



REPORT: A RAPID ASSESSMENT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

VIETNAM ASSOCIATION FOR PROTECTION
OF CHILD'S RIGHTS

Mas. Nguyen Thu Ha

Mas. Doan Minh Hien

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Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the year 2020, witnessing the effect of Covid-19 on the economic and social life of the Vietnamese including children, with “*the responsibility to connect, collect information and recommendations from social groups and children given to the state institutions to advise, to suggest on the establishment and implementation of policies and regulations on the rights of children; to participate in monitoring the conduct of children’s rights; to give opinions and petition of the Group towards the state institutions regarding children’s matters and law violations related to children*” as specified in clause 4, Article 92 in Child Law in 2016, and hoping to have a multi-dimensional view on the effects of Covid 19 on the children’s life, Vietnam Association for Protection of Children’s Rights (VACR) conducted a quick survey in April 2020 on the effects of Covid 19 on the daily life of children to have a better understanding of the difficulties the children faced at home and not being able to go to school, as well as the relationship between them and their caretakers in this period.

The VACR is sincerely grateful towards the local Association faculties, members of CRWG, groups, individuals and especially children across the country participating in the survey and sharing VACR’s information to the survey targets in order to help VACR complete the survey to update the information related to the effects of the pandemic on the children and their family when they could only stay at home for a long period of time and couldn’t go to school.

We hope the survey results can serve as a source of useful information for forming recommendations to send to related parties in order to ensure and strengthen the implementation of children’s rights, so the country as well as the different organizations, agencies and individuals can have more care towards the effects of disasters and pandemics on children’s life.

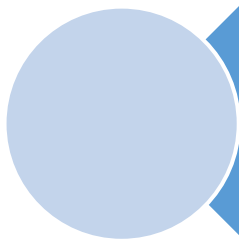
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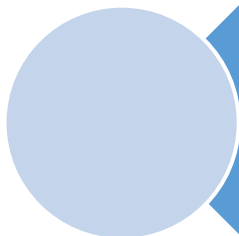
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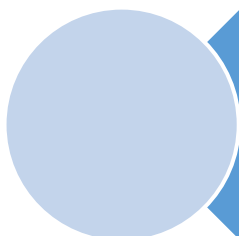
Main discoveries



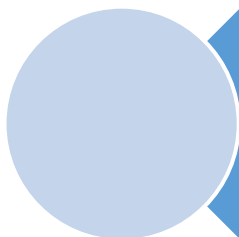
One out of 10 children spent 9 hours/day learning at school and self-studying at home.



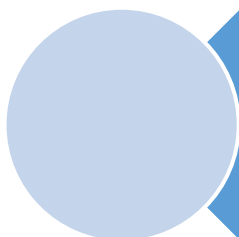
49% of surveyed children encountered difficulties studying online due to internet problems



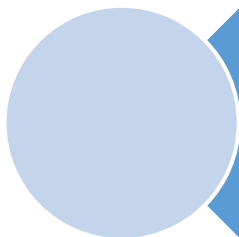
One out of two children said the pressure from studying intensified in 2021 compared to 2020, especially at the end of 2nd grade.



85% of children felt the home environment was harmonious, warm and happy, which was 25% higher than 2021. 81% of the surveyed caretakers said they felt closer to the children in this period.



80.5% of the caretakers were able to adopt a violence-free approach. Most of them were 25-45 years old.



In 2021, the caretakers reduced the use of physical violence means, but intensified the mental pressure method. One out of two caretakers applied mental pressure to solve the conflicts, which was 35% higher than 2020.

Survey content and results

The situation

The fourth wave of the Covid 19 pandemic caused many provinces to apply countermeasures. The children couldn't go to school and they had to study online from April 2021. Up to October 2021, their daily lives and study habits greatly changed since then with online study. Especially during the period that the provinces applied the Prime Minister's Directive 16/CT-TTg on a widespread scale which was longer than the previous pandemic, the workers had to conduct social distancing, alter their way of work at home. As a result, more people spent time with their families.

We see that Covid-19 changed not only the daily habits of children during their stay at home, but also the relationship between them and their caretakers in the family in this social distancing period. To evaluate those changes compared to 2020 that had been surveyed by VACR previously, VACR conducted another survey to update the information on the experiences and adaptations to the new situation of children and their caretakers in October 2021.

Goals

- Evaluate the effects of Covid 19 on daily lives of children (daily routines and education during the stay-at-home period)
- The difficulties and challenges faced by children and caretakers during the social distancing period, including the approach to the children's education, and the psychological impacts they faced currently under the fourth pandemic wave.
- Current problems and concerns of children and caretakers in this period.

Time window



Quick Survey Report: Covid's effects on children

The quick survey was conducted in a period of 15 days (from 9th to 24th of October 2021). The results will be compiled in 7 days to be arranged and published on the 15th of November 2021.

Survey method

VACR created two online survey forms via Microsoft Forms:

- Survey form for those under the age of 18 including 25 questions. 25 of which were multiple-choice questions, and 2 were short essay questions so the participants could add more information, opinions, needs and ideas.
- Survey form for the caretakers (parents, grand parents, siblings, relatives, etc) from the age of 18 and above including 20 questions. 18 were multiple choice questions, and two were essays so the participants could share their difficulties, concerns and struggles taking care of children at home.

After finishing creating two survey forms, VACR published them on their websites and facebook, sent them to local VACR faculties, shared them to CSOs groups, associations, Child Rights Working Group (CRWG), a number of schools, etc.

The collected data would be analyzed and displayed on graphs based on percentages.

Survey targets

- Children at the age of 9 - 16 and teenagers at the age of 16 - 18: 1056 responses. This survey extended the age range to 9 -12 compared to the 2020 survey which only included the children in the age of 12 to under 18
- People at the age of 18 and older, including parents/grandparents/relatives/caretakers/teachers: 785 responses gathered.

Limitations

The quick survey was conducted in the span of 2 weeks targeting two different groups, and the responses were voluntary. As a result, there weren't many participants. On the other hand, there were mainly quantifiable questions, and the qualifiable ones were few. The qualifiable responses were also few, so the survey faced some limitations when analyzing further experiences of children and adults in this time period. The participant numbers weren't equal between cities and provinces, and didn't tackle the regions that were heavily affected by Covid-19.

1 Children survey results

1.1 Overall evaluation of survey targets

1.1.1 Age - Gender

Age: The survey targeted the children at the age of 9 - 18, with 25% of them were at 9 - 12, 70% were at 12 - 16, and only 5% were at 16 - 18 in the survey.

The percentages in this survey were roughly the same as the ones in the 2020 survey, in which 83% were at 12 - 16, and 17% were under 12 and at 16 - 18 age range.

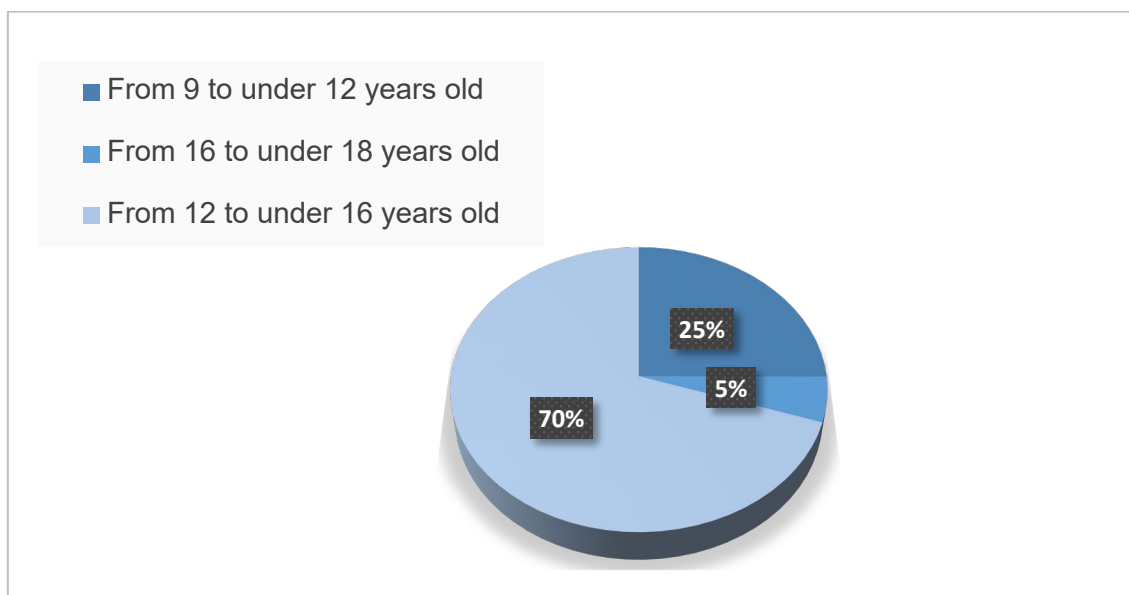


Figure 1 The percentage of age groups among survey participants

Gender

Among the 1056 participating children, there were 511 boys and 542 girls, and two chose “Other” either because they didn’t want to disclose, or they were really in another gender.

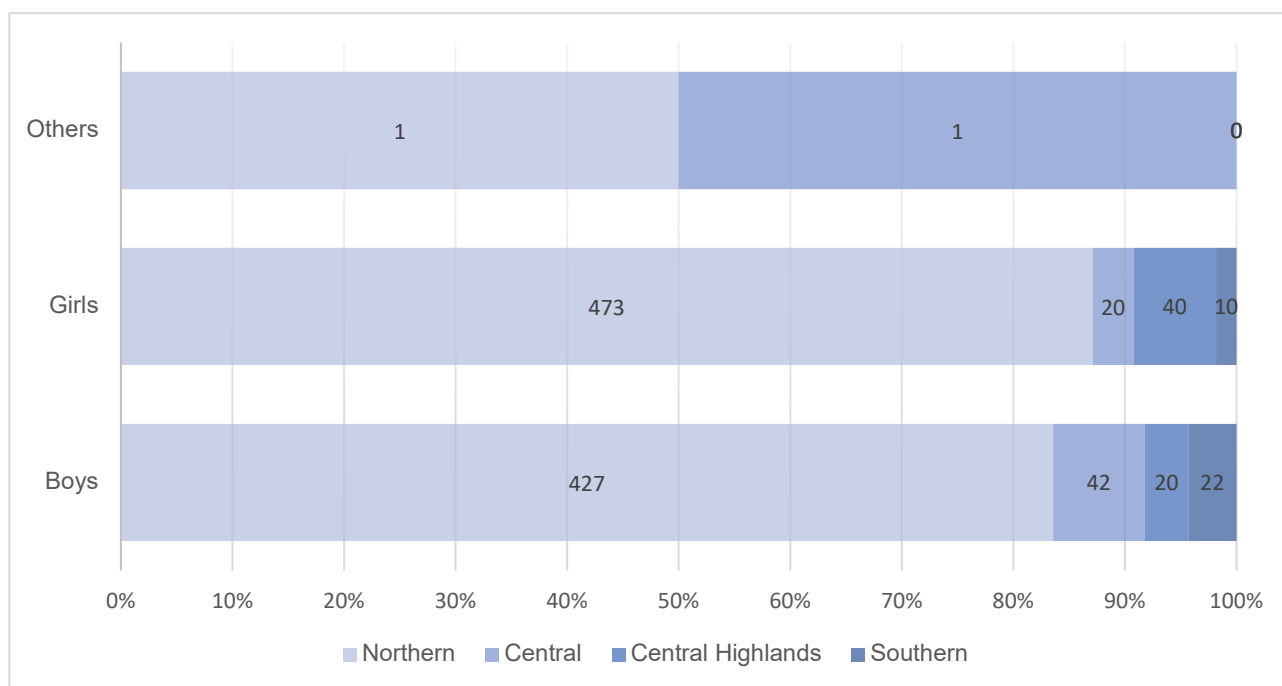


Figure 2 The percentage of gender groups among survey participants

Among 511 boys, 83.5% came from the Northern, 8.3% came from the Central, 4% from the Central Highlands, and 4.2% came from the Southern provinces.

Among 543 girls, 87.1% came from the Northern, 3.6% came from the Central, 7.4% from the Central Highlands, and 1.8% came from the Southern provinces.

In the “Other” category, one was from the Northern province Bac Giang, and the other came from Central’s Da Nang.

1.1.2 Living areas

Among all of 1056 surveyed children, 85.2% came from the Northern, numbered 900. 63 Central children made up 6%, 61 came from Central Highlands and made up 5.8%, and 32 Northern children made up 3%.

While the 2020 survey didn't reach the children in the Central Highlands, the 2021 survey had Central Highland participants taking 5.7% in total. This showed that WACR has gotten

better at approaching the children and ensuring the

representation of the children from all places in the country in this survey.

The percentage of participating children from the Northern is still high while the other regions still had low percentages.

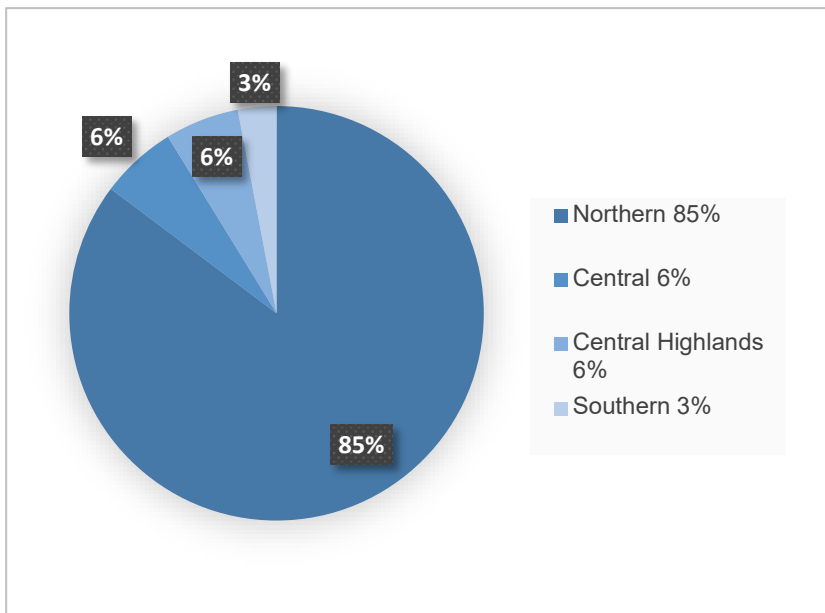


Figure 3. Living zones of surveyed children

1.1.3 Family environment for children during this Covid 19 period

69% of the children participating in the survey had parents, and they were obviously the majority. Those living with single parents took 7%. Those living with grandparents took 7%. Those who chose "Others" took 17% out of all participants. In Tay Nguyen, Ben Tre, Hai Phong, Nha Trang, there were 35 participating children from alternative environments (such as SOS villages or the Centers for the blind), taking 3.3% of the survey sample.

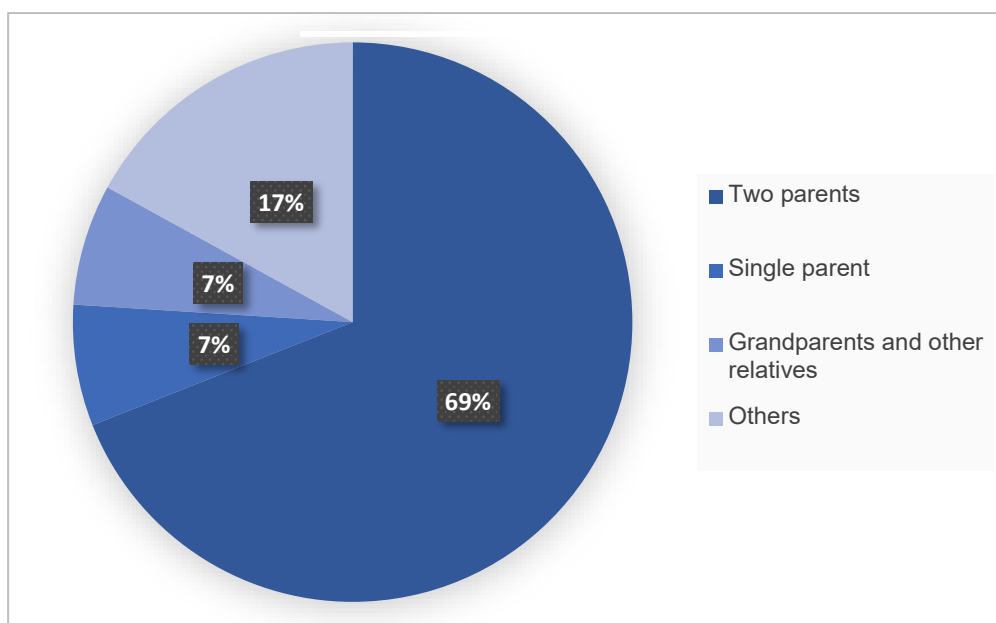


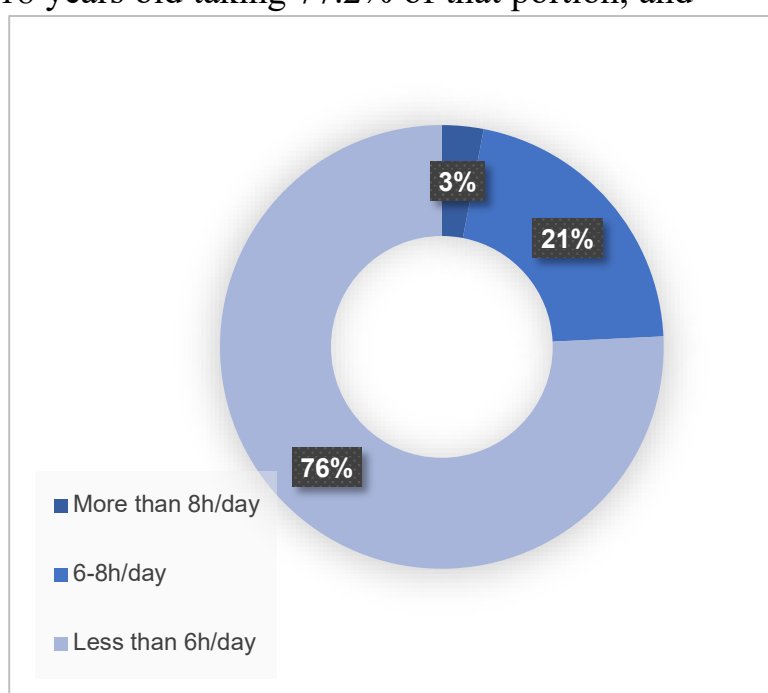
Figure 4: Caregivers who stay with the surveyed child

1.2 Effect of Covid-19 on the daily lives of children

1.2.1 Studying

1.2.1.1 Time spent on studying

According to the survey, 795 participants spent under 6 hours per day studying following the school curriculum, which took 54% of the total sample size. They felt the pressure was low. 25% of the participants on the other hand felt under pressure, with those at 16 - 18 years old taking 77.2% of that portion, and most of them were at the end of secondary school, and 10% were in the 16 - 18 age range. 225 children took 6 - 8 hours per day, taking 21% of the total sample size. Only 35 children took more than 8 hours per day, taking 3%. The time spent on studying by boys and girls was roughly the same.





Quick Survey Report: Covid's effects on children

Aside from following the school curriculum, 58% of the participants spent under 3 hours for self-studying, while 42% spent more than 3 hours.

There were 114 children out of 1015 spending more than 9 hours studying in total, taking 11% of the sample size.

“Normally if I don’t have the knowledge, I would ask my classmates or teachers. But when studying online, I could google the solutions to answer the teachers’ questions, and it helped me understand the problems I was having better. And it saved time”.

(14-year-old girl from Tay Ninh)

Because of the pandemic’s complicated developments, children staying at home had to use alternative studying methods such as television, internet, or online classes. 49% of the participants faced technical difficulties online, and 78% of them needed help from parents or other adults in the family. The remaining 22% didn’t need help, and most of them were 12 years old and older.

“I hope they have a way to ensure a stable internet for us on the days we need it to study”.

(17-year-old girl from Bac Giang)

“My internet kept lagging, interrupting my study sessions. When the teacher called me to answer, I was lagging and couldn’t get the question so she deducted a point”.

(13-year-old girl from Lam Dong).

“I’m studying directly and not studying online at home. It’s difficult understanding the teachers online.”

(13-year-old boy from Cao Bang)

29% of the children thought that online learning affected their health.

“Break time between studying sessions was a little longer to avoid hurting our eyes staring at the screen.”

(14-year-old girl from Lam Dong)

and 22% faced difficulties doing online tests.

“Early on I kept forgetting passwords when logging in. The computer had no sound because there weren't any speakers. When I was studying online I had a broken arm so I couldn't write so my mother helped me write, but she made mistakes when taking notes and she wouldn't know.”

(12-year-old boy from Bac Giang)

Children from cities and rural areas alike faced those difficulties, such as those from Bac Giang, Ha Nam, Ha Noi, Dak Lak, Binh Duong, Ho Chi Minh City, Lam Dong, etc.

1.2.1.2. Knowledge of safe internet usage

Regarding the knowledge of self protection online, the surveys showed:

46% needed to know how to defend against bullies, and 49.6% felt that they needed to the skills to protect their privacy due to their lack of knowledge.

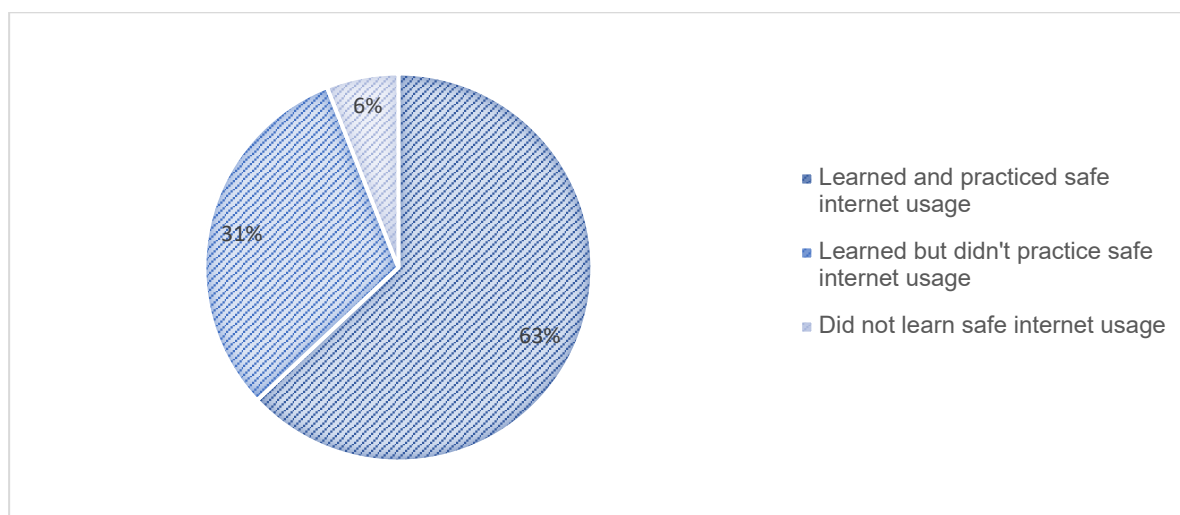


Figure 6 - Children's knowledge of safe internet usage

Compared to 52.8% of the children that knew how to protect themselves using the Internet and were familiar with safety measures in 2020, in 2021 there were 63% that were knowledgeable about internet safety. This showcased the positive effects of media raising awareness of internet safety towards children.

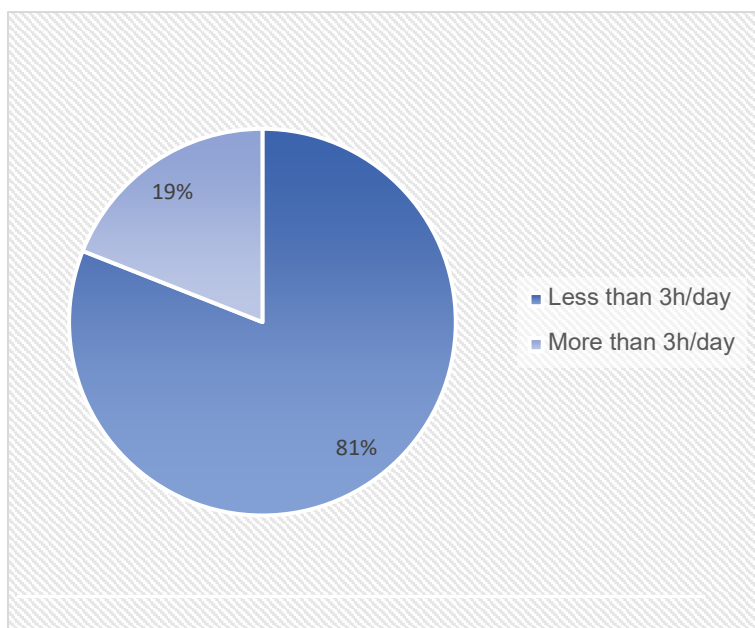
However, 6% of the surveyed children weren't taught how to use the internet safely, such as those coming from Bac Giang, Ben Tre, Cao Bang, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, etc.

Specifically about safe internet usage, 18.7% of the participants couldn't differentiate between provided links and strange websites to avoid danger. 16.4% didn't know how to protect their personal information, and 26.8% were taught but didn't know how to apply their knowledge. And 37.2% weren't taught how to defend against bullies, or were taught but didn't know how to apply their skills.

"If I receive a message from a strange number, I'll get uncomfortable and block it instantly"

(16-year-old girl from Na Noi)

1.2.2 Other activities



81% of the surveyed children spent below 3 hours per day on other activities aside, and the remaining 19% spent more. Most of the time were spent on self-study activities like homework or review, or other actions like cooking, playing, etc.

Figure 7 Time spent on other activities by children

1.3 Covid's effects on the relationship between the children and their caretakers

1.3.1 Evaluating the relationship between the children and the caretakers

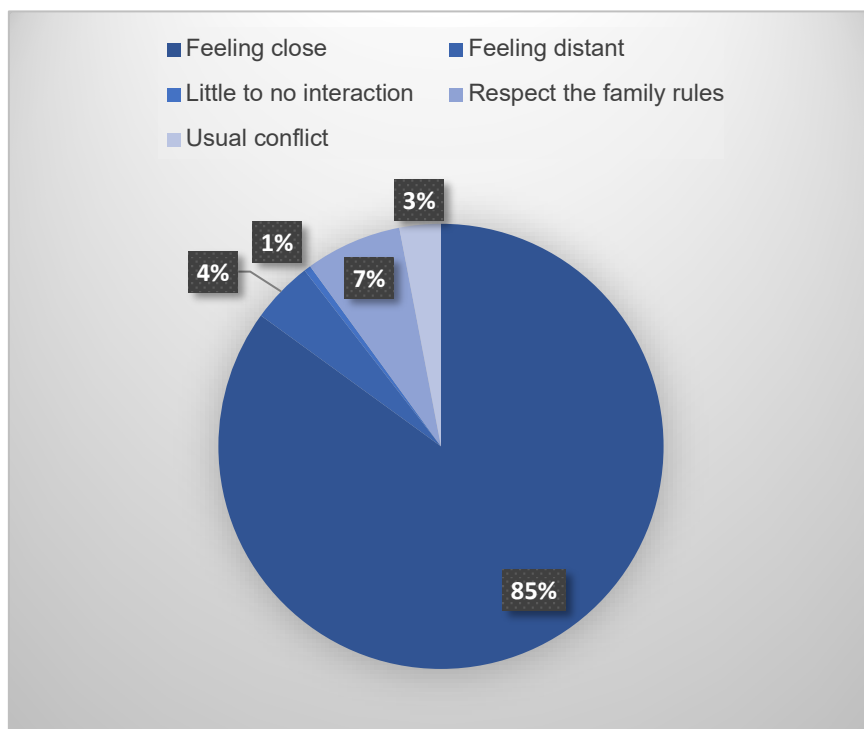


Figure 8 Evaluation of children on their surroundings

The survey also asked the question regarding the relationship between the children and the caretakers.

In 2020 there were more than 60% of the children feeling that the family environment during the social distancing was

harmonious, happy and loving with discipline and respect. The reason was because they felt comfortable spending more time with their family and doing more activities with them. In 2021 the percentage rose to 85%.

“Using Internet at home during Covid-19, what I remembered most was watching movies on the computer with the family on weekends.”

(12-year-old boy from Gia Lai)

However, 3% of the participants felt like the family environment was hostile and violent, and 4.5% felt like the family environment was distant, with a lack of care.

14-year-old girl from Bac Giang shared that her parents didn't talk or listen to her, or spend time with her. They didn't care enough about her emotions. Therefore she could only share to them things she couldn't deal with on her own. However, she was insulted whenever she tried to tell them. So she wanted her parents to listen, care and share with her more instead of verbal abuse, as well as being supportive and encouraging of her education.

1.3.2 Difficulties children faced at home during Covid

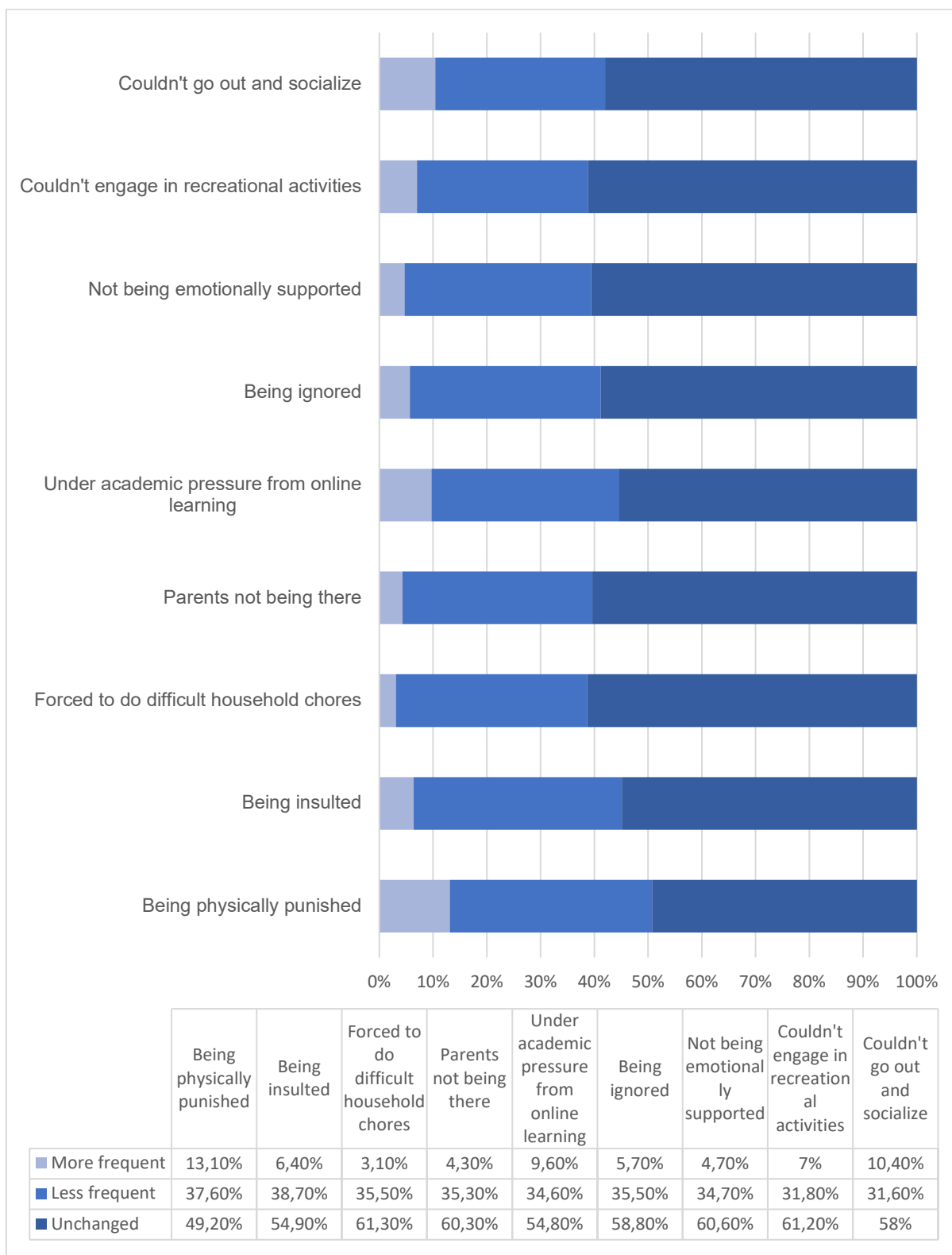


Figure 9 Children's feelings towards the difficulties they faced during 2021 pandemic

In 2020, 60% of the children said they felt difficulties during studying but the number reduced to 20.2% in 2021. 51% of those felt that the pressure during studying increased compared to 2020.

According to the surveyed numbers in 2020, 48% of the surveyed were under pressure from parents due to scoldings, while in 2021 the number reduced to 27.3%. 32.5% felt distant from their parents in either 2020 or 2021, and 19% felt that the situation occurred very often (5 times per day and above).

“Said that mom’s F0 and needed to be quarantined. Wearing masks felt difficult.”

(9-year-old boy from Ho Chi Minh City)

1.3.3 Possible things that could cause conflict between children and their caretakers

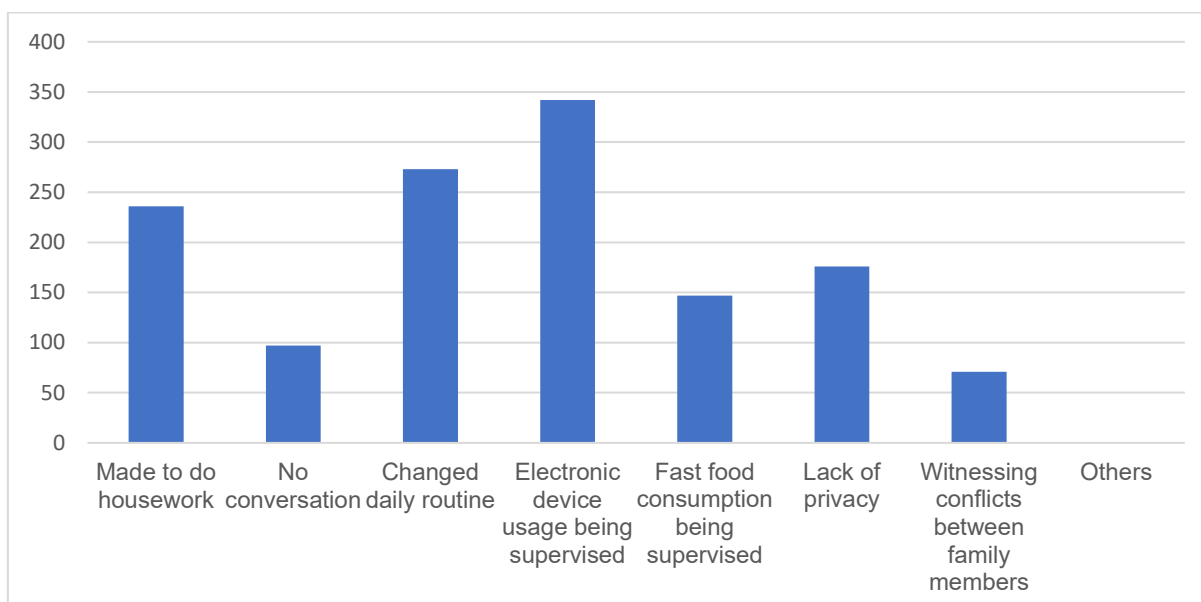


Figure 10 Causes of conflict between children and their caretakers

32,3% of participating children chose “being monitored when using electronics for entertainment” when it comes to choosing the cause of discomfort at home in this time period.

Aside from that, 26% felt uncomfortable because of “different daily routine times between children and adults” and 22,3% felt uncomfortable because they were “made to do chores” like housework or cooking for the family (47% of those were girls while 53% were boys).

1.3.4 Those the children trust in this time period

- Only things the children couldn't solve on their own
- Never
- Everyday

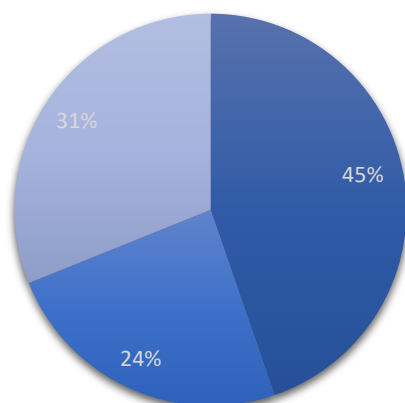


Figure 11 Conversations between caretakers and children

31% of the children often told their adults their daily experiences, and they felt 98% of their parents listened intently. 67% felt closer to their parents.

24% chose that they didn't share their experiences with anyone. However 45% of those who shared their experiences with

others reported that 89% of their parents listened and interacted with them, while only 2% interrupted and didn't listen.

"I think my father and mother should understand me more. They shouldn't look down on me whenever they talk to me and decide on something, because I would have difficulty talking and connecting with others. And they shouldn't say hurtful things to me."

(18-year-old boy from Cao Bang)

1.4 Children's impressions and wishes

Many children shared their impressions on our healthcare and pandemic countermeasures compared to other countries.



Quick Survey Report: Covid's effects on children

"The story that left the deepest impression on me was when the pandemic happened, the doctors were very dedicated to patients' treatment. Some pull all-nighters combating the pandemic until they collapse. The volunteers also came to the pandemic zones to aid the homeless. I will remember these touching stories forever in my heart."

(14-year-old girl from Bac Giang)

Those who were happy with online learning...

"Firstly, online study helped me learn better, because the teachers would record or talk through microphones so it was really easy to listen to. It's really nice because the classrooms were big, the teachers spoke fast but too quietly so I could only get 60% of the lessons. Secondly, during online classes, the teachers saved the lessons and posted them on the school website, making it easy for me to look them up at any time."

(14-year-old boy from Da Nang)

But some ran into certain problems...

"The first time with camera and microphone, others could see and hear anything we said to our family members, it was funny."

(16-year-old boy from Ben Tre)



Quick Survey Report: Covid's effects on children

"I remembered a funny story about the first time I attended online class. I wasn't familiar with phones and using my grandmother's phone so I was unfamiliar. So I felt asleep one time and dreamed that I was about to eat some really delicious grilled ribs... but my teacher called my name. I woke up, was really started and went "YES" loudly. My teacher was surprised, my classmates were also surprised when they heard that and everyone laughed. After the class the teacher lightly scolded me. I asked why everyone laughed, and she said I had messy bed hair, and I was surprised again and everyone couldn't hold in their laughter. Afterwards I really really paid attention to the online classes even tho I made sure everyone couldn't see my face anymore."

(13-year-old boy from Bac Giang)

"Studying with others, some ate noodles while forgetting to turn off camera and mic."

(12-year-old boy from Bac Giang).

Surveyed children also expressed their wishes regarding their current experiences.

"High school admission centers should adjust to studying programs during the pandemic period."

(11-year-old girl from Bac Giang)

"Reduce the class period time, reduce some lessons for shorter online classes to reduce eye strain. If the pandemic's over I want to go back to school, meet my classmates and teachers and study directly."

(14-year-old girl from Tay Ninh)

2 Adult survey results

2.1. General evaluation of the survey participants

2.1.1 Age

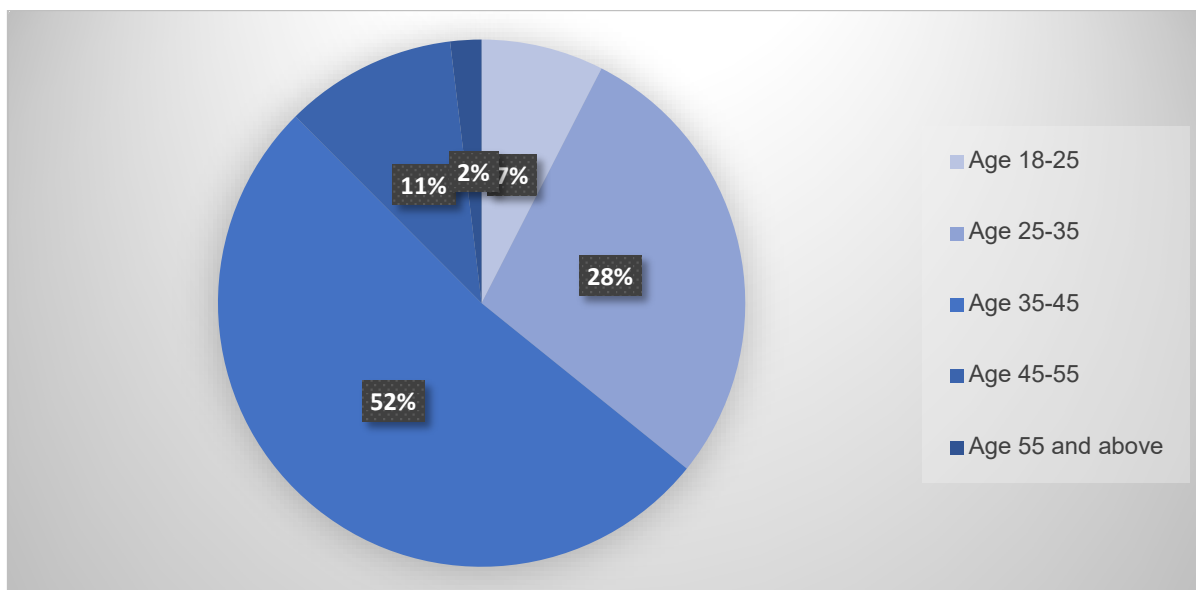


Figure 12 The age groups of the surveyed caretakers of children

The biggest age group was the 35 - 45 group, taking 52% of the total number of caretakers, after that the 23 - 35 age group taking 28%, and 8% were 18 - 25 years old. Therefore 80% of the participants fell in the working age range from 25 to 45 years old. They were at the parenting age and were the main working force in the family, while 11% were in the 45 - 55 age group while only 2% of the surveyed were 55 years old and older.

2.1.2 Living areas

According to the survey there were 785 people from the Northern, taking 94.7% of the sample size. The Central and Central Highlands took 4.3% and the South took 1%.

2.1.3 Number of children under care

48% of the survey participants were taking care of at least 3 children in the family, 39% responded that they were taking care of 2, while 13% were taking care of one.

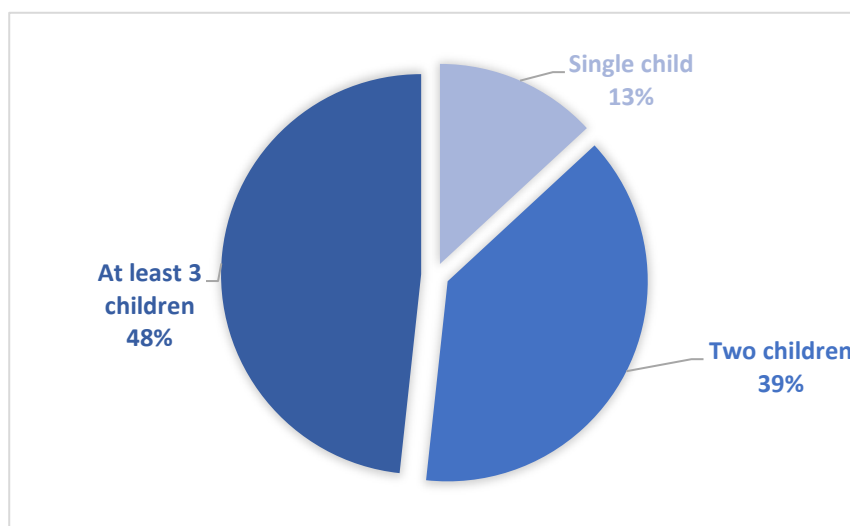
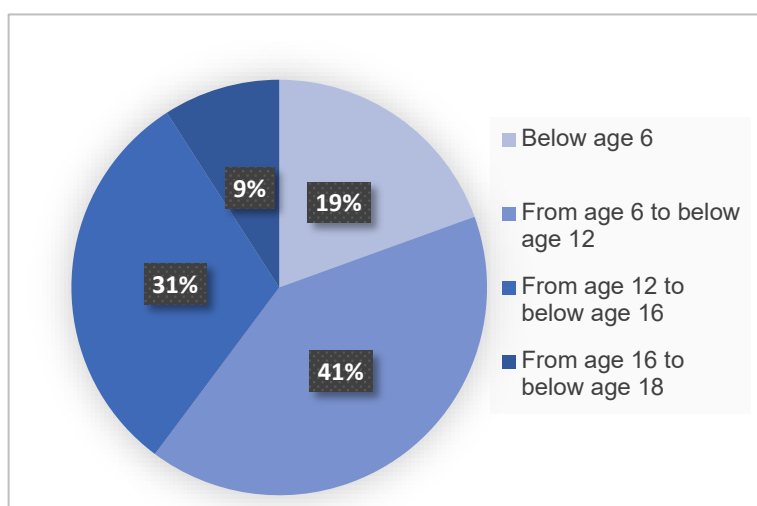


Figure 13 Number of studying children under care



Meanwhile, 19% responses indicated that they were taking care of children under 6, 41% were taking care of those from 6 to under 12 years old, and 31% were taking care of those from 12 to under 16 years of age.

Only 9% were taking care of those from 16 to 18 years old. So those taking care of the 6 - under 16 age range were taking 72% of the survey participants.

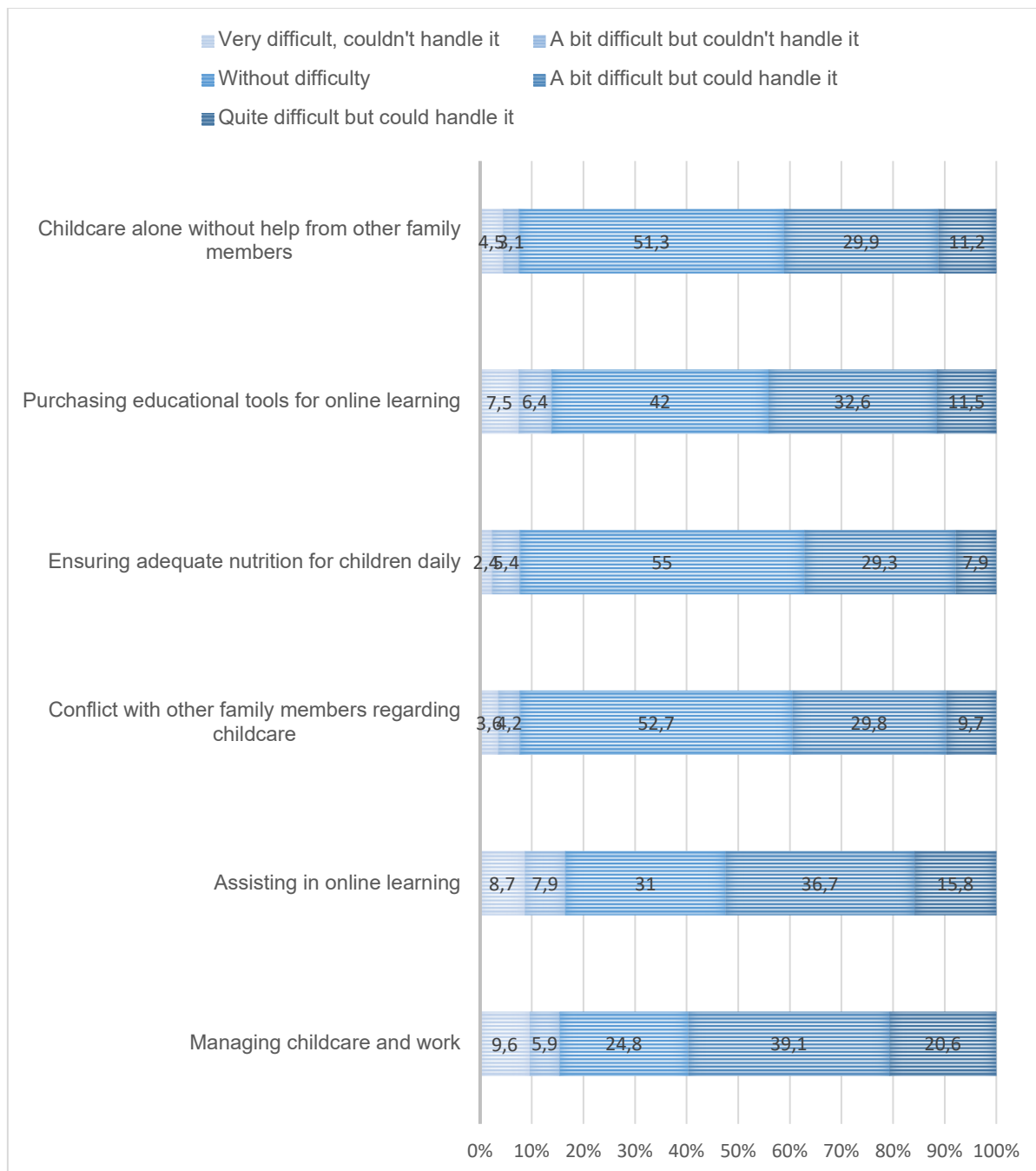
As a special note, among the caretakers that were surveyed, about 0.3% (3 people) were taking care of F0s or F1s. 2.4% (19 people) had to take care of disabled children, 10 of which were in charge of mentally challenged, the remain 9 had the deaf & mute, physically disabled or other groups under them.

2.2 The effect of Covid on childcare

2.2.1 Difficulties the caretakers faced

During the social distancing period due to the Covid 19 pandemic, balancing childcare and work at home caused a big strain on 59% of the

participants that they had to take care of on their own. Only 15% thought they couldn't do it on their own. Most of those were taking care of at least 3 children (48.3%)



Hình 15 Difficulties the caretakers faced in this time period

Supervising, assisting children's online learning was also difficult. 52.5% of the participants felt like they could handle those difficulties while 16.6%

thought they couldn't, and they were aiding those from 6 to under 12 years old (70.2%)

“Online learning with the kid was tiring and didn't feel productive.”

Participant 20, 45-55 years old, from Hai Phong

For the 19 that were taking care of disabled children, they faced difficulties purchasing learning equipment for children. Those taking care of F0s and F1s faced difficulty in conflict with other family members, and could only do it alone without help from the family.

“During online classes, I have to learn with my child to help because my child couldn't keep up with what the teacher said.”

Participant 8, 35-55 years old, from Ho Chi Minh City, taking care of F0-F1

2.2.2 Conflict between the caretaker and the children during quarantine

48.5% of the caretakers said that the biggest conflict between the children and the caretaker was about monitoring the children's study, with most of them were parents of those from 6 to under 12 years old (65.7%)

Then there were 48% saying that the conflict was from monitoring entertainment devices. 62.3% were in charge of the 6-12 age group while 42% were taking care of those from 12 to under 16 years old.

2.2.3 Methods caretakers used to resolve problems



80.5% of the participants in the 25-45 age group used other means to help the children study without resorting to violence. 90.8% of them used explanations, guidance, while 72.5% looked up how to teach the children using different sources such as newspapers and the internet.

“Perhaps I could ask for other children for help, or just talk with the child I’m having a problem with.”

(Participant 7, caretaker, 35-45 years old, from Ha Noi).

“Maybe let the child watch educational videos”

(Participant 314, 35-45 years old, from Bac Giang)

“We should set up family rules so all members can follow.”

(Participants 405, 18-25 years old, Bac Giang)

However, there were still parents using psychological abuse, taking 49.5% of those choosing to send their children to other people (grandparents, neighbors, acquaintances). 12% chose abandonment, not interacting with the children and ignoring them when conflict happened.

45.5% of the caretakers resorted to yelling, insults, threatening, or comparing the children with others or animals when conflict happened. 24.6% of the caretakers chose physical punishment (hitting, punching, ear-pulling, slapping) to solve the problem taking care of those from 6 to under 12 years old (63%). This showed that the number of parents using mental abuse increased

compared to 2020 while 10% used physical punishment (hitting, punching, slapping, etc).

“If they were too stubborn, I would possibly whip them.”

(Participant 5, 35-45 years old, from Ha Noi)

When it comes to solving conflict and difficulties the caretakers faced, 52.8% of those who used violence noted that the children would change their actions but then revert to their previous behaviors after a while. 42% reported that the children changed their behaviors permanently, while 5% reported no change with those violent methods.

2.3 The relationship between the caretakers and the children affected by Covid-19

2.3.1 Time spent with children

48% of the participants spent more than 4 hours per day with children, with

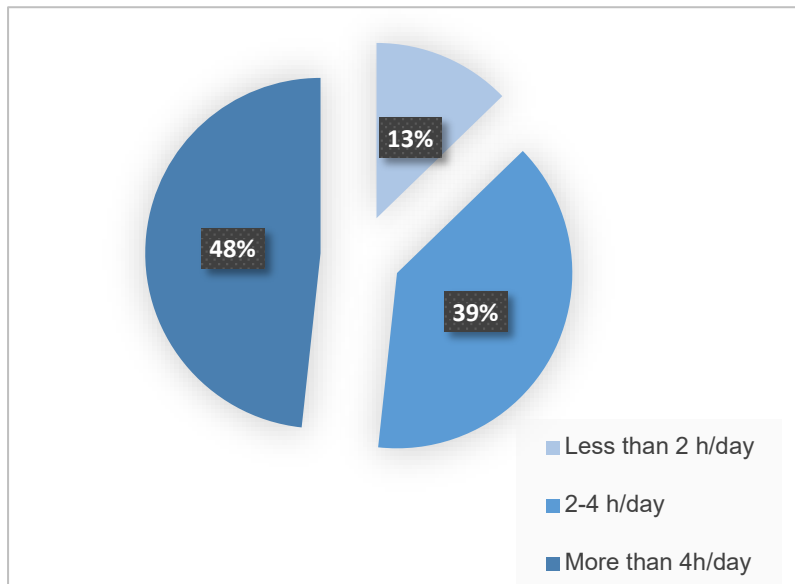


Figure 17 Time the caretakers spent with children

41% taking care of at least 3 children. 13% of the participants spent less than 2 hours per day taking care of children. For those taking care of children under 6 years old, 62.5% of them spent more than 4 hours per day taking care of children.

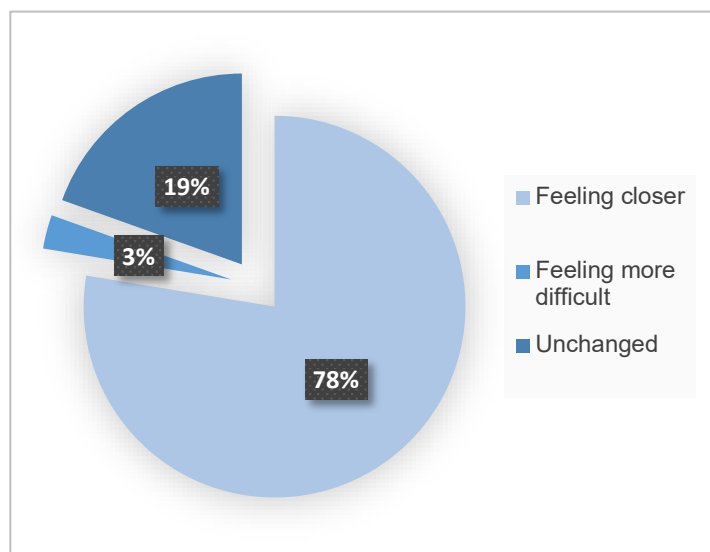
“My child is at kindergarten age, so staying at home during the pandemic was quite a challenge for the family due to the time we need to set aside for spending time with and cooking for the child. Still, it was fun hearing the teacher singing or reading poetry and the family going along. It's like we're having a mini kindergarten at home. It's fun.”

(Participant 431, from Bac Giang, 35-45 years old)

For those taking care of the children in the 6 - under 12 and 12 - under 16 age groups, the percentages of those spending more than 4 hours per day taking care of children were quite similar (50.4% and 50.2%, respectively).

2.3.2 Caretakers' evaluation on their relationship with children

81% of the parents spending more than 4 hours per day with their children noted that the relationship with their children has gotten better, smoother and closer. 75% of them said that they could control their emotions better during conflicts with their children.



40% of the parents revealed that their children told them their experiences every day,

taking 57% of those spending more than 4 hours per day with their children. 94.7% of those said they listened intently and talked with the children.

Only 0.7% reported that they ignored and didn't respond because they thought the children's stories were unimportant.

*Figure SEQ Figure * ARABIC 18 Caretakers' evaluation of their relationship with children in this period*

“Always listen to what the child says down to the smallest things. Compared to before I feel closer to the child, and the child feels more grown up.”

(Participant 903, 25-35 years old, from Bac Giang)

2.4 Memorable stories and recommendations from the caretakers

During the caretakers' time at home, most of them had the time to study and play with the children, and they had stories about those events to tell about how they felt closer to their children.

“During the pandemic times, the child was tired on certain days so I had to make orange juice. When I brought the orange juice over, the child was very happy and thanked me a lot. Small things like that and the child's happiness... made me happy.”

(Participant 9, 35-45 years old, from Ho Chi Minh city)

A lot of caretakers would like the children to return to school, as well as more specialized programs for children that are suitable for children, and more necessary life skills taught to them.

“The child learning online created chat group with friends via Team, then bragged to me about the group and the members, while the teachers reminded us that my child couldn't focus so the tests were poor. The child blamed online learning for the lack of focus wanted to go back to school”.

(Participant 2 from Ha Noi, 35-45 years old)



Quick Survey Report: Covid's effects on children

Many parents felt their time at home during the pandemic gave them an ideal condition to improve their relationships with their children and their education.

“Before the pandemic, I didn’t have a lot of time for my child. The child had classes, I had work. Staying at home gave me more time. Seeing the child’s knowledge was lacking so I collected materials to teach. The result was a lot of improvement, and the kid got into a good school. Furthermore, because I was busy I didn’t have time to cook (my husband’s mother cooked). With the pandemic I cooked at home and the child loved it. I also taught the kids to do housework in that time period too. After the pandemic, I let my mother-in-law go home; my family fixed their schedules so my children could be more independent. I worked online from home more so I could look after the house more compared to before when I worked all day”.

(Participant 18 from Vinh Phuc, 45-55 years old)

“Aside office hours I went home with my children and I spent a lot of time with them. The kids always go around me happily like little birds, sharing their many emotions and asked questions that I found hard to answer. My children were undergoing puberty so I had to dance between truthful answers and non-answers. One day my daughter was playing around and accidentally shoved my son and broke his right arm. The adults were angry and scolded her. She got sad and wrote her diary. After the family gathered around the boy going home, everyone felt closer except the girl who didn’t disclose anything for fear of being scolded. I tried all ways to nudge her to talk but she didn’t say anything. So I read her diary when she wasn’t at home, found out about her negative feelings. She wrote “I hate this family that only cared about boys and hated girls. I want to die, but dying is difficult.” She wrote something like that! I did not say I saw her diary, but I came up with a story similar to what happened to her but happening to a boy. He wouldn’t only get scolded, but also locked in a room, left to starve and not allowed to spend time with parents. Then I asked if it was bad that the boy wanted to die, while my dear daughter was loved by us and wouldn’t think of dying. The story was simple, but it left a deep impression on me about those undergoing puberty needing their parents close to them to resolve their difficulties when they were developing”.

(Participant 431, 35-45 years old, from Bac Giang)

3 Analyzing the problems between the children and their caretakers

3.1 The problems related to the relationship between the children and the caretakers

76% of the surveyed adults thought that their relationship with their children got easier and closer. 85% of the surveyed children also felt like the relationship with their caretakers were more harmonious, closer and more loving.

These data also showed an increase compared to 2020 in which only 59% of the adults reported an improvement in their relationship in this time period; Listening to the children became easier and felt closer. 54% of the children shared their concerns with their parents.

There was a parallel between the caretakers and the children when it came to their opinion of sharing their experiences, listening and interacting with each other in this period. 40% of the parents said that the children told them their daily happenings daily, while 94.7% of those parents revealed that they always listened and interacted with their children. The numbers for the surveyed children were 31% telling their daily happenings to their parents, and 98% of them said that their parents listened and interacted with them.

This clearly showed that the caretakers and the children spending time caring and sharing with each other would enjoy an improvement in their relationship. The children felt truly respected and listened, especially those in puberty having their caretakers keeping close eyes and ears on them seriously and honestly. The time when the caretakers and children staying at home to help deal with the pandemic as directed by the Government was when they had the chance to get closer together. After adjusting to the new situation, we note that the children and the caretakers needed to adapt to the new conditions.

Among them only 0.7% of the surveyed adults said that they ignored the children and didn't respond, feeling that their daily happenings were unimportant.

This number was 11% among surveyed children; those children felt that their experiences were ignored.

3.2 Supervision/Assistance of the caretakers towards the children in this period

There were 32.3% (compared to 2020's 40%) of surveyed children who felt uncomfortable and at odds with their parents due to their entertainment device usage being monitored by the adults. Meanwhile 48% (compared to 2020's 25.7%) of the surveyed adults noted the same thing. This is the biggest conflict between the children and caretakers in this time period.

SUMMARY

The survey was conducted within a short timeframe. The collected data reflected the change in the daily lives and education of children, as well as the relationship between children and caretakers during the social distancing period during the fourth Covid-19 pandemic wave. The numbers from the survey report showed the reality of adjustments in the lives of children and caretakers in a period of two years (2020 - 2021) under the influence of the pandemic causing the changes in daily routines and education of children.

We hope that the state institutions, faculties, organizations working for children will use the provided information as reference to formulate strategic plans and realistic actions to effectively contribute to the children's rights, as well as ensuring the children to have a safe, comfortable and flexible environment to live and learn under emergency situations like natural disasters and pandemics. We need to raise awareness of the community about the role of education in the family environment, the role of caretakers in helping the children to adapt to the new situation when the children cannot go to school, and the cooperation between family members to overcome the difficulties under the new circumstances.