

PLANNING AND PRACTICES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN PANDEMIC; NORTHERN CYPRUS CASE

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus epidemic has affected the whole world and many sectors have been affected by this crisis. Due to the pandemic in education, there has been a crisis, education has stopped around the world and education has to be moved to online environments. These changes, which can be defined as utopian, also caused changes in the policies and planning of education administrators and required effective management of the crisis situation. Covid-19 necessitated a re-evaluation of education along with all fields of study and revealing different perspectives. In this study, it is aimed to reveal the planning and practices put forward in educational institutions for crisis management in the pandemic and the practices and plans put forward in Northern Cyprus. The research was carried out with a compilation study, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Academic publications found in line with the keywords determined in line with the purpose of the research were examined and the findings were brought together. As a result of the research, it was determined that the education of Northern Cyprus was adversely affected by the pandemic and that this negative effect would last for three years, and that the various practices put forward by the Ministry of National Education to immediately switch to in-service training, television programs and distance education were not sufficient.

Keywords: Pandemic, crisis management, Northern Cyprus

Introduction

School is the place that has an important place in the life of students and where they spend most of their daily lives. The main task of the school is to prepare students for the society they live in and for today's world, in short for life, in addition to educating them academically (Buluç, 2009). We should consider that the world, and therefore our country, is going through a constant change, and we should question how prepared our institutions are for this change. Situations such as economic ups and downs, political events, terrorism, natural disasters and epidemics that we experience now and in certain periods can cause crises in schools. Again, negative situations to be realized by administrators, teachers, students, other employees of the school and parents can also cause a crisis. The manager does not have sufficient experience; not knowing enough about the school, its stakeholders, goals and qualifications; failing to show what is expected in the management and decision-making stages of the team; Situations such as not taking the necessary security measures can also cause a crisis (Aksu ve Deveci, 2009).

An institution called a school is a dynamic organic structure. The environmental manager of this dynamic and organic structure should observe the current situation with an open and innovative eye and dynamically transform the projects that affect the school (Yahşi, 2018). It is thought that the expected crisis management skill level and leadership style of the school principal is one of the key figures of the institution and is important in terms of establishing a qualified educational institution. In conclusion, this research examines the relationship between crisis management skills and school principals' leadership styles. Everyone will struggle with the crisis in the chaotic environment where the school is in crisis. The place where the planning and cooperation organization works and the success of these studies are related to the leadership quality of the manager (Ulutaş, 2010).

The coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, which emerged at the end of 2019, has become a global storm. In addition to the consequences of the current chaos and storms, the social, cultural, economic, political and many aspects of this situation will be unpredictable. There is no doubt that this storm was caused by education and the Covid-19 outbreak changed the views and understanding of education (Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020). Due to the global impact of the pandemic, basically this can be considered a disaster. This is interpreted as the end of something and a sign of a new beginning (El Maarouf et al., 2020). As an axis, with these perspectives, it can be said that everything that happened in the world after Covid-19 created a normal new paradigm that will create a new world order.

Crisis Management in Education

The concept of crisis entered the scientific literature 30-40 years ago (Soysal, Paksoy, & Özçalıcı, 2011; Tutar, 2004). While crisis was first used to mean "the turning point of a disease" in medical sources, it has become a concept used instead of the words "depression and depression" in social sciences over time (Nelson, 2018). There have been many scientific studies on the concept of crisis, especially in the last ten years (Ayyürek, 2014).

In the crisis process, the organization sees its deficiencies and competencies and creates a new strategy accordingly. Crisis; Completion of deficiencies creates an opportunity to regulate overlooked or neglected areas. It is ensured that the applications that work or not during the crisis are seen (Aydemir and Demirci, 2005). The crisis will create the opportunity to recognize the members of the organization who stand out as support and performance in managing the process and to evaluate these people at the right levels in the next process; It will also be an opportunity to cut off the relationship of members, work and areas that trigger the crisis to grow and harm the organization (Slater, 2017). Leaders view crises positively; They stated that crises provide an opportunity for businesses to identify their weak parts and understand their blind spots and in which parts more precautions should be taken (Fernandez and Shaw, 2020). They pointed out that if they had not faced so many crises, they would not have grown so much. The crisis may cause ruptures within the members of the organization as well as; It can also allow bonding and strengthening of bonds between members. What has been learned in this process will enable lessons to be learned; It will help in preventing and managing subsequent crises.

Crises in schools are situations that occur as a result of events that will disrupt the education process or completely prevent the functioning. Children constitute the future of the society, and therefore educational institutions are the organizations that constitute the most valuable building blocks of the society (Ocak, 2006: 69). The management and security of these institutions, which ensure the training of individuals at the desired level and suitable for the purposes of the society, should be our priority as a country (Aksoy and Aksoy, 2003; Maya, 2014). At this point, it is vital that everyone, from the Ministry of National Education, to which the country's most crowded organization network is affiliated, to the administrative staff at the school, perform their duties and responsibilities correctly and on time.

Pandemic and Education

It is possible to say that the concept of distance education in the education sector has gained more importance compared to the past, with the COVID-19 pandemic, which is effective worldwide. Many sectors were adversely affected by this difficult process, and an economic recession was encountered in every conceivable field, and social and economic life was interrupted. In this difficult process, where almost all areas stop, people cannot do their daily work and the wheels do not turn, individuals who are engaged in education and have a say in the management of education, by using the distance education system, ensure that the process is carried out successfully, thanks to television, internet and various information technologies, and that the students continue their education life completely. and ensured that they could survive this period with the least damage (Almazova et. al., 2020)..

The COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the whole world and caused a great change and alteration in our daily lives, affected many different types of business sectors and social areas as well as the field of education. Thanks to the measures and decisions taken for education, students, parents, teachers and education administrators have been able to integrate successfully into the distance education system. The correct communication and interaction of parents with their children and teachers with their students has been very important in this challenging process. During the pandemic process at the global level, the distance education system was switched to and face-to-face education was suspended. Thus, the education life of the students continued without interruption. Teachers have experienced great improvements in their knowledge, skills and experience in pedagogical, psychological and technological fields (Gelles et. al., 2020).

With the development of this epidemic, the pace and flow of life on earth has changed (Zhao, 2020). In order to reduce the impact of epidemics and slow the spread of epidemics due to high pollution levels, practices such as flexible, home-based work, and rotating work arrangements have been implemented. In addition, every country in the world has adopted measures such as partial or full curfews, personal isolation, quarantine procedures and social isolation (Gupta & Goplani, 2020). Within the scope of these measures, it was decided to close the places where human-to-human contact could occur and all educational institutions were included in this scope (Doghonadze et al., 2020; Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020). With the closure of schools and the interruption of face-to-face education, the educational life of 1.6 billion students was disrupted and constituted approximately half of the number of students at all education levels (Bozkurt et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2020).

According to the principle that education is the most basic human right (United Nations, 1984), many educational institutions in the world have quickly reflected on the emergency distance education application to compensate for the education interruption caused by the pandemic. The continuity of the current education system of Covid-19 in the world is not yet ready for an epidemic to ensure that students learn under all conditions; It has been observed that they study with schools, teachers and others. People are physically separated (Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020). Also, during the crisis (emergency) misinformation about distance

education spreads at the same speed as the virus; It is seen that crisis management is tried to be applied with the decisions taken with the introduction of these concepts.

Northern Cyprus Education Practices and Planning in the Pandemic

After the World Health Organization declared Covid-19 a global epidemic, national schools were closed in 107 countries around the world (UNESCO, 2020; WHO, 2020). The closure of schools due to Covid 19 has led to the transfer of education to online environments (Daniel, 2020).

In the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, all educational activities were suspended on March 10, 2020. Afterwards, as of March 30, 2020, education in primary and secondary education started on the website of the Ministry of National Education and on the screen of BRT 2 television as of April 13, 2020. Universities that already have distance education units have easily transferred their education to the internet environment.

The epidemic has turned into a global crisis. In addition to the current consequences of this crisis; We should not ignore that it is still in front of us as a scenario that can affect the whole world in social, cultural, political, financial and many areas that we cannot predict. The level of education is undoubtedly in the middle of this hurricane and the pandemic has caused a change in our perception of education and the way we interpret education at this point. (Bozkurt and Sharma, 2020).

In order to ensure the organization and coordination of schools in the fight against the pandemic and to intervene with stakeholders when necessary, a "Pandemic Monitoring and Evaluation Committee" will be established under the chairmanship of the Minister of National Education and Culture under the Ministry of National Education. In the Ministry of National Education, the Department of Education has formed an "epidemic support board" consisting of experts from the Ministry of National Education, the National Education Supervisory Board, the Department of Education and Discipline, and joint education services. Department, teachers union representatives. It was decided to establish an "epidemic committee" within the school, under the chairmanship of the school principal, consisting of school teachers and school-parent union representatives. Under the auspices of school administrators, the responsibility of the board of directors is to prepare the school's pandemic action plan within the framework of this guide; teachers, service personnel and school-parent alliances.

Another planning made in this process is the in-service programs organized for educators during the transition period to distance education. In this direction, an in-service training program "Protection from Infectious Diseases and Hygiene" was planned for school administrators by the Education Joint Services Department Directorate between 25-28 August 2020 (TRNC MEB, 2020).

According to the results of the "Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Northern Cyprus Education System" report prepared by the Cyprus Educational Research Association (KEAB) (2020); It is stated that the pandemic has adversely affected TRNC education seriously and the three education levels that are most negatively affected are higher education, vocational technical education and primary education. In line with the findings in the report, there is a high probability that serious learning losses may occur in at least two academic years in TRNC education due to the pandemic, and the Ministry of National Education and Culture does not have a planned process or procedure for crisis management, so the crisis created by the coronavirus pandemic in education is also good. It is stated that he cannot manage. It is emphasized that the elements that do not have distance education opportunities and that require applied education are adversely affected, and that the technological infrastructure of the schools and the central organization of the Ministry, the learning-teaching methods, the competencies of the educators, the educational supervision and teaching programs should be changed and transformed (KEAB, 2020).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Covid 19 pandemic process is a challenging process that affects all societies and all age groups in the world. It has been observed that schools are inadequate in managing this crisis, especially in our country. In this direction, the research aims to determine the opinions of school administrators on the crisis management policies implemented by schools during the Covid 19 process.

The pandemic process is not a process that the Ministry of National Education can overcome alone, because it is a social process that requires everyone to do their part seriously. Providing uninterrupted continuing education has always been the primary goal of all affected countries. Although there were interruptions and shortcomings in the scope of distance education during the pandemic period, the Ministry of National Education and YODAK quickly implemented the existing open and distance education opportunities so that education would not be interrupted during this period when schools were closed. At this point, it can be said that by taking the necessary

precautions and acting together with the stakeholders, it is getting through this process with the least damage and there is no harm in it. Borup, Jensen, Archambault, Short, & Graham, (2020) stated in their research that students need support during the pandemic process and the most important community that will provide this is families. When the problems are examined, it is pointed out that all of the participants lack infrastructure. Another problem is that students do not have equal conditions. In the studies conducted in this direction, it is emphasized that the closure of schools due to the Covid-19 epidemic causes many problems and mostly leads to inequality (Williamson, Eynon, & Potter, 2020; Van Lancker & Parolin, 2020).

National authorities should take measures to take into account the psychological, social and economic changes at the beginning of the pandemic process and in the period after. It is especially important to consider the activities and practices that will help students adapt to the school environment, as well as the psychological, economic and social development of students, in planning the post-pandemic period and arranging the education system. (Kara, 2020).

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