Coronavirus Outbreak in Turkey and Its Possible Psychological Effects

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explain the psychological problems that Turkish people may encounter as a result of Coronavirus. Also, it aims to guide mental health professionals for the normalization process. Pandemic affects all nations' social-economic situations, psychological and social elements deeply; heralds a painful process leading to death. Therefore, research in the integration process of people with COVID-19 in Turkey to explain what kind of problems they may face like anxiety, complicated grief, trauma, addiction etc. As a conclusion, the research also will offer some solutions for these problems.

Keywords: Coronavirus; Pandemic; Psychological Effects; Trauma; Grief; Addiction

Abbreviations: COVID-19: Corona Virus Disease 2019; APA: American Psychiatric Association.

Introduction

Pandemics are known as worldwide spreading outbreaks. It causes excessive diseases and deaths in the world and affects the social-economic conditions of the affected countries as well as their psychological and social elements [1]. Many pandemics have occurred throughout history. Examples include plague, smallpox, cholera, influenza, Hong Kong and Spanish flu. Millions of people have died to date due to these diseases and today know that as a result of globalization, transportation is much easier. In this context, epidemics such as technology show a rapid spread from one country to another like in Coronavirus situation.

Today, we are facing "Coronavirus disease 2019", "COVID-19", which makes its effect felt all over the world, emerged on 29-31 December 2019 and has now caused worldwide epidemic, pandemic [2]. After the coronavirus outbreak began encountering many problems in Turkey as well as in the world. For example, with the closure of schools, the online education process began; healthcare workers began to live almost all of their days and hours away from their beloved ones. Also, in order to prevent the spread of the virus, we became unable to embrace the people we beloved with the social distance. Many people lost their lives, and many people became unemployed, and many other situations. According to the current data on 11 May 2020, there are 4,148,034 cases and 284, 124 deaths in the world. In Turkey, the situation is in good condition compared to many countries. 139,771 cases and 3,841 deaths reveal the criticality of the situation. That's why this topic is essential in this current situation. At this point, in this article, I will especially touch upon the possible psychological effect of the Covid-19 outbreak with many outcomes in Turkey.

Literature Review

Each individual encounters many problems throughout his life and overcomes most of these events. However, some of the problems significantly affect or even change their life. Facing a threat that will cause loss or loss in the natural flow of life

from time to time and the unexpected death of a loved one are such events [3]. Since the first reactions to the loss are a natural reaction, they are not considered as diseases. Denial of complicated grief is a psychological problem in DSM-V with symptoms such as persistent mental occupation of the deceased, intense longing and suicidal thoughts in order to meet with the lost [4]. Professional support is provided by health professionals in case of need after loss under normal conditions. These supportive services include problem solving, role modeling, and encouragement, teaching and counseling [3]. However, due to the extraordinary deaths in the new situation with Covid-19 and the high number of these deaths and the social distance rule, an efficient study cannot be carried out at the point of psychosocial support for mourning. For this reason, trauma and complicated grief are the most important predictable psychological problem that can be encountered in the individual.

Outbreaks are reflectors that show power balances, class conflicts and deep social changes in a society. Sociological groups in the place of the epidemic may react differently, and the consequences of infectious diseases can reveal deep social fault lines in a society [5]. In the plague epidemic that caused the death of many people in the middle ages; the economic burden of diseases and wars made life difficult, especially in rural areas, and it was observed that "xenophobia" was triggered during this period [6,7]. Many studies have shown that epidemic diseases cause a great trauma and increase the level of anxiety in humans [5]. Anxiety can be defined as the state of anxiety or irrational fear that occurs in humans as a reflection of the fear of any danger [8]. Health anxiety is a psychological experience that appears with the thought that it is under a great threat to the health of the individual and eventually triggers the physical and emotional anxiety symptoms of the individual [9]. Health anxiety is also defined as the fact that the person thinks that he has a serious illness even though he has no physical illness and interprets it negatively that it will lead to bad results [10]. Health anxiety has two main components, the perception that it has a serious illness and the serious illness that it thinks exists [5].

The perception of control is the adequacy of the perception of changing or adapting situations that are important. While individuals who believe that they can easily affect their environment have high control perception, individuals who believe that they cannot affect their environment have low control perception [5]. Control perception plays an important role in protecting physical health [11]. Therefore, the idea that we can protect health with cologne nowadays has increased the use of many chemicals. In addition, those with obsessive disorder were highly affected by the situation. Thus, after learning that the virus has spread from China, social media may also show that the insults covering the Chinese people xenophobia gradually appeared

in the public. In this context, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, and xenophobia are examples of psychological problems that manifest themselves in the society. As a result of the case study of Şahin and Cerit [12], it has been shown that ambulance personnel show signs of traumatic stress and depression in their professional trauma experiences. At this point, there is an opinion that it will be beneficial to provide preventive vocational counseling to corporate strategy systems to prevent traumatic stress and depression symptoms in ambulance personnel like all healthcare professionals working with patients and pandemics. That is why, all of the workers in healthcare field are in danger for trauma and depression due to extraordinary working hours in hospital far away from family and facing deaths and unexpected other situations.

Another issue is addiction of technology. The idea that technological devices (television, computer, tablet, mobile phone, etc.) enter the daily life of children and affect their cognitive, emotional and social development is becoming more and more common day by day [13]. Using it or continuing a behavior can be defined as being unable to control them. Behavioral addiction is the state of addiction in which behavioral characteristics that involve the search for substances without being addicted to a substance are displayed [14]. Nowadays countries like Turkey want from people to not contact with people to isolate themselves at home or in a dedicated quarantine facility. Thus, when people spend more time at home due to social isolation and quarantine, they develop new behavioral addictions such as computer games, television, mobile phones and internet addiction. The screen usage is 8 hours on average due to the educational institutions that switch to online education if the schools continue the same curriculum. Therefore, it is difficult for individuals who develop technology addiction to return to normal life after the process.

Internet addiction is still not defined as a disease in "The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", which was published in 1994 by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and is abbreviated as "DSM IV". However, in the new version of DSM-V, which was released in May 2013, unhealthy internet use is evaluated under the title "Internet use disorder" under the heading "disorders and addictions related to substance use" [15]. Since internet and game addiction is considered to be a psychological problem, the number of people receiving addiction treatment has increased. Therefore, it will be necessary to deal with people who develop technology addiction along with the normalization process.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, many problems have arisen with the

Coronavirus process. Moving education processes to the online platform and spending more time at home caused technology addiction. In addition to this, the number of people affected by the grief process has the potential to increase with the dead cases. The deterioration of the economy and the increase in the unemployment rate may cause anxiety. Continuous trauma of healthcare professionals away from their families will also negatively affect their psychology. Since those affected by isolation, problems and quarantine is likely to report distress due to fear and risk perceptions, consideration should be given to support their psychological [16] financial, social, physical and other needs [17]. Also, people can develop xenophobia for foreign people and obsessive people may develop obsessive compulsive disorder.

It is very important to be informed online at the point when everything is moved to the online platform. Mental health workers also have a big duty for psychological resilience. Online therapies, online activities for children, assistance to healthcare workers themselves and their families, economically supportive policies, and new hobby acquisitions will help to get rid of the process with minimal damage. Although precautions are taken online, the main things will be in the normalization process. At this point, just as the Covid-19 test is done to people, we should test and identify problems as many as people who work in the field of mental health and as students, to identify problems. Although it is difficult to reach all people, everything can be easier if we choose the main audience as the people who are personally affected by Coronavirus.

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