

A Qualitative Investigation on the Effect of COVID-19 on the Views Concerning Marriage and Divorce

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Abstract : Objective: The COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting the whole world since the beginning of 2020. In addition to health-related and financial effects, there seem to be significant psychological effects as well, among them those related to people's views and representations of marriage and divorce. Background: Although various impacts of COVID-19 have been investigated since the beginning of the pandemic, there is a limited number of studies on its effects concerning relationships. This research aims to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic affects the views on and representations of marriage and divorce by conducting two studies. Method: In the first study, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with 31 participants (20 single and 11 married individuals) to investigate their evaluations regarding the effect of COVID-19 on people's views of marriage in general and their own views of marriage in particular. In the second study, 298 entries on the most frequently used online social platform in Turkey (EkşiSözlük) under two separate headings for COVID-19 impact on marriage and divorce were analyzed, and meaningful thematic units were formed. Results: The findings of the thematic analysis indicated that participants mostly mentioned both the positive and negative effects of COVID-19 on the views and representations of marriage. There were both common (e.g., loneliness, violence, etc.) and distinct (e.g., sexuality, positive and negative effects on attitudes towards marriage, etc.) thematic units between the results of the two studies. Implications: There are considerable implications discussed in light of the literature on Terror Management Theory, Attachment Theory, stress research, and growth perspective.

Keywords : COVID-19 pandemic, divorce, marriage, relationships, representations, views

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