Metaphoric Images of School Managers on Covid-19 Pandemic Process: A Mixed Method Research

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Abstract. This research was done to reveal the metaphorical images formulated by school managers working in educational institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education on covid-19 pandemic process. Each participant answered a standard open-ended questionnaire form, “If I am to formulate a metaphor to describe Covid-19 pandemic process as a school manager… I would formulate…. Because….. The raw data obtained from the answers to the open-ended questionnaire were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. School managers formulated 34 different metaphors on Covid-19 Pandemic Process. These metaphors were grouped under eight different conceptual categories with their common features. The categories in question differed according to the gender of participants. Findings provided detailed information on how school managers perceived the pandemic process. These findings can be used to improve management processes, education, and training services in schools.

Keywords: School manager, metaphor, covid-19, pandemic

Introduction

The Covid-19 virus epidemic, which started in Wuhan in China in December 2019, became a global epidemic in a very short time and was declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020a). From the perspective of chaos theory, the pandemic caused a huge storm in Asia as a result of a butterfly flapping its wings (Lorenz, 1972). The global Covid-19 pandemic, which has affected all over the world, has led to a period of uncertainties in all areas from individual and organizational, national and international, micro to macro level globally, especially the health and education sector, economy, politics, industry and so on. Tus, many sectors have been adversely affected by the pandemic. In order to prevent the spread of the virus, different or similar social measures have been taken in each country to protect public health such as closing schools and other restrictions. During the pandemic process, educational institutions both in our country and in many countries were temporarily closed, and it was decided to provide education and training services through distance education. In this process, guidelines, comprehensive reports and recommendations for protecting school and community health have been published by many national and international institutions and organizations. These decisions generally emphasized the responsibilities of school managers, preventing contamination in educational institutions, and organizing distance and face-to-face education. According to the World Health Organization, the decisions and practices of school managers should primarily focus on the general well-being, health and safety of children and ensuring the continuity of education. In addition, the effects of all decisions on children, parents, caregivers, teachers, other staff, and more generally on communities and societies are mentioned (WHO, 2020b).

It can be said that quite a few studies were done on school administrations regarding the crisis periods

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that occurred during the pandemic process in which educational institutions were closed and distance education or online learning methods began to be applied (Tamrat and Teferra (2020). These are periods when the need for managers increases and the importance of managers is realized in achieving goals, eliminating negativities, determining priorities and time management (Maya, 2014; Tutar, 2004). Thus school managers must have leadership roles that are adaptable, open to learning and change, able to manage order / disorder and the present / future (Tetenbaum, 1998). In this process, educational institutions need managers who make a difference in extraordinary situations, make and implement fast, accurate and effective decisions, create a sense of trust in all their stakeholders, and moreover, managers who demonstrate strong school leadership with education and training leadership.

As in all organizations, managers with crisis management skills and with a chaotic management approach in solving the problems in the chaos environment will be more successful in educational organizations (Bülbül & Erçetin, 2010; Sari & Sari, 2020). It is a necessity for school managers to manage effectively the periods of uncertainty as well as the periods of harmony and stagnation in which the routine structure of educational institutions continues to function within the framework of order and logic (Gunter, 1995). Periods of uncertainty is a cognitive state resulting from the inability to make sense of the events encountered (Crigger, 1996). The uncertainty experienced for the future causes a strong stress on the individual (Bailey et al., 2009) and negative reactions to uncertain situations as emotions, thoughts and behavior (Buhr & Dugas, 2002). World Health Organization Europe Director Kluge points out that psychological resilience is a key to the physical and mental health of individuals in the pandemic (Kluge, 2020a), and how we manage our reactions and the resulting stress in this process (Kluge, 2020b). Therefore, it is thought that understanding the feelings and thoughts of school managers about the pandemic process, how they perceive and interpret this process is important in terms of the effectiveness of management processes in educational institutions. In this context, school managers were asked to express their perceptions about the pandemic process via metaphors.

Metaphors also enable individuals to understand nature and its environment, to interpret and make sense of situations that seem meaningless, and to know as a means of making sense of their lives and experiences (Morgan, 1980). Through metaphors, situations that seem abstract and ambiguous are reconstructed through clear, understandable, familiar and more concrete concepts, and unknown situations are transformed into known experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). On the other hand, metaphors can ignore differences while revealing common and similar aspects of the situation (Morgan, 1980). Metaphors effectively and simply describe the important properties of many complex variables, but shed light on only a part of the present picture (Morgan, 1980; Sterman, 1985). However, although metaphors overshadow some small differences in the holistic picture of the system or space, creating a mental picture equivalent to thousands of words reveals the visual power of metaphors as a very powerful and effective means of communication (Sackmann, 1989). The metaphorical perceptions that the managers will formulate towards the pandemic process will contribute to our understanding of the situation experienced in terms of educational institutions, and the education and management dimension of the process.

Metaphors are generally used to describe a situation, event or phenomenon in its current form or to speed up and improve a process as a tool of change (Morgan, 1986). When studies using metaphors are reviewed, there are many studies on metaphors, changing the strategic orientation of organizations, organizational change, employees' perceptions of their institutions and teachers' students, and tools that facilitate learning (Balcı, 1999; Gunbayi, 2011; Morgan, 1986; Özart , 1999; Sackmann, 1989; Sterman, 1985; Şimşek, 1997). In a metaphor study by Bredeson (1985), it was found that school principals use the metaphors of protection-watchfulness, survival and vision for their work. Şimşek (1997) found that faculty members used metaphors of large and bulky animals, such as amoeba, octopus, elephant, etc., and a wild and uncontrolled growing garden, regarding the university before the restructuring.

In this study, it is aimed to describe how the pandemic process is perceived by school managers working in educational institutions. In addition, it is thought that this process will shed light on some of the
Reflections of this process in the education system while making sense of the lives and experiences of school managers regarding the pandemic. The purpose of this study is to reveal the feelings and thoughts of school managers working in educational institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education about the covid-19 pandemic process by using metaphor. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

1. What are the metaphors school managers formulate for the pandemic process? Why?
2. Under what conceptual categories are these metaphors grouped in terms of their common features?
3. Do these conceptual categories differ significantly according to the gender of school managers?

Method

This study is a convergent pattern mixed method research. Mixed method research is a research method in which data collected using quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated, associated or blended (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Convergent mixed design method is a research method in which data are collected simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then the results obtained from qualitative and quantitative databases are compared with each other (Günbayi, 2020).

Sampling

This research was conducted in the state educational institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the Muratpaşa district of Antalya in the 2020-2021 academic year. 38 managers (school principal and vice principal) participated in the study, selected via equal sample size approach (Creswell & Clark, 2017) based on purposive sampling method. 12 of the participants were female and 26 were male managers, and the average seniority of the participants in the profession was 23 years and the average years of seniority in management was 11 years.

Table 1. Demographics of school managers

| Variable | Group         | f  | %    |
|----------|---------------|----|------|
| Gender   | Female        | 12 | 31.58|
|          | Male          | 26 | 68.42|
| Duty     | Principal     | 16 | 42.11|
|          | Vice Principal| 22 | 57.89|
| Seniority| Low (10-19 yeras) | 10 | 26.32|
|          | Medium (20-29 years) | 16 | 42.11|
|          | High (30 years +)  | 12 | 31.58|
| Total    |               | 38 |      |

Data collection

Individual, face-to-face and depth-focused, long-term interactions with school managers on a voluntary basis were carried out using a tape recorder. Participants were asked to formulate a metaphor for the pandemic process, to express their opinions verbally, and to provide a rationale for their metaphors.

Ethical Procedure

In all stages of the study, scientific research ethics were followed. Scientific Research Ethics Committee Approval was obtained. Necessary permissions were obtained from the Antalya Provincial Directorate
of National Education for the implementation of the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, its confidentiality and security, and that there was no risk of physical or psychological harm. For the interviews conducted on a voluntary basis, permission was obtained from the participants to record audio. It was informed that the interview records would be kept for seven years. Participant confirmation was received immediately after the interviews were transcribed. Research results were shared with the participants who asked for it. In this study, principals were coded as "OM" and vice-principals as "MY".

**Analysis of Data**

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the study, internal validity (credibility), external validity (transferability), internal reliability (consistency) and external reliability (verifiability) criteria were taken into consideration (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In ensuring the internal validity of the research, all stages were acted in accordance with the issues specified in the research ethics processes. In order to ensure the external validity of the research, the participants were determined by sampling purposefully to contribute to the best way to reveal, understand and interpret the phenomenon.

Interview audio recordings containing the metaphors formulated by the participants and the reasons for their selection were transcribed and analysis process was aided by the use of a qualitative data analysis computer program called NVIVO. After the codes were formed, categories were created for the metaphors that had common features with each other. “Kappa Consistency Analysis” was conducted to determine the level of consistency with the category to which each metaphor belonged in order to ensure internal reliability (consistency). 34 metaphors and 8 categories in the study were sent to a field expert for consistency analysis, and they were asked to match. The coding done by researcher and the matching done by the field expert were subjected to consistency analysis using the SPSS 23 program. As a result of the Kappa analysis, it was seen that the consistency between the opinions of the researcher and the expert was 93%. According to the criteria made by Landis and Koch (1977), this value had a perfect fit. After the theme analysis, descriptive analysis was performed by presenting the participants' reasons for the metaphors in the form of direct quotations. Content analysis was performed in order to interpret the participants' characteristics as independent variables, in a comparative and in-depth manner. Then, analytical generalization was made by discussing the results based on relevant literature (Kelle, 1995; Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007). In order to ensure the external reliability of the study, all data collection tools, raw data, coding made during the analysis phase, and the notes and inferences forming the basis of the report were then stored for confirmation review by an external expert.

After determining a total of 34 metaphors and developing the 8 conceptual categories formed by these metaphors, all data were transferred to the SPSS 23 statistics program. The number (f) and percentage (%) of the participants representing the metaphor and category were calculated. Then, Pearson Chi-Square test was applied to test whether the conceptual categories differed according to the gender of the participants, and the results were analyzed and interpreted.

**Findings**

**Findings of the Metaphors Formulated by School Managers on the Pandemic Process**

According to the general findings obtained in this study, a total of 34 valid metaphors related to the pandemic process were formulated by school managers. Women formulated 12 metaphors and men formulated 26 metaphors. Of the 34 metaphors, 12 were formulated only by women and 23 by only men. While all women expressed separate metaphors, 3 metaphors were formulated more than once by men. (Table 2).
Table 2.

Metaphoric perceptions of school managers regarding the pandemic process

| Category             | Metaphor                                             | Female | Male | Total |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|
|                      |                                                      | f     | f   | f    |
|                      |                                                      | %     | %   | %    |
| Uncertainty          | Something unexpected                                 | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Unsolved problem                                     | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Intruder                                             | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | The invisible tunnel                                 | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Falling into the pool of a person unable to swim     | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| Natural disasters    | Earthquake                                           | 2     | 2,63| 2     | 5,26 |
|                      | Snowstorm                                            | 2     | 2,63| 2     | 5,26 |
|                      | Wind                                                 | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Flood                                                | 2     | 2,63| 2     | 5,26 |
| Turning point        | Bing bang boom                                       | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | The beginning or the closing of an era                | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Test of humanity                                     | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Anti hero                                            | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Science fiction                                      | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Horror film                                          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| Figment              | Modified virus with its fictional structure          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | An aggressive animal                                 | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Driving a simulated vehicle                          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Seven headed dragon                                  | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Zombie film                                          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| Chaos                | The plague of our age                                | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Evil                                                 | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Health blow                                          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| Restriction          | Covid 19 holiday                                     | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Prison                                               | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | The thing that puts people in shape                  | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Rule maker                                           | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | The dispossession of liberties                        | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| School               | Garden without flowers                               | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | The executioner of education                          | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | A fruitless tree                                     | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
| Social life          | The union of good and evil                           | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Social unrest                                        | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      | Social absence                                       | 1     | 2,63| 1     | 2,63 |
|                      |                                                      | 12    | 31,57| 26 | 68,42 |
|                      | Total                                                | 38    | 100,00| 38 |

In the following sub-headings, descriptive analysis was performed for supporting the features of the 8 conceptual categories developed in this study with direct quotations. These conceptual categories were then compared in terms of the gender of the participants, and content analysis was performed.
Conceptual Categories

Category 1: Pandemic process as uncertainty

Table 3 shows the metaphors that forms uncertainty category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 3, 5 metaphors created by a total of 5 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 1 and men formulated 4 metaphors.

Table 3.

Pandemic process as uncertainty

| Category          | Metaphor                                              | Female | Male | Total |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Uncertainty       | Something unexpected                                  | 1 20   | 1  20|  5 100|
|                   | Unsolved problem                                      | 1 20   | 1  20|  5 100|
|                   | Intruder                                              | 1 20   | 1  20|  5 100|
|                   | The invisible tunnel                                   | 1 20   | 1  20|  5 100|
|                   | Falling into the pool of a person unable to swim      | 1 20   | 1  20|  5 100|
|                   | Total                                                  | 1 20   | 4  80|  5 100|

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated the uncertainty metaphors are as follows.

“We can think of it as a tunnel with no visible end. As you progress, of course, you encounter problems." (MY-10).

“Something very sudden is happening, there may be an earthquake, you fall into an unexpected situation when you least expect it. There may be a bomb explosion, when everything is in its place in no time at all, and the routine breaks so suddenly that everything goes in the usual way. Such a thing can happen, sudden changes, you see an elephant in the middle of the bazaar for a moment. (MY-7).

“I see Covid-19 to an unsolvable problem. It is constantly being renewed, the problem is also obvious. But there is no solution. We can think of it as a physics problem, an unsolvable physics problem. We are constantly trying something new, but there are vaccination, restrictions, but we still haven't reached a solution." (MY-9)

Category 2: Pandemic Process as a Natural Disaster

Table 4 shows the metaphors that forms natural disaster category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 4, 7 metaphors created by a total of 7 participants represent this category. All metaphors in this category have been formulated by male managers.

Table 4.

Pandemic Process as a Natural Disaster

| Category          | Metaphor     | Female | Male | Total |
|-------------------|--------------|--------|------|-------|
| Natural disasters | Earthquake   | 2 28,57| 2 28,57|       |
|                   | Snowstorm    | 2 28,57| 2 28,57|       |
|                   | Wind         | 1 14,28| 1 14,28|       |
|                   | Flood        | 2 28,57| 2 28,57|       |
|                   | Total        | 7 100  | 7 100 |       |
Some of the reasons why school managers formulated natural disaster metaphors are as follows.

“This seemed like an earthquake to me. After the first very strong quaking, there are such lighter shocks that follow. So when you experience that shock, you panic a little. But after the earthquake you have experienced, you will see your shortcomings, you will see what needs to be done. After that, you will see how plans should be made. So this happened suddenly like a natural phenomenon, it created a destructive effect. Of course, our greatest thing as a human being is the ability to adapt to this effect. Therefore, with this adaptation ability, I think we will overcome it in a very short time.” (MY-12).

“I would compare it to a snowstorm. If you are going out in a snowstorm, you should wear a mask and wear it tightly. Even if it is not going out, it is usually stayed at home. The pandemic forced us both to stay at home and to leave cautiously, even if it is about to leave.” (MY-1).

“I would compare it to snowstorm or blizzard. But the pandemic really disturbed it like a pandemic. It restricted freedoms. It affected the children in the developmental stages of the children very much. So this is seen and clearly seen. Some of them couldn’t obey the restrictions anyway. Since they could not obey the restrictions, the disease did not stop, it increased. It is a very difficult process, in other words, a very difficult process. The disease also changes course. Everyone is desperate right now. The thing to do is follow the rules. Paying attention to the mask and distance. Hand hygiene is very important. Pay attention to these.” (MY-3).

“It is like a sudden flood. So you don’t expect, you live normally, it feels like a raindrop, but you see, it destroys everywhere. Or, while swimming in a sea without your knowledge, it is like a big wave that hits you suddenly, you take your breath away, you feel like you are drowning. But in the meantime, you can get out of this crisis with your calmness, calmness, and abilities and relax. We can compare it to this.” (OM-12).

Category 3: Pandemic Process as a Turning Point

Table 5 shows the metaphors that forms turning point category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 5, 3 metaphors created by a total of 3 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 1 and men formulated 2 metaphors.

Table 5. Pandemic Process as a Turning Point

| Category          | Metaphor                               | Female | Male | Total |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Turning point     | Bing Bang                              | 1 33,33 | 1 33,33 |       |
|                   | The beginning or the closing of an era | 1 33,33 | 1 33,33 |       |
|                   | Test of humanity                       | 1 33,33 | 1 33,33 |       |
|                   | Total                                  | 1 33,33 | 2 66,66 | 3 100 |

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated turning point metaphors are as follows.

“There was an atmosphere of chaos like the Bing Bang. In other words, although we are a lucky school, even though we made all our plans during that holiday period in the first week, we encountered different problems from places you never expected. Like the big bang, it put us in a state of being ready for anything anytime, anywhere. We cannot predict what will come from where. That is why we are always in a defensive state or if we always have this in mind, we apply this plan and if this happens, we are constantly planning different things. Suddenly, I think it was like an Big Bang, everyone tried to protect themselves and organize those scattered particles around them. We tried to do it as a manager.” (MY-20).

“Actually I see this as the closing of an age and the beginning of an age. This is the biggest in terms of not only the education sector, but also the economy, and I think that there are such changes in all kinds of sectors, including the construction sector, and that the reflections on this will emerge better. Therefore, when we see here as the end of an age, the beginning of an age, we will see such changes in the process of change and development in all areas of human life. We are starting to see it now, but I think we will see this in more details in the future. Especially in the education system, we will see that what I call digital transformation, which is also often used as a digital
transformation, changes, develops and progresses very rapidly. We will see this more clearly in the education sector as a service sector within this sector. (MY-2).

“I view the COVID-19 process as a test of humanity. At this point, I think people should be patient. And of course, while being patient, I think that the necessary precautions should be followed by everyone, taking into account what our healthcare professionals, the scientific committee or people who have leadership characteristics in the society in terms of health, as a society. So it’s a test for all of us.” (MY-5).

Category 4: Pandemic Process as figment

Table 6 shows the metaphors that forms figment category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 6, 8 metaphors created by a total of 8 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 4 and men formulated 4 metaphors.

Table 6.

| Metaphor                                    | Female | Male | Total |
|----------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Anti hero                                    | 1      | 1    | 2     |
| Science fiction                              | 1      | 1    | 2     |
| Horror film                                  | 1      | 1    | 2     |
| Modified virus with its fictional structure  | 1      |      | 12,5  |
| An aggressive animal                         | 1      | 1    | 12,5  |
| Driving a simulated vehicle                  | 1      | 1    | 12,5  |
| Seven headed dragon                          | 1      | 1    | 12,5  |
| Zombie film                                  | 1      |      | 12,5  |
| Total                                        | 4      | 4    | 8     |

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated imaginary metaphors are as follows.

“I thought as an anti hero, an extraordinary hero. If you ask why, there is a virus that even the colony can kill, an invisible virus. However, it can kill us, you know, when you think about it, it sounds absurd to people, but the fact that it is invisible scares people as much. On the other hand, if we look at it, it feels as if there is a good side of the coronavirus. Because people started to think about what kind of world they want in this process.” (MY-11).

“I compare it to a horror movie and I also think it is“ biological warfare “. We are in a horror movie. It is a nightmare that involves the whole world, where we do not know where and how it will turn out, and we approach everything with fear. This is actually a war, our houses have borders, we can give the biggest support in this war by staying in our homes, not going to guests, not coming and by obeying the rules.” (MY-6).

“I think it is a bit like driving a simulation vehicle. Because in this process, we are trying to continue this process without being able to touch the students, which is our most fundamental duty, and without communicating with them one-on-one. So it seemed to me like driving with simulation. You do not touch the vehicle there either, you have a steering wheel in the simulation, you have a gear lever or something, but there is no one-to-one road. So there is only one screen in front of you, you are trying to go through that screen. There, for example, sometimes when you are driving a simulated vehicle, when you rub the car somewhere, it makes noise, but just like in normal life, it is the case of addressing those five sensory organs at once, some of our sensory organs were missing in this process. They tried to learn the importance of those sense organs in the learning process of the students, for example, one or two senses without using the student at all. Actually, the students are doing a very difficult job, so it is clear.” (OM-11).

“If we act individually, no matter how strong we are, we have little chance of succeeding. I compare this to a seven-headed dragon. It dictates to us a process that is integrated against it, where everyone can react to the same at the same time, not one that suspends the others while applying the rule. When we do this, we are successful. When we don't do it, we fail.” (OM-4).
**Category 5: Pandemic Process as Chaos**

Table 7 shows the metaphors that forms the chaos category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 7, 3 metaphors created by a total of 3 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 1 and men formulated 2 metaphors.

**Table 7.**

**Pandemic Process as Chaos**

| Category | Metaphor           | Female | Male | Total |
|----------|--------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Chaos    | The plague of our age | 1      | 1    | 3     |
|          | Evil               | 1      | 1    | 2     |
|          | Health blow        | 1      | 1    | 2     |
|          | **Total**          | 1      | 2    | 3     |

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated chaos metaphors are as follows.

“I think there was a health blow. I see it that way right now. I hope our country will overcome this situation as soon as possible. I want to meet our students as soon as possible. I repeat it over and over again, but it is a whole with its school student, teacher, parent. So I hope to meet them.” (MY-15).

“It really happened like the plague of our age. It is not a disease that can be compared, it is not something that can be compared. They say it’s not something that can be tied to the house. After all, the world we live in is the world we live in now, we have turned it over and over again. … Now we will learn to live in peace with the world in a way. We have no other choice.” (MY-22).

“Calamity, evil. The disease is obvious.” (M-13).

**Category 6: Pandemic Process as Restriction**

Table 8 shows the metaphors that form the restriction category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 8, 5 metaphors created by a total of 6 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 1 and men formulated 5 metaphors.

**Table 8.**

**Pandemic Process as Restriction**

| Category   | Metaphor                          | Female | Male | Total |
|------------|-----------------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Restriction| Covid 19 holiday                  | 1      | 1    | 2     |
|            | Prison                            | 1      | 2    | 3     |
|            | The thing that puts people in shape| 1      | 1    | 2     |
|            | Rule maker                        | 1      | 1    | 2     |
|            | The dispossession of liberties     | 1      | 1    | 2     |
|            | **Total**                         | 1      | 5    | 6     |

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated the restriction metaphors are as follows.

“Actually, it put the whole world not only us, but also all countries, even the whole world, into a situation like an open air prison. In other words, people were able to come to school from home, some of them stayed at home when it was not possible to go to school like us. Some of them is a new situation, many of them have started to do their jobs from home, so most of the people do not go to work as a homeoffice, just to meet their needs…” (OM-16).
“I can say that freedoms are taken away. In this process, we realized how important freedom is for a person. We stayed at homes, could not go out, we could not travel, we could not do what we wanted, and we realized how valuable these values we have are actually the values we have so far. Again, I think that we have understood the value of health without getting sick, as the old saying goes. (OM-8).

“The rule maker. Because our whole life has been shaped according to pandemic rules. We have to comply with the pandemic rules in order to be protected from the epidemic. " (OM-2).

**Category 7: Pandemic Process as a School**

Table 9 shows the metaphors that form the school category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 9, 3 metaphors created by a total of 3 participants represent this category. In this category, women formulated 1 and men formulated 2 metaphors.

Table 9. Pandemic Process as a School

| Category | Metaphor                   | Female | Male | Total |
|----------|----------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| School  | Garden without flowers     | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|         | The executioner of education | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|         | A fruitless tree           | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|         | **Total**                  | 3 100  | 3 100 |       |

Some of the reasons why school managers formulated school metaphors are as follows.

“Garden without flowers. Because of the absence of students at the school during the pandemic. " (MY-4).

“I would like to describe the COVID-19 process as the executioner of education in two words, so to speak. In other words, even though we try to do distance education efficiently, nothing beats face-to-face training. In my opinion, what we are doing now is not face-to-face education, but face-to-face instruction. So the training part cannot be done remotely, so I want to call it the executioner of the training. I don't know, maybe it was a very harsh analogy, but. ” (OM-7).

“As you know, there were no students in the schools during the pandemic process. I compare it to a tree without leaves and fruits. Because we are educators, an education in our schools away from students is like a dry tree. Therefore, I compare the pandemic process to a tree without leaves and fruits in terms of schools. ” (OM-9).

**Category 8: Pandemic Process as Social Life**

Table 10 shows the metaphors that make up the social life category of school managers and the number of participants who formulated each metaphor. According to Table 10, 3 metaphors created by a total of 3 participants represent this category. All metaphors in this category have been formulated by women.

Table 10. Pandemic Process as Social Life

| Category | Metaphor                | Female | Male | Total |
|----------|-------------------------|--------|------|-------|
| Social   | The union of good and evil | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|          | Social unrest           | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|          | Social absence          | 1 33,33| 1 33,33|       |
|          | **Total**               | 3 100  | 3 100 |       |
Some of the reasons why school managers formulated social life metaphors are as follows.

“Social unrest. Because our teachers and students are constantly on the computer, their ability to go out and socialize is limited. For this reason, everyone's psychology is deteriorating. Especially our students are on the edge of being more aggressive, more selfish, more insensitive than they cannot be with their peers.” (OM-5).

“I can say social absence. We have learned once again that human beings are very important in human life. Either social socialization is really important for a person, friend group, peer group, conversation, conversation, sharing… All of this happens with people. Okay, technology has sufficiently supported it during the pandemic period, but I'm really saying it again. What you call education is face-to-face education, when you say people it is socialization. …” (MY-14).

“I am a person who thinks that there is good in evil and evil in good. I think that every bad thing that happens to us in life is actually not a negative thing but a negative thing, let's not say bad, actually it has its benefits and contributions to us. The evil in good, the good in evil. In a sense, the world had to be cleaned. For example, the beluga whale was even seen in the sea. Isn't it true, in the streams the fish have come to life again, a natural glow? People have changed themselves…” (OM-15).

**Differences of School Managers by Gender in Producing Metaphors**

Table 11 shows the categories of metaphors formulated by school managers regarding the pandemic process and the number of participants in each category. Table 11 contains the results of the Chi-square ($X^2$) test, in which 8 metaphor categories formulated by school managers are compared in terms of gender.

**Table 11.**

The results of the Chi-square test comparing the metaphorical perceptions of school managers regarding the pandemic process according to their gender.

| Category            | Female | Male | Total | $X^2$ | df | p     | Difference |
|---------------------|--------|------|-------|-------|----|-------|------------|
| Uncertainty         | 1      | 4    | 5     | 0.357 | 1  | 0.550 | --         |
| Natural disasters   | -      | 7    | 7     | 3.960 | 1  | 0.047*| Erkek      |
| Turning point       | 1      | 2    | 3     | 0.005 | 1  | 0.946 | --         |
| Figment             | 4      | 4    | 8     | 1.591 | 1  | 0.207 | --         |
| Chaos               | 1      | 2    | 3     | 0.005 | 1  | 0.946 | --         |
| Restriction         | 1      | 5    | 6     | 0.733 | 1  | 0.392 | --         |
| School              | 1      | 2    | 3     | 0.005 | 1  | 0.946 | --         |
| Social life         | 3      | -    | 3     | 7.057 | 1  | 0.008*| Kadin      |
| Total               | 12     | 26   | 38    | 0.000 | 1  | 0.000 |           |

According to the results of the Chi-square ($X^2$) test in Table 11, the metaphors formulated by male managers in the natural disaster category (Pearson $X^2 = 3.960; p = 0.047$) and female managers in the social life category (Pearson $X^2 = 7.057; p = 0.008$) differentiates as ($p <0.05$). While the metaphors formulated by male and female managers are similar in some categories, they are completely different from each other. In addition, it is possible to summarize these differences as follows.

Male managers formulated all of the metaphors in the natural disaster category ($n = 7, f = 100\%$) and female managers formulated all of the metaphors in the social life category ($n = 3, f = 100\%$). Female managers did not formulate any metaphors in the natural disaster category, and male managers in the social life category.

Male managers formulated more metaphors than female managers in 6 categories. These; constraint ($n = 5, f = 83.33\%$), uncertainty ($n = 4, f = 80\%$), turning point, chaos and school ($n = 2, f = 66, 67\%$) are metaphors.
Female managers formulated fewer metaphors than men in every category except for the social life category. The low number of female managers was also effective in this. Both female and male managers formulated an equal number of metaphors in the fictional category (n = 4, f = 50%).

When the data obtained in this study are examined, the following results are obtained.

The categories in which school managers formulate metaphors are imaginary (n = 8, f = 21.05%), natural disaster (n = 7, f = 18.42%), restriction (n = 6, f = 15.79), uncertainty (n = 5, f = 13.16), turning point (n = 3, f = 7.89), chaos (n = 3, f = 7.89), school (n = 3, f = 7.89) and social life (n = 3, f = 7.89).

According to gender, it was observed that female managers formulated the most metaphors in the social life (n = 3, f = 100%) category, and male managers in the natural disaster category (n = 7, f = 100%).

Discussion

In this study, 34 metaphors formulated by school managers for the pandemic process were collected under eight categories as imaginary, natural disaster, restriction, uncertainty, turning point, chaos, school and social life. When the categories were considered, it was seen that the pandemic process, which was a complex and uncertain phenomenon with global effects, was perceived by school managers in different ways and in multidimensional ways. The metaphors formulated by the school managers from the fatal and destructive effect in the process to the uncertainty, from the chaos experienced in the process to the turning point for the future of humanity, and the restrictions in both school and social life reveal a part of the picture of the pandemic process.

While the metaphors formulated by school managers were expected to be mostly about education and school, the fact that the covid-19 virus caused by the pandemic was an imaginary product, compared to natural disasters for its fatal and destructive effect, was composed of metaphors for the restrictions it created in every aspect of our lives and the uncertainty of the process. Metaphors for education and school were among the categories formulated the least in number. It can be thought that this situation is mostly caused by the schools continuing distance education and the decrease in the complexity and intensity in the routine process of the schools in the administrative dimension.

One of the findings of this study shows that the gender factor plays an important role in the mental perceptions of school managers. The most important result of the research is that only female managers in the social life category and only male managers in the natural disaster category formulate metaphors. There are also some studies revealing that there are differences in the metaphorical perceptions of women and men. In a metaphor study conducted by Varisoğlu and Kasaveklioğlu (2019) on teachers who could not be appointed, it was seen that the teachers who could not be appointed metaphorically described women as not working and men as unknown. In the study of Kalkan and Gürses (2019), it was stated that women formulated metaphors for theory and men for the application and distribution of knowledge. On the other hand, it was seen that women played many gender roles in social life, including profession, motherhood, spouse, housewife, kinship, citizenship and individual (Oppong & Abu, 1988). There are studies showing that men and women are in conflict with their roles in the organizational process, contrary to the biological and gender roles expected of them. It was stated that management women showed more masculine characteristics when compared to other women and men during the career progression process (Brewer, Mitchell, & Weber, 2002). In addition, in a study that dealt with the emotional intelligence of women and men, women in the management of their own emotions, empathy and interpersonal social relations; It was stated that men were better at self-confidence, optimism, adaptation and stress management (Goleman, 1998). Dubrin and Dalglish (2003), on the other hand, stated that leadership styles differed according to gender, women displayed relationship-oriented leadership based on cooperation and interaction, and men displayed militaristic leadership based on command and command. Therefore, it can be said that besides gender roles, emotional intelligence and leadership styles are also effective in creating metaphors in the social life category of female managers.
Conclusion

The aim of this study was to learn the feelings and thoughts of school managers about the pandemic process through metaphor. 38 school managers participating in the study expressed the pandemic process with 34 metaphors and showed that male and female managers have significantly different views in their mental perceptions. The data obtained showed that metaphors could be used as a very powerful tool to understand and make sense of the situation of school managers. It was understood that the pandemic process, which was a complex and uncertain phenomenon with global effects, was perceived by school managers in different ways and multidimensionally. In their opinions on the reasons for formulating metaphors, school managers gave their reasons such as the characteristics of the virus in the pandemic process, its destructive effects on the individual, organization and the environment, the uncertainty and chaos experienced in the process, the limitations in the individual and social life, the things to be done in the process and the possible effects after the process.

Recommendations

Although this study was conducted with school managers, it can be comprehensively analyzed with a larger sample of other stakeholders, including teachers, students and parents. It may even be suggested to carry out similar studies in higher education institutions. By comparing the findings made in different samples, school managers’ situation determination and their perspectives on the event can be evaluated.

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