

Covid-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study on Adolescents' Stress, Anxiety, and Family Communication

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Research Article

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Abstract

This study, which included eight adolescents, was planned as a qualitative study on the stress, anxiety and family communication experienced by adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. To collect data, this research was conducted in-depth with case-study from qualitative methods, and a questionnaire was carried out through open-ended interviews by taking the opinions of field experts. In this direction, four models were created and an in-depth analysis of the models was made. According to the results, while the COVID-19 pandemic has led to higher levels of stress and anxiety, it has also revealed both positive and negative aspects in the adolescents' communication with their families. It has been observed that the lack of communication of adolescents' with their peers because of social isolation may cause negative effects on them.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic which started in China and affected the whole world, isolated individuals from their family and friends, posed communication difficulties and thus exposed people to behavioral problems mainly caused by the unaccustomed conditions of living alone (Brooks et al., 2020). With the World Health Organization declaring a COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020, pandemic and social distance measures have significantly affected daily life of adolescents like other individuals causing the closure of schools, the transition to distance education, the restrictions on leaving their homes and the inability to get together with friends (Rogers et al., 2021; WHO, 2020).

Due to the life-threatening nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, a change in our lifestyle and reducing social communication was inevitable to prevent the spread of the virus (Everett et al., 2020). Considering the fact that strong social relationships play a key role in the developmental stages of life, it is likely that the pandemic affected teenagers and adolescents. According to Steinberg (2005); Steinberg et al. (2011), adolescence is the period in which individuals experience changes in both emotional and physical characteristics quite intensely. The biggest effects felt by adolescents stem from the closure of schools. As a result of this, teenagers stayed at home with family members, and they weren't able to see their friends and peers. Adolescents have different developmental needs than adults. Thus, adolescents are at a stage where they are prone to social connections and separation from their parents. For this reason, it can be said that the COVID-19 pandemic process has a different emotional impact on adolescents than adults (Mendelson, 2020). Thus, it is probable to say that adolescents with such intense emotions are affected more than adults during the pandemic.

Together with national legislations, confinement, curfews, and quarantine were imposed in most of the countries. Quarantine is often accompanied by negative emotions that can cause anxiety, boredom, and/or restlessness (Brooks et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2020). Thus, quarantine, together with the stress and anxiety that is generally thought normal in the development process of adolescents, caused stronger emotional distress, stress and anxiety, and subsequent problems in family communication during the pandemic (Akoğlu & Karaaslan, 2020).

Stress and Anxiety in Adolescents

Although there are many definitions of stress, it can generally be defined as the biological, physical and mental reaction of the organism to a negative situation (Del Giudice et al., 2018; Endler & Parker, 1990; McEwen & Karatsoreos, 2020). Anxiety, on the other hand, is defined as a state that includes emotional, cognitive and behavioral responses to an uncertain threat anticipation (Grupe & Nitschke, 2013). Johnston (2020) defined stress as feeling overwhelmed due to inability to cope with the situation encountered. However, anxiety does not have an identifiable cause and its treatment usually requires more than just changing the lifestyle. Lazarus (1976) defined anxiety as an emotion within stress. Long-term stress can lead to anxiety (Endler & Parker, 1990).

The teenage years are full of new experiences, opportunities and challenges. Besides, teens' brains are changing and they want more independence and autonomy. During this time, there are also many stressors for example, school, adjusting to friends, assignments, exams, etc. may be concerning for teenagers. Feeling anxious is part of the normal range of emotions, just like feeling angry or embarrassed. For most teens, anxiety is not permanent and goes away on its own. But for some teens, it doesn't go away or is so intense that it prevents them from doing their daily activities. Feeling anxious can help keep teens safe by making them think about the situation they're in (Hospital, 2021). However, it is stated that the stress experienced during adolescence can cause both anxiety and permanent cognitive deficits to some individuals (Afifi et al., 2016; Goodman et al., 2005; Provensi et al., 2019). Troy and Mauss (2011) stated that stressful life events in adolescence can cause mental health deterioration and lead to negative consequences such as anxiety and depression. Therefore, stressful events during this period are likely to pose a risk to an individual's mental health during adulthood (Lo lacono & Carola, 2018). In addition, Basut (2006) emphasized the importance of efficient stress-coping ways and positive parental role models during adolescence can reduce the risk of tendency to crime and substance abuse later in life. In this context it can be stated that the communication and interaction among adolescents' and their families is a prominent factor in stress management.

Adolescence and Family Communication

The role of parents in an individual's life starting from infancy and during in adolescence is quite significant. Several studies reported that many stress factors affect adolescents (Goodman et al., 2005; Groux et al., 1992; Sigfusdottir et al., 2017). Goodman et al. (2005) stated that stress in the family affects both parenting styles and parent-child relationships. Family communication is a key element for the adolescents while growing into adults. White (1996) reported that adolescents are highly influenced by family communication in their decision-making processes. For these and other similar reasons, family relationships play an important role in adolescent development (De Los Reyes et al., 2019).

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many social and psychological changes in everyone's lives, including adolescents (McGinty et al., 2020; Sani et al., 2020; Ünver et al., 2020). In particular, families with children faced a great extent of stress due to losses in their financial resources and psychological support for their children (Patrick et al., 2020). Due to their developmental characteristics, the adolescents

try to be independent, try to spend more time with their friends and they focus on socializing more which makes things difficult for them and for their families (Steinberg, 2005; Steinberg & Silk, 2002). However, for some families, spending more time together can bring family members closer together and develop a sense of well-being (Cava et al., 2005; Jeong et al., 2016). As a matter of fact, it has been reported in a study that positive results can be achieved in increasing the time spent with the family. Rogers et al. (2021) stated that spending more time with parents and siblings is both enjoyable and a source of social support. However, in another study, it was stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic, adolescents and families were tense and angry, and this even led to domestic violence (Bavel et al., 2020).

Considering that this stress experienced by families during the COVID-19 pandemic process also affects children, it becomes important to have healthy communication between the family and the child, because having a healthy parent communication, the child experiences less stress and his/ her future life will be affected relatively less negatively (Brown et al., 2020).

Many studies have been conducted on adolescents during the pandemic (Bećirović & Pajević, 2020; Prime et al., 2020; Wray-Lake et al., 2020). However, the communication skills of adolescents during the pandemic are not studied in full depth. In addition, finding out in which direction adolescents are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic will guide the shaping of the measures to be taken in this context. It is thought that increasing the number and quality of the studies to be carried out in this field will have an important place in increasing the effectiveness of the applications to be made to strengthen the communication between both families and adolescents. Thus, the present study titled "COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study on Adolescents' Stress, Anxiety and Family Communication" was planned to fill in the gap in the relevant literature.

Within the scope of this study, we aimed to thoroughly investigate:

- To see the economic conditions of the family in the COVID-19 pandemic and the situation of the adolescent's responsibilities at home,
- To examine how adolescents structure their time before and during the pandemic,
- To identify the emotions that adolescents experience intensely during the pandemic process,
- To see how stress and anxiety levels of adolescents are affected by the pandemic,
- To see how the communication of adolescents with their families has changed during the pandemic process,

Method

Research Design

This research was carried out in a phenomenological design which is one of the qualitative methods. The phenomenological design aims to discover the common meaning of the experiences of a group (Creswell, 2021). This design aims to focus on phenomena that we are aware of but not aware of in a detailed understanding (Şimşek & Yıldırım, 2011). Creswell (2013) defined qualitative studies as a way to collect and examine non-numerical data in order to narrow a wide research area to an easily ascertainable topic. Data collection process in qualitative studies can be completed in three different ways: (a) in-depth, open-ended interviews, (b) written documents and (c) direct observation (Patton, 2014). We used in-depth, open-ended interviews to collect our data because with the help of open-ended interviews, it is aimed to understand and interpret the current situation or to examine the problem in depth (Mohajan, 2018). Since the study deals with the COVID-19 pandemic process, it was deemed appropriate to use the phenomenological design, as it was planned on an event that we were aware of but could not understand in depth.

Sample Group

The study group of the research consists of 8 adolescents studying in high school in the 2020-2021 academic year. While forming the study group, "maximum diversity sampling" was used which is one of the purposive sampling methods used in qualitative research. Büyüköztürk et al. (2017) stated that maximum diversity sampling should be used to determine both different and similar aspects of the problem examined in the population. For this reason, while determining the students, two people, one girl and one boy, were determined from each grade level. The purpose of taking different types of samples is to try to determine whether there are common or shared situations. Some demographic information of the sample group is given in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic information of the sample group

Demographic	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8
Gender	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl	Boy
Grade	9th	9th	10th	10th	11th	11th	12th	12th
Age	15	15	16	15	16	16	17	18
Hobby	Riding	Tennis	Tennis	Sports	Basketball	Basketball	Piano	Design

While determining the adolescents, two individuals from each grade level were determined. The parents of all the participants are working people. All of them describe their family's economic situation as moderate. There are variations in the types of high schools attended by the participants. Each of them took up hobbies with various sports or arts and stated that they continued during the pandemic process.

Data Collection Tool

Demographic Information Form: The gender, life standards, city, parental employment status and economic status of the adolescents participating in the study were collected at the beginning of the interviews.

Semi-structured Interview Form: First, a semi-structured interview question pool was created by the researchers by considering the relevant literature. The questions created were discussed among the researchers and made suitable for adolescents. The questions were finalized by taking the opinions of 5 different field experts through online forms. The form obtained after receiving the opinions of the field experts was carried out as a pilot study on two adolescents. Questions with similar answers were combined or separated as probe questions. In line with the feedback obtained, 11 questions were collected under 3 main themes and in addition to these, 22 probe questions were obtained. In the preparation of the questions, it was deemed appropriate to take a pilot application and expert opinion in order to ensure the validity, which shows that the obtained data reflect the reality, the consistency of the results, and the reliability. In the interview form the questions are given as followed: "How is the distribution of roles at home planned according to you?", "How did you spend time with your family during the pandemic?", "How was your relationship with your family during the pandemic?" and "How is a day during the pandemic process?"

Data Collection

After the ethical committee decision numbered E.4461 was taken, the data were started to be collected. The data were collected in the 2020-2021 academic year. The semi-structured form was recorded by 2 child development field experts by asking online interviews or phone calls. Before the interviews with the adolescents were recorded, permission was obtained from the families of the adolescents, and then the interviews were conducted with the permission of the adolescents. Interviews were planned with online Zoom meetings or phone calls at jointly determined hours and days. Interviews with each adolescent lasted an average of 30 minutes. First, the records obtained during the interview were transcribed by the researchers and the records were made into a single text for each adolescent.

Credibility and Consistency

In order for the researches to be accepted, it is expected to be at a minimum level of validity and reliability. Determining the validity and reliability of the design, data collection tool and analysis in which the research is planned, has a decisive role in the acceptance and credibility of the study. Although there are various methods for validity and reliability in quantitative studies, it is not possible to find a definite value for qualitative studies (Shenton, 2004). Expressing the processes in detail in qualitative research methods increases the credibility of the study. For this reason, in this study, the data collection and analysis processes are described in detail.

Various methods were used to increase the credibility and consistency of the study. Şimşek and Yıldırım (2011) stated that in qualitatively planned research studies, the results obtained may be different due to the different views and perceptions of the researchers towards the events. In this context, while coding the themes, the two authors independently categorized and coded the transcripts of an interview. After coding, two researchers developed a new coding framework by discussing the code booklets they created in a meeting. In this way, it is aimed to ensure compatibility between coders. In addition, in order to ensure consistency, the findings of the study were directly supported by the opinions of the participants and the findings were presented by ensuring consistency with the coding. Finally, Creswell (2002) stated, the findings were interpreted in terms of related situations and internal and external heterogeneity criteria were taken into account in order to ensure the internal consistency of the themes.

Analysis of Data

Following the steps stated by Şimşek and Yıldırım (2011) for qualitative studies, the data were coded, themes were found, the data were organized according to the codes and themes, and the findings were interpreted. Considering the relevant steps, the interview records were first transcribed. In order to create the coding booklet, two researchers separately coded a randomly selected interview. After reaching consensus on the coding, both of the researchers completed all the remaining coding by cooperatively.

Each theme obtained was interpreted within its own title. In the study, MAXQDA qualitative data analysis package program was used to categorize the interviews within the framework of coding. Concept maps were created through creative coding in the program in order to create the visuals of the coding. In addition, the analysis of the study was carried out by considering the steps of "Standards for the Reporting of Qualitative Studies" which has 21 steps (O'Brien et al., 2014).

Results

The financial situation and the harmony within the family are two important factors that can affect adolescents. In order to better evaluate the family situation of our participants, information about their families was collected and grouped under two themes as "Role Distribution" and "Family Financial Situation". The "Information About Family" is represented in Model 1.

[Figure 1 near here]

Since it is thought that the economic situation and the distribution of domestic responsibilities of adolescents have an effect on overcoming the pandemic process, the economic status of the families and the distribution of domestic responsibilities were examined. The theme of "*Family Financial Situation*" included two sub-themes, namely: daily allowance (pocket money) of the adolescents and whether they could buy what they wanted to. During the pandemic, not all of the participants received their pocket money, as one said: "*I don't get any pocket money during the pandemic; even if I do, I can't do anything with it.*" It was not only during the pandemic; most of them were not getting pocket money from

their parents before the pandemic. One student said: *"It is not on a weekly or monthly basis. You know, it is not really regular."* Even if they do not have pocket money, it can be said that none of them had any problems about how they got what they wanted to buy. One student said: *"You know, lately there isn't anything I deeply want anyway. I tell my parents what I want, and they buy it for me. I am also saving a little bit."* Another student said: *"For expensive things such as smart phones, I save money. But not for clothes and other stuff"*.

Regarding the theme of "Role Distribution", although there was no distinct set of rules, the adolescents had some responsibilities at home. One student said: *"There is not much distribution of roles actually."* And another said: *"Well I think there is a distribution of roles at home, but I think the roles assigned to me are a little less than others..."*. There was no clear description of the responsibilities given to the adolescents participating in the study, yet they did not have any difficulty in fulfilling their responsibilities. *"I mean, they are not difficult things..."* and *"Easy and simple things that take 10-15 minutes"* were the answers of two participants. However, one subject expressed that he needed to take care of his younger brother, which was exhausting for him: *"It is tiring because the age difference between the two of us is so much that whatever interests me is boring for him, and the other way around. He always wants to do the same things and I get bored"*.

Examining how the participants spent their time before the pandemic process revealed two main themes, namely time spent at home (consisting of three sub-themes) and outside home. The model for adolescents whiling their time before the pandemic process is given as Model 2.

[Figure 2 near here]

Before the pandemic, our participants usually spent their out-of-home time with their friends and in the school. One of the participants said: *"Before the confinement, I usually walked around the beach with my friends. We used to go to shopping malls."* Another one said: *"I used to wake up early at about 7-7.30, I used to be at school from 8 to 15:30. After school, sometimes I would meet with my friends and go for a walk, sometimes I would visit my aunts, sometimes I would come home and study depending on the schedule of my next day, but generally I used to have an active day"*.

One of our participants said: *"Before the pandemic, we didn't spend so much time at home, and I am sure you didn't either"*. 3 different sub-themes were identified regarding the time they were homebound due to the pandemic: the time they spend in their room, the way they spent their time in their room, and the time they spend outside their room. Our participants spent most of their time -around 8-9 hours a day- in their rooms dealing with either technological devices or studies. One of the participants said: *"In my room, I actually do everything, you know, I read books, listen to music, and mostly study. In summers, I don't even want to leave my room to relax, sometimes I sleep in my room, in my bed, and then I get up"*. Another one said: *"I have a TV in my room so I can play video games or watch movies. I spend time lying in my bed until sleep time"*.

When asked about the time they spent out of their room, one participant said: *"I only go to the kitchen to have a meal, except that I go to the living room where I watch TV series with my mother or something"*. Another one said: *"Generally, I don't spend much time in my room during the day, other than sleeping. Mostly, I am in the living room studying"*. It seemed that the adolescents did not engage in common activities with their parents other than daily routines.

Regarding the most adverse impacts of the pandemic on adolescents, we observed two main themes and five sub-themes. The model for the effects of the pandemic is given in Model 3.

[Figure 3 near here]

Our participants stated that during the confinement, most of their days were monotone, routinized, and quite boring as one said: *"It's generally boring and I get tired of doing nothing. I'm always trying to find something to do, but I can't."*

When asked about the negative impacts of the pandemic, our participants mentioned family-related, friends-related, and school-related effects. As a family-related effect, the pandemic had caused changes in the communication of the adolescents with their families. One of the participants said: *"Of course my relationship with my family was affected the most. We had arguments and quarrels. I don't know, my mom was always cleaning the house or something, she was always going into my room, she was bothering me, but that's all. My relationship with my dad was good, we hadn't seen each other in a long time, we missed each other. I had no problems with my dad."* On the other hand, the adolescents started to spend more time with their parents due to the pandemic, which helped them realize more about the character, temper, and nature of their family members. For instance, one participant said: *"It happened, of course, because we stayed at home all the time, we got closer and spent time together for almost three or four months. I think I learned more about my father that I didn't know before. As we spent more time together, we became closer"*. Another participant said: *"I realized that my family members had habits that I had never noticed before"*. It seemed that the adolescents and their families did not have close-knit relationships before the pandemic. Home quarantine -as a preventive measure against the spread of the COVID-19 disease- brought parents and children together at homes as one participant said: *"Spending so much time with my family was a big change for me, and we have been so close and together that we had never been before"*.

The fact that adolescents are estranged from their friends due to the pandemic is another negative effect they experience. *"What affected me the most was that I could no longer meet my close friends and buddies. We used to meet very often, learn a lot from each other, and basically grow up together. I mean, we could not get together anymore, and I felt sad. It truly affected me"*, said one participant. Likewise, replacing on-campus classes with online lectures created a distance between friends. Feeling very pleased with the possibility of the reopening of schools, one participant said: *"We could not go to school. Now I really want to go back to school, even more than before. Actually, I heard that schools would be open soon, and the exams would be face-to-face. I am so excited"*. Our participants expressed their concern, anxiety and stress regarding their academic success. One of them said: *"What affected me the*

most was the anxiety about the university entrance exam. I think it is somewhat more difficult now that the lectures are online, I personally prefer on-campus classes and now I am anxious about the future". Another student expressed his concern as: *"I have this anxiety about my studies, and I think online teaching makes it more difficult for me to fully understand the lessons. You know, that's how online lectures make me anxious".* Likewise, our subjects also stated that the pandemic had some positive effects such as: *"I started doing sports at home during the pandemic, which is a good thing. I studied a lot more" and "Although sometimes I got tired of constantly being with my family, there were times when I started shared things that I didn't share before. After all, we were together all the time, so we had to have a conversation, and I felt like we were getting closer".* Despite the fact that spending the whole confinement period at home with family members could be boring at times, our participants seemed to recognize its positive aspects.

The areas in which our participants experienced the most changes were investigated. The model regarding the changes experienced during the pandemic is given as Model 4.

[Figure 4 near here]

The changes caused by the pandemic comprised two main themes and 7 sub-themes. Some of the participants stated that there was an increase in their inner thinking during the pandemic as one said: *"I have a lot of time to spend by myself. I am alone more than before. For some reason I started writing more and more. I started thinking about myself and the pandemic. I started thinking about my friends".* Another one said: *"I have a strange feeling of being overwhelmed, as if everything is coming on top of each other. I feel like crying for no good reason. This feeling is so intense that I can't be happy at all".* It is thought that they had more "self-talk" during the pandemic. Therefore, prolonged loneliness and negative self-talk can lead to inefficient or problematic communication between individuals.

It seemed that the pandemic caused an increase in self-awareness among the adolescents, which can be due to an increase in inner thinking. *"I mean, I think I grew into a mature person in this period. I feel it so vividly"* said one participant. In addition to this, our participants also mentioned the negative changes in their emotions as one said: *"Well, I have contrast emotions in one moment. It is strange. Some days, I get up fresh and happy, and spend a nice day. Other days, I feel down and sad, especially if I have an exam. It is very different, so I cannot say I am always happy or sad, my feelings are constantly fluctuating. I cry at home because of lockdown".* While the COVID-19 crisis brought about many changes, social isolation was the most pronounced one among all. One participant said: *"It is a big change. I cannot spend time with my friends anymore. I started to study more as I am constantly at home".*

Regarding the strongest emotions that the adolescents experienced, we identified sub-dimensions, namely anxiety and impatience. As social interaction decreased to a minimum due to the pandemic, the adolescents had elevated levels of anxiety and stress. One participant said: *"... seriously, when my close friends and relatives were diagnosed with COVID-19, I realized how serious it was, and then I felt worried and scared".* Another one said: *"First I thought that my stress was due to the burden of lessons, exams, and homework. But then I realized that even when I was studying well, I had the same feelings [stress,*

anxiety]". Our participants reported that during the pandemic they were petulant and short-tempered. Therefore, adolescents are quite likely to experience higher levels of stress. Two of our participants responded as: *"These feelings [stress and anxiety] were the most intense when people below 20 years of age were prohibited from leaving their homes. It was overwhelming when there was a long period that I could not go out at all"* and *"I mean, I was really overwhelmed when we could not leave the house for 3 months. Now that we can go out on weekdays (though not on weekends) I feel a lot better. But when we stayed at home for 3 full months, I was experiencing these [stress and anxiety] to a great extend"*.

Discussion And Conclusion

Adolescence is an important developmental period that affects the future life of the individual and ensures that the adolescent is a healthy individual in the society. For this reason, it is thought that the results of the positive or negative experiences that adolescents will experience in this process will directly or indirectly affect the society they live in. In this context, it was assumed that examining the experiences of adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic process would be effective in taking forward-looking measures. When the results are examined, within the scope of the research; Four main themes were created: information about the family, a day before the pandemic, the effect of the pandemic, changes and emotions. The results obtained from these main themes are as follows:

The theme of "Family Financial Situation" was divided into two sub-themes: pocket money of the adolescents and whether they could buy what they wanted to. Both before and during the pandemic, the adolescents did not get pocket money on a regular basis, so they were dependent on their parents for buying things. It is an important issue that adolescents do not have problems in getting pocket money. For this reason, pocket money to be given to adolescents should be controlled and in a way that does not leave them in a difficult situation. Because, when pocket money given to adolescents is uncontrolled, problems arise in terms of both health and substance use (Kumar et al., 2014; Mohan et al., 2005; Punitha et al., 2014). In addition, Kumsa et al. (2020) stated that students who have trouble getting pocket money have effects on their learning and behavioral control (Ardiansyah et al., 2017). It is thought that this situation prevents adolescents from making unlimited spending and they live depending on their families. Having financial difficulties during adolescence can affect adolescent's self-confidence, and it can be said that they may withdraw them from sharing the same environment with their friends.

Within the theme of "Role Distribution", we observed that the adolescents were given responsibilities within the family. However, lack of a specific set of rules caused the responsibilities seem meaningless for the adolescents. The responsibilities that are assigned to young adults should be meaningful, practical, and within their capabilities. It is also important to bear in mind that assigning too much or too little responsibilities are harmful for young adults in their future lives. The most important point to be considered in assigning responsibilities to the adolescent is that assigning more responsibilities than the adolescent can do may have a negative effect on the development of the adolescent. Because while adolescents are trying to fulfill the duties and responsibilities expected by their parents, they may have the wrong idea that their own needs are more important than the needs of others. This way of thinking

may cause individuals to ignore their relationships, interests and needs in their own lives (Köyden, 2015). For this reason, adolescents should be given appropriate responsibilities because they have a very important place in their lifelong success and self-discipline (Taşdemir & Dağistan, 2014). In addition, it is thought that adolescents should not be burdened with responsibilities beyond their development. Because it is seen that adolescents who take more responsibility experience more problems than adolescents who do not (Demir et al., 2005). It is thought that in the responsibilities to be given to adolescents, responsibilities that the adolescent can make sense of in his mind and that he will not have difficulty in realizing should be given. Because it can be concluded that adolescents who have too much responsibility or no responsibility may experience problems in their later lives.

Within the theme of “Before the pandemic”, It is observed that our participants generally spent most of their time outside the home usually with their friends and in the school. While at home, they were mostly in their rooms. It can be thought that an adolescent expresses himself / herself better by helping and sharing with his/ her friends and recognizing his/ her own personality and value judgments during relations with his /her friends. Therefore, it can be said that adolescents' friendships have an important place during adolescence (De Water et al., 2017; Roach, 2019; Van Harmelen et al., 2020). Restriction of social communication with the pandemic process has also deeply affected the friendship relations of adolescents (Rogers et al., 2021). In general, it can be thought that the social communication of children during adolescence is mostly based on the concept of friendship which is very important for them and they take their communication with their families to the second plan. Due to the insufficient communication of adolescents with their families, it is seen that adolescents spend more time in their rooms with the effect of the pandemic. Therefore, it can be said that adolescents' staying indoors due to curfews, being in quarantine in their home environment, restricts their communication with the social environment. Because when the duration of the adolescents' stay in their rooms is examined, it is seen that they spend almost all of the time they stay awake in their rooms. During the time spent in the room, they spend more of their time studying or watching movies and TV series. In their activities outside the room, most of them are actions they take to meet their basic needs. Since adolescents are very open to social communication and interaction outside home due to their developmental age period, it can be thought that they do not spend much time at home. Blakemore and Mills (2014) also stated that adolescence is a very sensitive period in social interaction. However, in some cases, there has been an increase in the time and activities they spend with their families due to the pandemic. Parents have a great influence on adolescents' leisure time activities, and parents need to guide adolescents to spend their spare time (Hutchinson et al., 2003). Because when adolescents are alone, they are more engaged with the media than when they are with their peers (Larson, 1995).

It is seen that the sources that adolescents are affected by during the pandemic process are family, friends and school. When family-based effects were examined, it was revealed that there were differences in the communication of adolescents with their families. It is seen that adolescents who have to stay at home due to the pandemic have an obligation to communicate with their families because they cannot find anything to do at home. Alt (2015) stated that parenting practices such as parent-child communication have a great impact on the well-being of children and adolescents. Alt and Boniel-Nissim

(2018) stated that if the communication between the adolescent and the family is problematic, adolescents may exhibit problematic behaviors. For this reason, the fact that adolescents spend more time in their room than necessary may be an indication that they may become separated from their families or display problematic behaviors in the future. In addition, it can be concluded that the quality and effective time spent by adolescents outside the room with their parents can be quite effective in the well-being of adolescents.

Because, it can be said that while adolescents shared many things with their friends rather than their families before the pandemic, it is thought that they communicate with their families after the disappearance of the face-to-face communication factor with friends during the pandemic process. In fact, with the increase in this communication, it has been observed that adolescents become aware of some unfamiliar behaviors of their family members because they have been together for a long time. Due to online education, problems have started to arise in school lessons and it has been seen that adolescents who are in the exam period are more stressed about this issue. Because they say that they cannot get enough education through online education. In addition, the closure of schools due to the pandemic caused the adolescents to distance themselves from their friends.

When it was observed, during the home confinement, the days were monotonous and quite boring. The adolescents found it difficult to entertain themselves with fun activities at home; thus, after attending online lectures in the mornings, they spent the majority of their time with technological devices such as tablets and smart phones. It is seen that students in this period are quite bored at home or in online classes (Livana et al., 2020; Tanu Wijaya, 2020). The fact that adolescents who have to stay at home due to the pandemic cannot find anything to do at home can also be thought to trigger this situation.

When the negative effects experienced by adolescents during the pandemic process are evaluated, it can be said that there has been an increase in behaviors of cleaning. Rundle et al. (2020); and Signorelli and Fara (2020) stated that awareness of hygiene has both increased and gained importance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, it is said that obsessive behaviors of cleaning have begun to be shown due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Fernández et al., 2020; Kurt-Demirbaş & Sevgili-Koçak, 2020). Because the COVID-19 pandemic is a stressor that emerged outside the family system, it is likely to be perceived as an important stressor for many parents and children, given the uncertainty associated with this disease (Brown et al., 2020). It seems likely that the mental health of individuals will be adversely affected in line with the decrease in interactions between people due to the pandemic (Orben et al., 2020). It is known that infectious diseases have negative effects on the mental and psychological well-being of individuals (Restubog et al., 2020). Despite all these, it is among the studies that have also found the positive effects of the pandemic (Kamdi & Deogade, 2020; Sandín et al., 2020). Considering the positive aspects of the pandemic process, it is seen that adolescents do sports, study more and communicate more with their families. In this context, it can be said that a disaster such as a negative pandemic also has some positive aspects. It can be said that the adolescents who shared less with their families before the pandemic, share more with their families during the pandemic process, which can strengthen the social communication of the adolescent within the family. In this context, it can be said that pandemic

has made a positive contribution to the increase of communication at home because the communication between the family and the child in adolescence makes an important contribution to the general family atmosphere (Noller & Bagi, 1985).

It is seen that there are seven sub-themes under two main themes in line with the examination of the changes experienced in adolescents due to the pandemic. When the theme of the changes experienced by adolescents during the pandemic was examined, it was seen that there were four sub-themes. It is among the findings that some adolescents have an increase in their inner thinking and self-awareness levels, as the adolescents who are alone in their rooms during the pandemic process start to think more. In this case, it can be thought that it is possible for adolescents to behave more consciously towards themselves. Studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between adolescents' self-awareness and their social skills, academic skills and abilities (Karamad et al., 2020; Turan & İskender, 2020). In this process, it can be said that there may be an increase in self-awareness as adolescents begin to listen to themselves more during the pandemic process. However, in addition to this, it is seen that the adolescents who are alone with themselves experience too much negative emotional changes. Because they try to learn how to overcome difficulties, control some of their behaviors and learn how to approach the opposite sex through their adolescent children (Şahin & Özçelik, 2016). In this period, the circle of friends (Bayhan & Işitan, 2010; Kim & Chun, 2018), which has an impact on the social development of the adolescent, has narrowed due to the pandemic and they have been affected by this situation. Because, thanks to school, starting from early childhood, the individual learns academic skills and develops friendships (Lin et al., 2003; Pavão et al., 2019). It can be thought that these emotional changes experienced by adolescents may also affect their communication skills negatively. In addition, it can be seen that the stress level experienced by the adolescent increases with different emotional changes.

When the emotions that adolescents feel most intensely are examined, it is seen that they are grouped under 3 sub-categories as anxiety, impatience and the situations they feel them. It can be concluded that these feelings of anxiety and impatience experienced by adolescents are mostly due to the curfews applied to adolescents. With the curfews, they felt more anxious and impatient as adolescents living in social isolation. Social interactions with peers play an important role in adolescents' psychosocial adjustment (Tillfors et al., 2012). Brooks et al. (2020) also stated that social distance individual difficulties may occur because friends and relatives can no longer be visited and physical contact should be avoided. In addition, Lee (2020) stated that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is predicted that there may be symptoms related to anxiety, depression and/or stress as children and adolescents experience unprecedented interruptions in their daily lives. In the light of these results, it can be said that it is quite possible for adolescents to experience stress situations. It is known that the COVID-19 pandemic quarantines increase feelings of stress and anxiety due to their long-term social isolation (Pakpour & Griffiths, 2020; Satici et al., 2020). Similarly, in this study, similar results were obtained and it can be said that the stress and anxiety levels of adolescents increased.

As a result of the findings of the research, the following suggestions can be given to adolescents, families and researchers in the related field;

- Educators working in the relevant field should inform families of those working in the field during the pandemic process, and provide trainings that will strengthen adolescent-family communication by specifying and explaining communication methods,
- Sample activities that families can share with adolescents should be presented,
- Guidance should be given to adolescents experiencing school-related stress,
- It is important to establish systems where healthier communication can be established for online training,
- It is recommended that necessary measures be taken to support their communication with their friends within the prohibitions to be taken against adolescents,
- In new studies, interviews with adolescent groups with different socio-demographic characteristics can be repeated to examine the results,
- In future studies, face-to-face interviews can be conducted with adolescents by providing suitable conditions for the COVID-19 pandemic,
- Finally, establishing and experimentally testing structural equation models by developing scales in the context of this study can provide generalizability.

Limitations

Although the study provided important insights, some limitations should be noted. The sample group data of this study were collected from adolescents in similar economic situations in various cities, but there are limitations due to the socio-cultural differences between cities in Turkey. Problem situations, responses, and effective assessments mainly consist of the children from middle-income families. The study is limited to the questions in the semi-structured interview form applied. Also due to the COVID-19 pandemic the inability to collect data face-to-face is another limitation of adolescents while expressing themselves. Another limitation is that the study is not generalizable due to the fact that it consists of qualitative data, and that it was created by only two researchers during the analysis of the data.

Declarations

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Ethical Approval: This study was performed in line with the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethics approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee Board of Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University (E-95531838-050.99-4461) in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki.

Authors' Contributions: Z. Ç. And S. A. conceived of and wrote the manuscript; Z. Ç. conducted data analysis and interpretation; S.A. contributed to the data analysis and Z. Ç. contributed to critical revision of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final manuscript.

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Figures

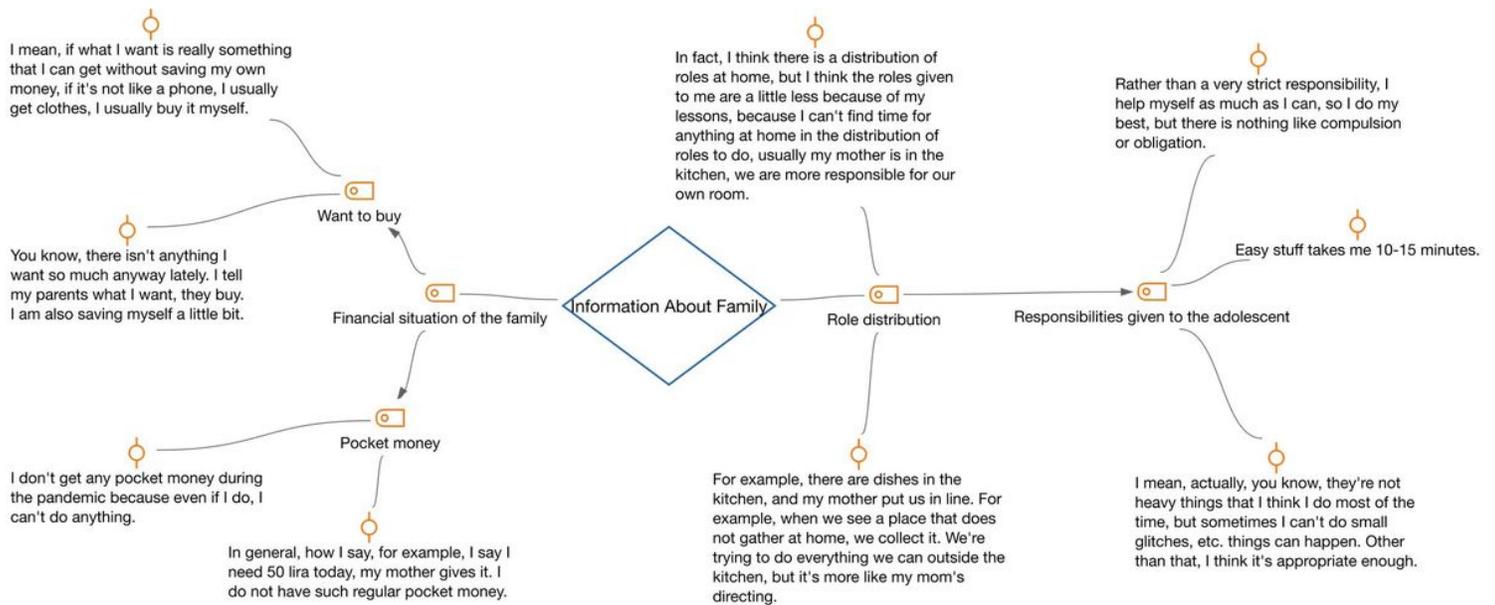


Figure 1

Model 1. Model of the Information About Family

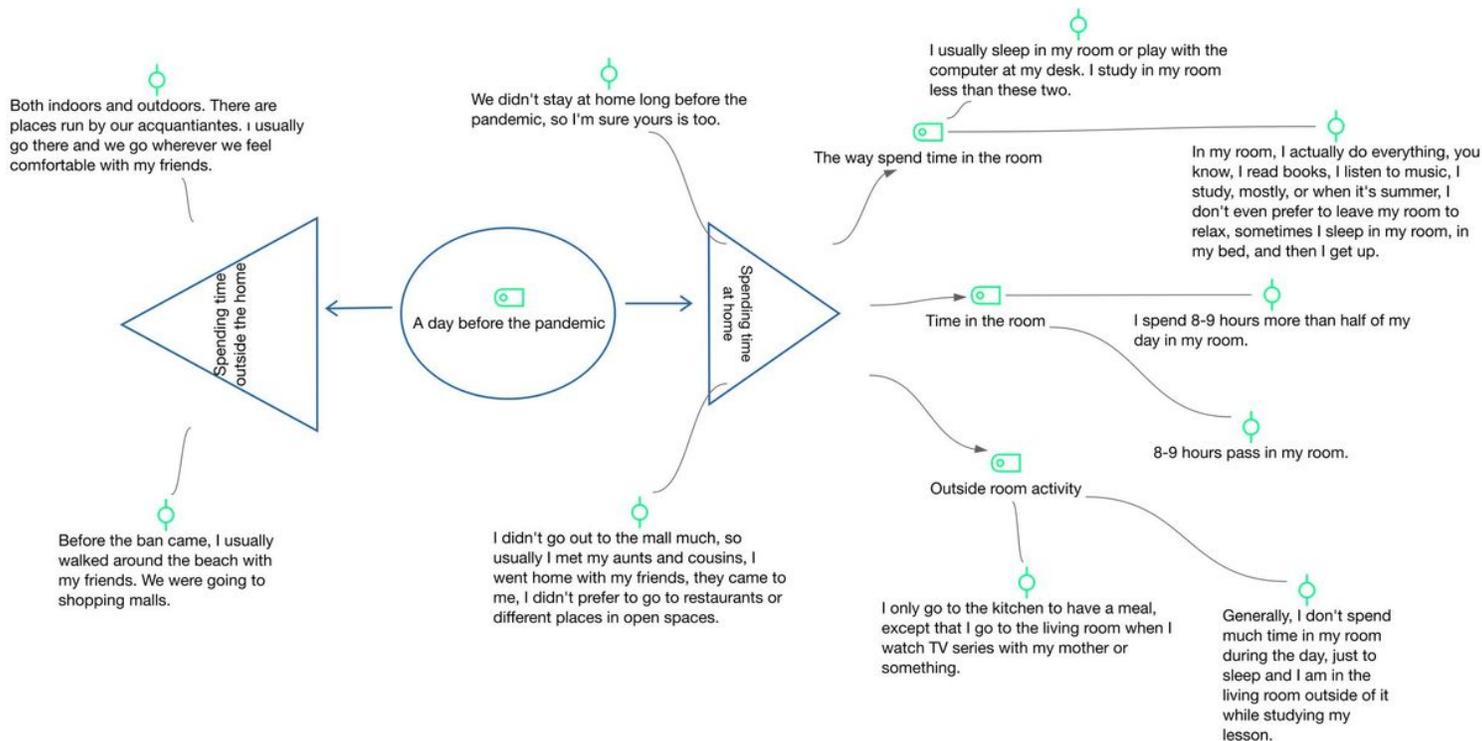


Figure 2

Model 2. Adolescents' time structuring model before the pandemic

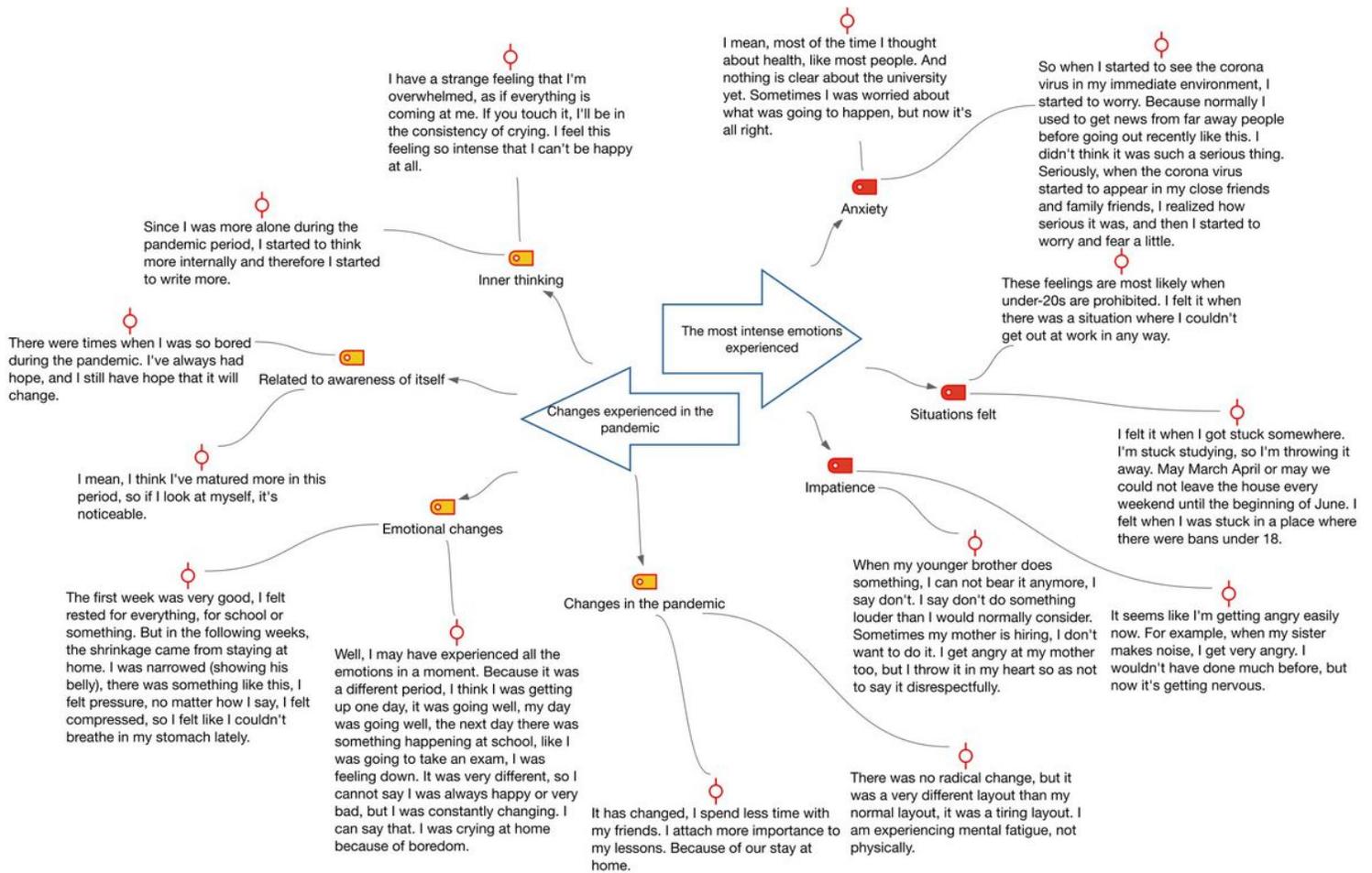


Figure 3

Model 3. Model of the effects of the pandemic on adolescents

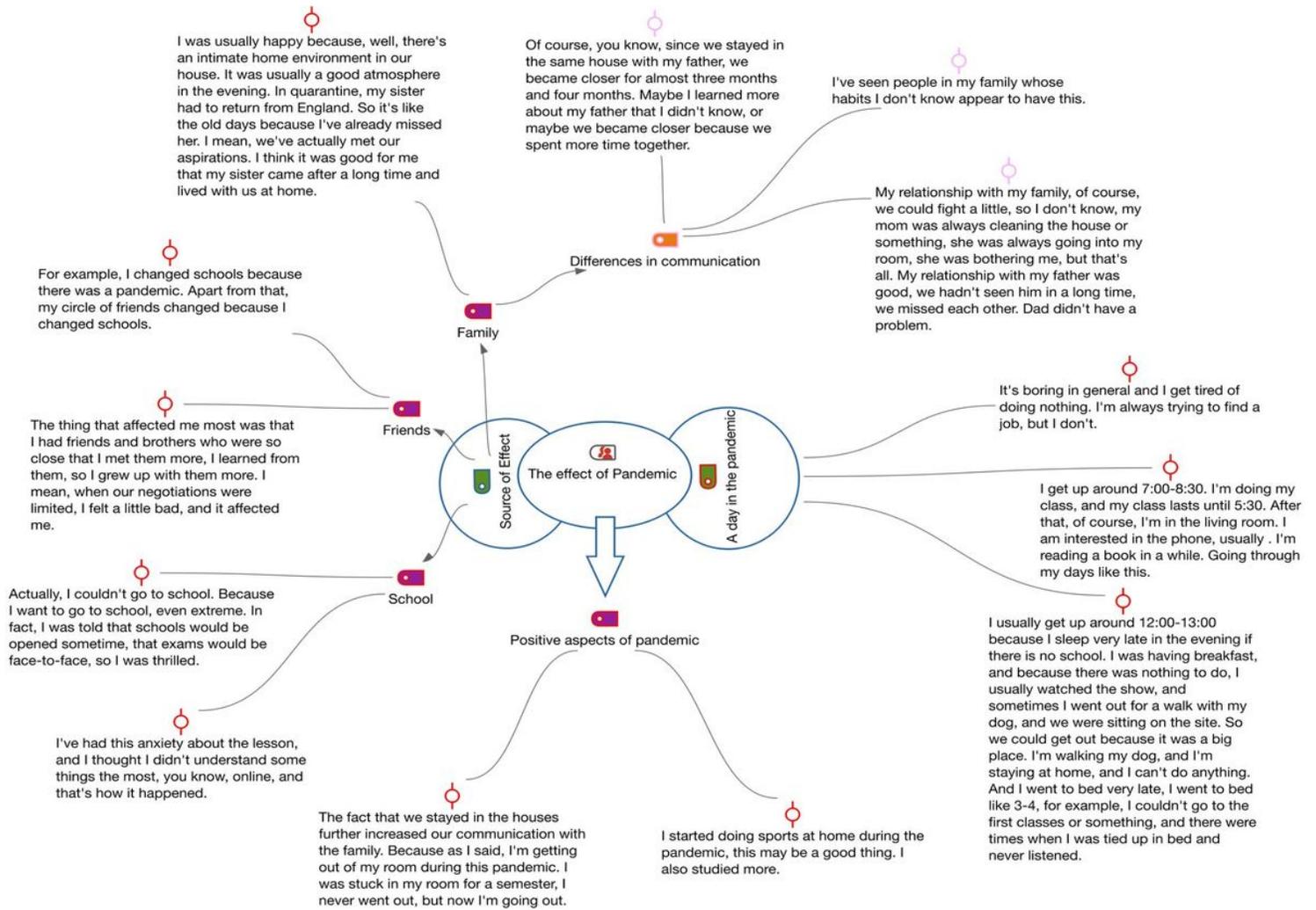


Figure 4

Model 4. Model of change in adolescents in the pandemic