2022: 1-71). Cognitive development involves the sequence of changes in individuals' thought, intelligence, and the use of language. Putting together words to form sentences, memorizing a poem, imagining how it feels to become a movie star or solving crossword puzzles are reliable indicators of cognitive changes (Santrock, 2018: 16). Similarly, through language development, children fulfil their need to communicate with others. This, in turn, affects their ability to make friends and socialize. Language is a mental activity. Therefore, language development is a part of cognitive development. Both cognitive development and language development occur within the context of maturation, experiences, and social interactions (Bacanlı, 2021: 74; Santrock, 2018: 316-328; Talu et al., 2022: 174). Social and emotional development includes changes in individuals' interpersonal relationships. An infant's smile in reaction to his/her mother's touch, a boy mistreating his playmate, a girl growing up to be assertive, a teenager's rejoicing at graduation, and an elderly couple's love for each other are among the strong indicators of socio-emotional development (Santrock, 2018: 16). Moreover, moral development refers to the process through which individuals learn to distinguish right from wrong and develop a sense of ethics and values. This process involves understanding social norms, empathy, and the ability to make decisions based on principles of justice and fairness. Furthermore, personality is a unique pattern of sensation, thought, and behavior styles that differentiate one person from others. Therefore, Personality development, like other areas of development, undergoes a developmental process and is also in interaction with all other areas of development. It is a commonly accepted rule that both genetic inheritance and immediate surroundings have an influence in development. The pace and rate of developmental processes differ on the different domains of development in individuals. Especially, in the initial stages of life mostly physical and biological development is prominent, while in later stages cognitive, language, socio-emotional, moral and personality development become significant (Bacanlı, 2021: 50-51).

Children, when together with their peers, rapidly begin to learn how to get along with others, show respect, share, and understand their emotions. Completing the assignments related to the cognitive, language, social-emotional, moral, and personality development of elementary school children during the concrete operational stage is of vital importance for their subsequent social, social, and educational lives. Research has shown that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to outcomes such as children's reluctance to attend school, fear, anxiety, attention problems, psychological and emotional issues, social phobia, feelings of worthlessness, technology addiction, and academic failure (Alon et al., 2020; Bradbury-Jones & Isham, 2020; Kılıç-Özmen, 2023: 244). For children whose school and social lives have been greatly restricted due to the global pandemic, it has become an emotionally challenging process (Aral et al., 2020: 362; Yüksel-Şahin, 2014).

The absence of the school context in societies switching to ERT during COVID-19 results in a deprivation of educational, social, and cultural attainments schools are offering. This is because distance education practices by which students receive instruction in isolation do not have the capacity to offer the environment where students interact with one another within social and cultural contexts. Though this is a commonsense assumption, it is not empirically evident whether this is the case or not, and it is the purpose of the present study to investigate if ERT resulted in developmental differences in elementary school children. The focus was on elementary school children, as they are in a critical developmental period to acquire cognitive, social-emotional, linguistic, and moral characteristics, for which their student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions in the school setting provide a crucial source.

Emergency Remote Teaching

No matter what threats humanity faces, it has never given up on education, which it sees as the guarantee of its future. Although the Covid-19 pandemic is one of these threats, societies have sought ways to maintain their education systems without interruption and have transformed distance education, which is based on communication technologies, into an emergency distance education practice by expanding it to all levels of education and layers of society (Trust & Whalen, 2020). It should be known that the concepts of distance education and emergency distance education are not the same thing, on the contrary, they are different concepts (Huang, Liu, Tlili, Yang, & Wang, 2020). Distance education, which was also used before Covid-19, is

a traditional educational practice prepared and implemented as a result of careful planning and long studies (Bakia & Murphy, 2014; Carrington & Robinson, 2009; Means). Emergency distance education, on the other hand, is a temporary and compulsory form of distance education that was put into practice in a hurry due to the Covid-19 pandemic without conducting deep and detailed research (Hodges, Moore, Lockee, Trust, & Bond, 2020). Unlike traditional distance education, emergency distance education was implemented in a very sudden and rapid manner and with the idea of returning education back to normal (face-to-face education) after the pandemic. Until education returned to its pre-pandemic state, “emergency distance education” was accepted and implemented as the “new normal” in almost all countries (Dahmash, 2020; Keskin & Derya, 2020).

The Present Study

Elementary school students had to spend their middle childhood period without interpersonal relationships other than their parents, playing games, or going out to play under COVID-19 lockdown measures for approximately two years. Because the concept of critical period matters highly in development (Bacanli, 2021: 51) and as humans are social beings, it is expected that the developmental domains of the children spending this critical period at home under lockdown measures could be negatively affected. In the post COVID-19 period, even though the schools and classrooms stood unchanged, the returning children were irrevocably transformed—older, altered, and shaped by unprecedented times. As understanding the developmental condition of the children is crucial for educational programs designed for them, it is important to determine the developmental levels of elementary school students who stayed at home during the COVID-19 pandemic period. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the effect of emergency remote teaching during COVID-19 period on major domains of child development from the perspective of teachers. The purpose of this study was to find answers to the following research question: What do the elementary school teachers think about the effects of emergency remote teaching on the students’ (1) cognitive development, (2) language development, (3) socio-emotional development, (4) moral development, and (5) personality development?

Method

Research Design

This study investigates how emergency remote teaching during COVID-19 isolation has affected the development of elementary school students based on teacher opinions. This qualitative study adopts a phenomenological design. Qualitative studies, by nature, aim to make observations of the subjects and qualities in their natural surroundings and are structured in a way to present the findings as they are (Creswell, 2017: 131; Maxwell, 2013). The phenomenological design involves dealing with the facts and cases within consistency as they are and how they are interpreted and perceived by the participants (Merriam and Grenier, 2019; Patton, 2018). The phenomenological design enables researchers to find out about the participants’ subjective experiences, perceptions, and the way they attribute meaning to the facts and case.

Participants

The participants of this study were selected using the typical case sampling method, which is one of the purposive sampling techniques designated for non-probability sampling. This sampling method involved selecting the participants who are familiar with the research subject and able to provide responses in the most truthful manner (Creswell, 2017: 131; Miles and Huberman, 2016b; Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018). Therefore, twenty-six elementary school teachers were selected as the study group. Each participant either holds a graduate degree or is pursuing one. Since qualitative studies are not mainly concerned with generalization to the population, the importance is not on the number of participants in the study group, but instead is on whether the information provided by the participant group is suitable for a case study or not (Creswell, 2018; Miles & Huberman, 2016b). To satisfy the typical case sampling, all of them had to have had a minimum of five-year teaching experience and had to be working at the same elementary school prior to and after the emergency remote teaching during COVID-19 period. Also, nine of them were male and seventeen of them were female elementary school teachers. The data regarding the participants can be found below in Table 1.

Table 1: Data about the Participants

Participant teachers	Experience			Total
	0-8 Year	9-16 Year	17-25 Year	
Female teachers	3	7	7 =17	26
Male teachers	3	3	3 =09	
Total	6	10	10	

The participants were briefed regarding the research subject, purpose of the study, consent to participate, etc. and each of them was coded as p standing for participant from p1-p26. Informed consent forms were collected,

and they were ensured that they would maintain the right to withdraw from research without submitting any excuse anytime they deemed necessary.

Data Collection Tool

Ethical committee approval was obtained from Yildiz Technical University, Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee with the decision dated 08.11.2023 and numbered 2023/11, stating that there is no unethical situation in the method and data collection tools of this research named "Investigation of the Effects of Online Education Period on Students' Developmental Areas in Line with Teacher Opinions". Afterwards, a form consisting of two demographical (gender and experience) and six semi-structured interview questions regarding the cognitive, language, moral, socio-cultural and personality development domains, was sent to the participants directly or via e-mail. The participants were informed that participation was voluntary, that working with students at the same or similar level before and after the epidemic was a requirement of purposive sampling, and that those who did not meet these conditions should not participate. A 30-day period was given for the forms to be completed and returned. At the end of 30 days, it was decided that the number of participants was sufficient for qualitative research and the data were subjected to content analysis.

Data Analysis

The participants of the study were sent detailed emails containing the specifics and instructions on how to answer the interview questions and given a month's time to reply to the emails with answers. All the data provided by the participants were coded from p1-p26 in the order of the time the responses were received and digitally stored. The data were analyzed using the content analysis technique. This analysis technique aims to explain the results in concepts and relationships (Creswell, 2017: 132; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018: 78). The data obtained from the participants were analyzed individually and transformed into themes and codes. Therefore, the studied cases and facts were reorganized in order to present the results to the audience clearly and precisely (Miles and Huberman, 2016b; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018).

Validity and Reliability

In line with the main principles of research ethics, informed consent was collected from the participants. They were given extensive background to the study in its purpose and content and were ensured that they would maintain the right to withdraw from research without submitting any excuse anytime they deemed necessary. The validity of the data obtained from the participants was provided through the informed consent forms. In addition, the data collection process involved typical case sampling methods in order to reach data representing the universe sufficiently. During the data analysis, the participants were asked to confirm the codes and themes in order to prevent any misinterpretation or errors in presenting the findings. For ensuring the reliability of the study (Creswell, 2017: 132; Gubo & Lincoln, 2005), the formula of unity/percentage of agreement [$\text{Unity to Thinking} / (\text{Agreements} + \text{Disagreements}) \times 100$] developed by Milles and Huberman (1994) was deployed, and the percentage of agreement among the participants was found as 80.2 per cent. The participants who are teachers working in different parts of the city yielded similar results and this was assessed in favor of the external validity and reliability of the research.

Identity of the Researchers

The researchers are teaching at the faculty of education of a state university in İstanbul, Türkiye. During the graduate courses where the participants are mostly teachers from different schools in the city, the researchers felt that especially the elementary school students suffered greatly in terms of the developmental stages and domains during the emergency remote teaching period due to COVID-19 preventive measures based on the feedback as part of those courses. Also, further feedback from in-service teachers from the schools in the area confirmed this negative effect to the elementary school students, and the researchers felt obliged to further study the negative effects to the students brought about by the emergency remote teaching. The researchers initiated the study by taking part in the study group by involving directly in the sampling process.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Sticking to ethical standards and obligations in data collection and analysis stages of the scientific studies is essential (Maxwell, 2013). As part of this qualitative study, the research problem is based on a completely original research idea and ethical guidelines and principles were strictly followed during the literature review, citing previous research, and data collection and analysis procedures. Data safety protocols were also followed, and the participants were specifically ensured in this manner. In conclusion, the facts that the participants were adults and the data collection tool did not ask for any data which may violate personal privacy, also facilitated participation in terms of ethical and data safety issues.

Results

This study investigates the effects of emergency remote teaching, which approximately lasted for two years during COVID-19 period, on major domains of child development (cognitive, language, socio-emotional, moral

and personality) from the perspective of teachers. In this sense, the participants were selected from elementary school teachers who worked in the same levels before and after emergency remote teaching because the students were still in a critical period of development. The data obtained from twenty-six elementary school teachers through the interviews and the results of the content analysis are presented in an order of development domains as follows. Some of the children who experienced the emergency remote teaching process were in the preoperational stage of cognitive development due to their age, while others were in the concrete operational stage. Elementary school children, deprived of communication with their environment and peers, may have faced challenges in acquiring the critical tasks of cognitive and language development, which are closely tied to cognitive growth. Table 2 presents the teachers' views on the cognitive and language development of their students who returned to face-to-face education after the implementation of emergency distance education during the Covid pandemic. These opinions were subjected to content analysis separately, and those that reached a certain frequency (f) along with those that were gathered under a code/category are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Content Analysis of Teachers' Views on Students' Cognitive and Language Development Levels

Main Theme	Sub Theme	Code/Category	Participants	f
Development	<i>Cognitive Development</i>	Attention Deficit	p2,p5,p6,p10,p11,p12,p14,p15,p16,p18 p19,p22,p26	13
		Poor concentration	p1,p3,p5,p7,p10,p12,p13,p19,p22,p24	10
		Numerical calculations deficit	p1,p2,p4,p5,p7,p8,p11,p12,p19,p21,p25	11
		Learning incompetence	p2,p4,p6,p7,p9,p17,p18,p19,p20,p21 p22,p23,p25	13
	<i>Language Development</i>	Inability in sentence formation	p1,p2,p5,p9,p13,p18,p19,p22,p25,p26	10
		Inability in speaking	p1,p9,p10,p16,p17,p19,p20	7
		Language development deficiency	p1,p4,p6,p11,p14,p21,p25	7
		Poor vocabulary knowledge	p1,p3,p7,p11,p14,p24,p26	7
		Weak verbal communication	p8,p18,p19,p20,p22,p23	6

According to Table 2, where the perspective of teachers as to the cognitive development domain of the students is presented, it is evident that the elementary school teachers think that their students exhibit poor development in paying attention (f=13), concentrating (f=10), numerical calculations (f=11), and learning (f=13). When examining Table 2 in regard to teachers' opinions regarding students' language development, it can be observed that elementary school teachers find their students insufficient in the areas of "sentence construction" (f=10), "inability in speaking" (f=7), "language development" (f=7), "vocabulary" (f=7), and "oral communication" (f=6). Some of the teachers' views are presented below in their original form;

"There is insufficient interest and attention in the lesson, there is a problem of focusing". (p16)

"Difficulty is observed in solving numerical operations". (p7)

"Speech disorders are often observed." (p19)

"Their vocabulary is observed to decline." (p11)

Furthermore, teacher observations on the cognitive and language development of elementary school students were analyzed and presented in Table 2 as main themes, sub-themes and categories. According to the teachers' opinions, it was determined that in the cognitive sub-theme dimension, distraction was observed intensely, lack of concentration, difficulties in performing simple numerical operations (learning difficulties), inadequate learning (learning gaps) were observed. In the language development sub-theme, they reported observations directly related to language development such as inadequate sentence formation, poor speaking skills, inadequate development in reading and writing, and poor vocabulary. Since the teachers who reported their opinions about the cognitive and language development of the students are the ones who know the students personally, it can be said that the students' cognitive and language development is behind the basic characteristics of the normal development process.

It can be said that what children, who spent the most critical periods of their developmental process at home with emergency remote education, perhaps needed the most was to communicate with their friends, engage in conversation, touch, and joke around. Due to their age, this period is crucial for the social and emotional development of elementary school students. The opinions of the teachers were obtained regarding the social and emotional development of the students who returned to face-to-face education after the emergency distance education implemented during the pandemic. These opinions were subjected to content analysis

separately, and those collected under a code/category by reaching a certain frequency (f) are presented in Table 3

Table 3: Content Analysis of Teachers' Views on Students' Social and Emotional Development

Main Theme	Sub Theme	Code/Category	Participants	f
Development	<i>Social Development</i>	Problems in friend relationships	p2,p6,p7,p10,p13,p15,p17,p20,p25	9
		Inability to communicate	p1,p2,p5,p9,p10,p13,p16,p17,p22	9
		Problems in social relationships	p2,p3,p4,p7,p9,p11,p12,p13,p17,p18,p19,p20	12
		Inability to adapt school	p2,p4,p9,p14,p17,p21,p23,p24,p26	9
		Inability to adapt classroom	p2,p4,p7,p8,p10,p17,p23,p24,p26	9
	<i>Emotional Development</i>	Lack of eye contact	p1,p2,p4,p9,p15,p25	6
		Boredom	p1,p5,p6,p10,p12,p15,p17,p19,p22	9
		Shyness	p3,p5,p7,p8,p16,p18, p19, p21	8
		Anxiety disorder	p1,p2,p5,p7,p11,p14,p18,p19,p23	9
		Selfishness	p1,p3,p11,p14,p15,p20	6
		Anger/Aggression	p3,p5,p9,p13,p17,p22,p23,p24,p26	9

According to Table 3, where the perspective of teachers as to the social and emotional development of the students is given, it is seen that the elementary school teachers think that their students exhibit poor social development in relationships with friends (f=9), taking part in communication (f=9), relationships in society (f=12), adapting to school (f=9), and adapting to the classroom (f=9). It is also evident, from Table 3, that the elementary school teachers think that their students exhibit poor emotional development in keeping eye contact (f=6), coping with boredom (f=9), overcoming shyness (f=8), having anxiety disorder (f=9), not being selfish (f=6), controlling anger/aggression (f=9). Some of the teachers' views are presented below in their original form;

"Problems/difficulties are observed in socializing." (p19)

"It was observed that they had difficulty making friends." (p13)

"They have difficulty in expressing their feelings." (p24)

"Frequent anger and aggression are observed." (p23)

Moreover, through the examination of teachers' views on the social and emotional development of their students presented in Table 3, it is understood that elementary school students have difficulty making friends, avoid talking, and hesitate to establish relationships, which are observed in the area of social development. Additionally, poor eye contact, shyness, anxiety disorder, selfishness, and anger are observed in the area of emotional development. It can be said that children of this age group, who are naturally affected by the changing paradigms of the age, show inadequate development in some critical task areas of developmental periods according to teachers' opinions.

The age range of elementary school students (7-11 years) corresponds to the adherence to external rules in Piaget's theory of moral development and aligns with the pre-conventional stage of punishment and obedience in Kohlberg's moral theory. These children, who have been subjected to emergency remote education, should acquire the values of society in terms of moral and personality development by gaining experiences within their culture. The opinions of the teachers concerning the moral and personality development of the students who returned to face-to-face education after the emergency distance education were subjected to content analysis separately, and the ones that reached a certain frequency (f) and were collected under a code/category, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Content Analysis of Teachers' Views on Students' Moral and Personality Development Levels

Main Theme	Sub Theme	Code/Category	Participants	f
Development	<i>Moral Development</i>	Differentiate right from wrong	p4,p7,p10,p13,p14,p15,p16,p19	8
		Value development	p2,p5,p7,p9,p11,p12,p15,p18,p22,p23,p25	11
		Manipulative relationships	p3,p4,p6,p8,p9,p10,p15,p16,p18	9
		Obeying rules	p1,p5,p7,p11,p12,p16,p19,p20,p21,p24,p26	11
		Conscience development	p3,p7,p10,p12,p13,p15,p17,p19	8
	<i>Personal Development</i>	Parental dependency	p2,p4,p5,p7,p9,p10,p13,p14,p17,p20	10
		Maturation level	p1,p3,p5,p6,p7,p9,p10,p15,p19,p21,p22	11
		Development of Responsibility	p3,p7,p9,p11,p13,p15,p17,p21,p23,p25,p26	11
		Determination	p1,p4,p5,p6,p7,p8,p9,p10,p12,p16,p18,p19	12
		Peer influence	p1,p4,p5,p9,p11,p15,p19,p21,p24	9

According to Table 4, where the perspective of teachers as to the moral development domain of the students is presented, it is evident that the elementary school teachers think that their students exhibit poor development in differentiating between right and wrong ($f=8$), developing values ($f=11$), staying away from manipulative relationships ($f=9$), obeying rules ($f=11$), and developing conscience ($f=8$). In addition, Table 4 also exhibits the perspective of teachers as to the personality development domain of the students; it is evident that the elementary school teachers think that their students exhibit poor development in depending on parents less ($f=10$), growing mature ($f=11$), developing a sense of responsibility ($f=11$), being determined ($f=12$), and not being influenced by peers ($f=9$). Some of the teachers' views are presented below in their original form;

"Wrong and right seem to have switched." (p13)

"They seem to have lost their values." (p7)

"There is timidity in taking initiative." (p12)

"Indecision is observed in their actions." (p19)

When the teacher observations on the moral and personality development of elementary school students presented in Table 4 are analyzed, it is concluded that these students exhibit inadequate development, similar to other areas like cognitive, language, social, and emotional development. Teachers noted deficiencies in moral development, including distinguishing right from wrong, values, manipulative relationships, and conscience development. In terms of personality development, teachers observed parental dependency, insufficient maturation, irresponsibility, and inadequate peer influence. This situation parallels the observations of elementary school students in all developmental areas studied.

Discussion

If education is to be defined as intentional acculturation process, this process needs to be carried out through cooperation with family, school, and social environment. Especially the pre-school and elementary school years are crucial for children's acquisition of fundamental behaviors, values, beliefs and skills that they need for life. Students learn by doing, living, disassembling, in other words they learn through interacting. Most of these types of learning typically occur outside the home, within schools and the community. However, this dynamic came to a halt during the COVID-19 pandemic due to Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT). The gravity of the repercussions of this period on child development was highlighted with the repeated warnings from health professionals, psychiatrists, and educators about the significant negative impacts of the extended stay-at-home period on children's cognitive and socio-emotional development. To empirically understand such effects, the present study focused on cognitive, language, socio-emotional, moral, and personal development and examined the reflections of the online learning process on the developmental areas of students based on the views of teachers.

Cognitive development is a domain of development that involves thinking, intelligence, perception, and problem-solving skills. Elementary school is known as the second childhood period (7-12 years) and as the concrete operational stage of cognitive development. During this period, a child gradually moves away from egocentric thinking and progresses perceptually and mentally in a gradual and cumulative manner to a higher level (Cardullo et al., 2021: 35). Furthermore, in order for the child's healthy cognitive development, the child must be among his peers, in school and in society to have healthy communication and interaction with others. In other words, the child requires enriched stimuli for cognitive development during this period. Conversely, a lack of stimuli negatively affects this development (Senemoğlu, 2022: 76). In this regard, teachers reported that children had deficiencies in "attention," "concentration," "numerical calculations," and "learning," which they attributed to extended periods of "staying at home". These cognitive development deficiencies expressed by teachers in this research, labelled as "learning deficiencies" align with another study where it was found, "problems are observed in transmitting course content to students" (Çakın and Akyavuz, 2020: 166; Yüksel-Şahin, 2014). These two findings suggest that students' cognitive development was adversely affected during emergency remote teaching on the COVID-19 lockdown period.

Just as cognitive development requires enriched stimuli and social interaction, so too does language development. Furthermore, an individual's language development is another one of the key factors that determine their ability to learn, communicate, socialize, and develop their personality (İpek et al., 2007: 140). This development is not entirely dependent on the child, but similar to cognitive development, it requires the child to be in a social environment with peers, in school, and within the community. This is to ensure that language development occurs in the desired direction and within an age-appropriate rate. In this research, teachers' views on students' language development are presented in Table 2. The analysis indicates that students have insufficient development in language skills in categories such as "sentence formation," "speaking," "language development," "vocabulary," and "verbal communication". It can be understood that students who spent a two-year period at home due to COVID-19 were adversely affected in terms of their

language development. In another study, problems were reported in both the “student-teacher” and “student-student” communication categories after online education (Çakın & Akyavuz, 2020: 166).

While language skills are essential for communication, socio-emotional development is equally critical in shaping how children interact with others and build relationships. Additionally, according to the teachers’ views on the socio-emotional development of elementary school students presented in Table 3, students experience problems related to the indicators of their social development, such as “friendship relationships,” “communication,” “social relationships,” and “school and classroom adaptation.” Children who were isolated from their social environments for extended periods appear to have struggled with maintaining socialization skills. When looking at teachers’ views on the emotional development of elementary school students, it becomes apparent that students face emotional development problems such as “avoiding eye contact,” “boredom/disinterest,” “shyness,” “anxiety disorders,” “selfishness,” and “anger/aggressiveness”. Moreover, the social-emotional development of children is essential for the formation of a healthy personality. This development not only affects their learning motivation, the development of their sense of responsibility, and their attachment to school but also affects their grades, study habits, the development of their thought systems, and improvements in reading skills (Elias and Moceri, 2012: 424; Güngör, 2014: 1378).

Beyond socio-emotional skills, moral development is a key area where children learn to differentiate between right and wrong, shaping their ethical frameworks. Moral development encompasses concepts of “right or wrong,” “good or bad,” and the adoption of behaviors and values that are considered acceptable or unacceptable. It involves specific moral stages. In order for a society to fulfil its expected functions, the individuals as members of society must internalize certain rules. Some of these rules are related to how an individual can communicate effectively with others, how to avoid hurting others, and generally how to get along well with other people, in other words, how to adapt effectively to the environment in which they live (Senemoğlu, 2022: 62). According to teachers’ views presented in Table 4 regarding the moral development of elementary school students, it is evident that elementary school students have deficiencies in their ability to differentiate “right from wrong” and in their “value development”. Moreover, they tend to develop more “selfish relationships,” and their ability to “obey rules” and “conscience development” is considered inadequate. During the COVID-19 pandemic, children who lacked social interaction and remained within their families have likely not ventured beyond their family’s moral values. Particularly for children in the pre-moral development stage, the need for model experiences in differentiating right from wrong is crucial. Children who are deprived of these experiences are observed to progress to the next stage without acquiring adequate moral development, leading to their critical developmental stage without a strong moral foundation.

In parallel with moral growth, the development of a child's personality is fundamental in forming their unique identity and behaviors. Thus, the last developmental domain examined in the study is personality development of elementary school students. Personality development encompasses a person’s acquisition of an identity, consisting of behavioral characteristics that are unique to the individual and consistently displayed. Personality is a unique whole formed through the interaction of characteristics an individual is born with and those acquired over time, encompassing all aspects of human behavior (Senemoğlu, 2022: 72). Children’s personality development is related to their cognitive skills, as well as their self-concepts, interaction patterns with others, and attitudes toward the world and life (Bacanlı, 2021: 25). Emotions, abilities, motivations, temperament, social, physical-psychomotor and cognitive traits, character and values, beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and so on, all contribute to forming an individual’s personality (Senemoğlu, 2022: 72). After examining teachers’ views on personality development of elementary school students as indicated in Table 4, it becomes apparent that elementary school students exhibit poor development in areas such as “dependency on parents,” “maturation level,” “development of responsibility,” “determination,” and “peer influence”. For students to acquire essential personality traits, they need to face challenges, experience life difficulties, and consequently, confront situations where they can take responsibility (Cullinane et al., 2020: 11; Senemoğlu, 2022: 72). Considering that children exposed to home isolation due to the Covid-19 virus pandemic have been unable to develop their basic personality traits, demonstrate them, receive criticism, and reassess themselves, it is believed that there is an inevitable deficiency in personality more significant than what elementary school teachers have indicated.

Recommendations Based on the Findings

1. It is recommended that teachers and parents need to be informed about the insufficient developments in the developmental assignments related to the development areas of elementary school students during the online education process.
2. It is suggested to conduct more comprehensive research and examinations, involving healthcare professionals, focusing on elementary school children.
3. Especially, the reading-writing skills and language development abilities related to the cognitive development areas of children in the early years of elementary school, who spent their time with online education, should be examined.

4. It is recommended to examine the attitudes of students at all levels who spent the two-year COVID-19 pandemic period at home with online education, regarding both their developmental areas and assignments, and their attitudes towards education and school concepts.
5. It is strongly advised to promptly monitor the long-term reflections of developmental assignments related to developmental stages.
6. Since emotional development deficiencies may not be immediately observable, it is considered beneficial to monitor and observe students over a specific period of time.
7. Since the process of staying at home may also have affected children's eating habits, it is recommended that the domain of physical development be investigated by healthcare professionals.

Conclusion

The results of this study has shown that due to COVID-19 pandemic and the confinement of children at home, many developmental assignments related to various areas of cognitive, language, social-emotional, moral, and personality development that could have been acquired individually within the social life have remained incomplete in elementary school children according to teacher evaluations, which is important given that elementary school is a critical period for the development of these developmental milestones.

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