



A Gendered Woman in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Being a Mother

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Many different health problems have been seen throughout human history. One of them is the pandemic. Pandemic is defined as an epidemic disease that spreads around the world and causes many people to get sick and die. The most recent example of these is the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which broke out in China at the end of 2019 and still affects the whole world. Since this pandemic causes a large number of deaths worldwide and creates an important source of social and individual stress, it causes individuals to be psychologically, socially and economically affected [1,2].

In the literature, it is stated that the effects of the pandemic differ according to gender. By finding out how the disease affects men and women during the epidemic, the basis of a correct and fair step in understanding the society is formed. Increased stay at home due to social isolation, problems in accessing health and education services for women and especially mothers, increased workload and responsibilities at home, their inability to have a say in many issues related to themselves and their families, increase in family conflicts and many similar problems affect mothers physically, socially and psychologically [3,4].

The pandemic period has many negative effects on maternal health, including physical, social and psychological. This period, which most of the mothers considered as an advantage to spend effective time with their family members in the early stages of the pandemic, caused the emergence of negative emotions due to the prolongation of the restriction period [5]. However, it is reported that domestic violence increases and female gender is exposed to more violence due to the economic and psychological negative effects of the pandemic on families [6]. Therefore, homes, which should be a safe space for everyone, constitute a very risky place

for mothers and their children who are exposed to violence. For this reason, with the provision of social isolation at home in order to protect from the virus, women in a risky situation are protected from one danger and become vulnerable to another [7]. In this context, the importance of healthcare professionals comes to the fore in the early detection of the above-mentioned risks, the determination and implementation of necessary initiatives for these risks.

The importance of healthcare workers has been understood once again during the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthcare professionals have played and continued to play a major role in the effective management of the pandemic with their numbers, professional knowledge and experience. It has been seen how important the nursing profession members, who have an important place in the health system, are in this period. In addition, the fact that most of the nursing professionals are women has revealed their ability to cope with many of the above-mentioned problems individually and to work effectively and continuously in the health system. On the one hand, nurses continue to work with all their strength to protect and improve public health, on the other hand, they try to overcome the physical, psychological and social difficulties brought by the pandemic. Due to the pandemic, many female nurses have to live apart from their homes and children for days, and this causes them to be affected more negatively. In this context, it is of great importance to support nurses and other female health workers, especially female workers who have a mothering role.

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