

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SUFFERING AND THE PERSONAL MEANING OF THE PERSONS WITH CHRONIC DISEASE IN COVID 19 PANDEMIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant lifestyle changes in individuals who need to be under constant control due to chronic disease. Individuals with chronic diseases can be expected to suffer more for reasons such as fear, anxiety, stress, uncertainty during the pandemic process. Suffering can cause the meaning of life to be questioned and positive personal meaning characteristics to develop. In COVID-19 pandemic, it was aimed to evaluate the transformative power of suffering and the level of personal meaning perceived in individuals with chronic diseases and to determine the effect of suffering on personal meaning.

Subjects and methods: The study was planned descriptively and cross-sectionally. The data were collected online in Turkey. 407 samples were reached between May and August 2020. The data were collected using the Personal Information Form The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief.

Results: As a result of the study, The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale mean score was 24.65 ± 6.30 , and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief mean score was 113.98 ± 17.58 . As a result of the correlation analysis; a positive correlation was determined between the The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale, The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief and sub-dimensions ($p \leq 0.05$).

Conclusion: The transformative power of suffer and perception of personal meaning of the individuals in general were determined to be above the middle level according to the scale scores. It was found that as the transformative power of suffer increased, the perception of personal meaning increased in individuals. It can be said that individuals who have a high transformative power of suffer, who can adapt to changes in the pandemic process, and who have a high level of education and income have better perceptions of personal meaning.

Key words: Covid-19 infection, chronic diseases, power of suffering, personal meaning

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 virus emerged in China in December 2019 and spread rapidly all over the world. The disease caused by the COVID-19 virus is a public health crisis declared as a pandemic, which can cause serious health problems and suffering and even result in death (OECD 2020). Chronic diseases are still in the first place in terms of causing disability and death (WHO 2018). However, many studies have shown the presence of concomitant chronic diseases in a large proportion of individuals who have had COVID-19 disease or died due to COVID-19 disease. (WHO 2018, Li et al. 2020, Vetta et al. 2020, Chen et al. 2020). Data obtained from previous outbreaks show that during the pandemic period, society is subjected to serious fear, anxiety, and panic, which leads to significant psychosocial problems (Yang et al. 2020, Chong et al. 2004, Goulia et al. 2010). Although the average population will show normal responses to pandemic stressors, others more

mentally vulnerable to anxiety will have overstated emotional responses (Lazzari et al. 2020). During pandemics, psychosocial problems such as stress, fear, anxiety, and depression can occur. Among the reasons for these problems; are social isolation, quarantine, loss of loved ones, uncertainty, boredom, insufficient information, financial loss, life safety, and the threat of life, and contamination risk (Sritharan et al. 2020, Zhou, 2020). The crisis is likely to shake up geopolitics, change the way we use technology, challenge our worldviews and life values we follow and force us to redefine priorities in order to prevent or prepare for a new crisis (Jakovljevic et al. 2020). COVID-19 disease has a more severe course in individuals with chronic diseases and these individuals have a higher risk of death (WHO 2018, Chen et al. 2020). It is predicted that the anxiety, fear, and stress associated with the COVID-19 disease, which is added to the problems caused by the nature of the chronic disease, will make the management of chronic diseases difficult and cause

more morbidity and mortality (Sritharan et al. 2020, Nagarathna et al. 2019, Brooks et al. 2020).

Suffering can occur as a result of physical pain, as well as fear, anxiety, depression, hunger, fatigue, or the loss of loved objects (Loeser 2000). Suffering is a mental process and the situations that cause it vary from person to person. The state of suffering can only be determined according to the expressions of the individual (Tossani 2013). Suffering has been considered a condition that should be alleviated in terms of both physical and psychological health for years. However, recently, traumas that are the result of suffering are considered a concept that provides personal development and provides positive inferences from negative situations. Suffering can lead to the development of positive personality traits such as self-knowledge and self-understanding. Suffering makes individuals resilient and ready for negative life events (Dinçer et al. 2015, Jayawickreme et al. 2016, Ekşi et al. 2018).

Search for meaning; It is a phenomenon that is settled in the nature of being human, gives information about who the individual is, includes characteristics such as intelligence-creativity-curiosity, and depends on what the individual does and thinks (Wong 1997, McDonald et al. 2012). It is a fundamental deficiency that the services provided in the field of psychology in the modern age ignore the search for meaning (Alper et al. 2001). The COVID-19 pandemic increases psychosocial problems such as fear, anxiety, and stress in people with chronic diseases compared to other people. This situation causes individuals with chronic diseases to suffer more. The process of suffering is expected to have a transformative power in terms of the meaning of life or personal meaning. When the literature is examined, it is seen that the number of studies examining the relationship between the transformative power of suffering and personal meaning or the meaning of life is quite limited (Izgüden et al. 2017, Sarı 2018). No such study has been found on individuals with chronic diseases who are at risk, especially in the COVID-19 pandemic. By investigating the impact of the pandemic in every aspect, it will be easier to follow the health, changing characteristics, and needs of the society. In the COVID-19 pandemic, which is thought to have a long-term effect, knowing the social needs will guide the planning of social policies and health care services. It is a matter of curiosity to what extent the personal meaning, which is the basis of human existence, is affected without suffering in the presence of chronic disease and pandemics.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

Purpose of the study: In the COVID-19 pandemic, it was aimed to evaluate the transformative power of suffering and the level of personal meaning perceived

in individuals with chronic diseases and to determine the effect of suffering on personal meaning.

Study type: It is descriptive-cross-sectional.

Study place: Turkey's south, was built in Osmaniye.

Time of study: Conducted between May and August 2020.

The population of the study: The population consisted of individuals with a diagnosis of chronic disease living in the province of Osmaniye.

The sample of the study: The forms prepared online (Google docs) were delivered to individuals using the random sampling method. Individuals who were diagnosed with chronic disease at least 6 months ago, who agreed to participate in the study, who were 18 years of age or older, who were undergoing medical treatment, who were not diagnosed with COVID-19, and who could fill in the online form with the help of themselves or a relative, were asked to fill in the submitted form. In a period of 4 months, 407 individuals were returned. In the statistical power analysis made with 407 data, 100% power was obtained and sampling adequacy was achieved.

Data collection tools: Personal Information Form, The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale, and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B) were used to collect the data for the study.

Personal Information Form; It includes questions about the socio-demographic, illness, and experiences of individuals in the pandemic process.

The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale (TPSS); was developed by Joshanloo (2014) to measure beliefs about whether suffering serves a positive personal transformation, development, and maturation. The validity and reliability study of the Turkish version of The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale was conducted by Dinçer et al. (2015) and the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.84. It is a 7-Likert type scale (scored from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree). High scores on the scale indicate high beliefs that painful experiences serve positive personal transformation (self-development and maturation).

The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B); The scale developed by MacDonald, Wong, and Gingras (2012) aims to reveal what constitutes the meanings of individuals in their lives. The scale was adapted to Turkish by Ekşi et al (2018). PMP-B is a 21-item scale consisting of 7 sub-dimensions and 3 items in each dimension. As a result of the reliability analysis, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the whole scale was calculated as 0.83. As the score obtained from the scale increases, the result is that the person lives a life close to the ideal life meaning.

Data collection and implementation: The data collection process was personally carried out by the researchers. The data were sent to individuals online, and the questions of the participants who had questions were answered by phone, mail, or message.

Data evaluation: Statistical package program was used

in the analysis of the data. It was determined that the Skewness and Kurtosis values of the data took values between -1 and +1 as a result of the normality test and showed normal distribution. In the analysis of the data; Number-percentage calculation, Independent Sample t-test, One Way Anova, and Pearson Correlation Analysis methods were used.

Ethical dimension: Ethics committee approval was obtained from the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Osmaniye Korkut Ata University in order to conduct the study before starting the application (22.5.2020-2020 / 20/02). Although the selection of the participants in the study is voluntary, their consent was obtained after they were informed about the protection of factors such as confidentiality and that they could leave the study at any time.

RESULTS

The socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics of the individuals participating in the study are presented in Table 1.

When the socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics of the individuals included in the study are examined; most of the participants are women (61.4%), housewives (40.8%), married (76.7%), spouses alive (85.9%), actively working (69.5%), high school and university level educated (54.0%), living with their spouse and children (44.7%), equal to its income expense (61.4%), middle-level perception of the economic situation (71%), did not smoke or alcohol, (74.4%, 91.4%), HT and DM patients (43.3%) was determined (Table 1).

The experiences of the individuals participating in the study during the COVID-19 pandemic process are presented in Table 2.

When the experiences of the participants in the COVID-19 pandemic process are examined; most of them paid attention to social isolation (83.5%), did not have problems meeting their needs (43.2%), received support from health institutions and health professionals (46.9%), were informed about the disease by health professionals (49.1%), complies with medical treatments related to the disease (84.5%), easily obtain their medicines (77.9%) and care about their health (95.3%) (Table 2). Scale mean scores calculated according to the answers given by the participants are presented in Table 3.

When the scale mean scores are examined; The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale mean score was 24.65 ± 6.30 , and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief mean score was 113.98 ± 17.58 (Table 3). According to the socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics of the individuals participating in the study, the mean scores and statistical significance levels of TPSS and PMP-B and their sub-dimensions are presented in Table 4.

When the scale score averages of the participants according to their socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics were examined: TPSS mean score was higher for those who had an active working life and those whose income is more than their expenses; The mean score of the PMP-B was higher in those who had an active working life, university graduates, officers, those living with relatives, and those whose income is more than their expenses. PMP-B's "achievement" sub-dimension mean score was higher among university graduates. The mean scores of the PMP-B "relationship" sub-dimension were higher in those with university graduates and those with good economic income perception. The mean score of the PMP-B "religion" sub-dimension was found to be higher in women, who married, did not smoke or alcohol, were housewives, living with their spouses and children, and those with a single chronic disease (CAD). PMP-B's "self-transcendence" sub-dimension mean score was found to be higher among those who had an active working life, university graduates, officers, those living with relatives, and had a good economic income perception. It was found that the mean score of the PMP-B "self-acceptance" sub-dimension was higher in those who had a university degree, had a good economic income perception, and those whose income was more than their expenses. It was determined that the mean score of the PMP-B "Intimacy" sub-dimension was higher in those whose spouses were alive, university graduates, those living with their spouses and children, those with good economic income perception, and HT patients. It was determined that the mean score of the PMP-B "fair treatment" sub-dimension was higher in those who had an active working life, university graduates, officers, those living with relatives, those whose income is more than their expenses, and those with a good perception of economic income ($p \leq 0.05$) (Table 4). According to the experiences of the individuals participating in the study during the COVID-19 pandemic process, the TPSS and PMP-B mean scores and statistical significance levels are presented in Table 5. When the scale score averages of the participants were examined according to their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic process; Individuals who could adapt to the pandemic process generally had higher PMP-B scores. "Did you easily obtain your medicines during the pandemic process?" Those who answered "yes" to the question, had higher mean scores on the TPSS, PMP-B (total, self-transcendence/self-acceptance/fair treatment sub-dimensions) ($p \leq 0.05$) (Table 5). The relationship between the TPSS, PMP-B, and some continuous variables was evaluated with correlation analysis and the results are presented in Table 6. As a result of the correlation analysis; A positive correlation was determined between the TPSS, PMP-B, and sub-dimensions ($p \leq 0.05$) (Table 6). The mean of the responses to the scale of The Transformative Power of

Table 1. Socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics of individuals (n:407)

Characteristics	n	%	Characteristics	n	%
Gender			Marital Status		
Female	250	61.4	Married	312	76.7
Male	157	38.6	Single	95	23.3
Is your spouse alive (n:312)			Are you currently actively working?		
Yes	268	85.9	Yes	124	30.5
No	44	14.1	No	283	69.5
Education Level			Who are the people you live with?		
Illiterate	59	8.4	Alone	36	8.8
Literate	34	14.5	Spouse	79	19.4
Primary education	94	23.1	Child	42	10.3
Secondary Education	117	28.7	Spouse and child	182	44.7
Higher Education	103	25.3	Relative	25	6.1
			Other	43	10.6
Occupation			What is your diagnosis of chronic disease?		
Housewife	166	40.8	HT	89	21.9
Retired	52	12.8	DM	87	21.4
Officer	88	21.6	HT+DM	40	9.8
Freelance	101	24.8	CAD	41	10.1
			COPD	32	7.9
			HT+DM+CAD	60	14.7
			Other	58	14.3
What is your income status?			What is your perception of the economic situation?		
Less than my expenses	99	24.3	Good	81	19.9
Equal to my expenses	250	61.4	Middle	289	71
More than my expenses	58	14.3	Bad	37	9.1
Smoking			Alcohol		
Yes	104	25.6	Yes	35	8.6
No	303	74.4	No	372	91.4
Chronic disease duration. (mean)	9.8±7.72		Systolic BP (mmHg)	129.0±18.16	
Age (mean) (min-max) (19-84)	51.45±17.93		Diastolic BP (mmHg)	79.0±13.01	

HT; Hypertension, DM;Diabetes Mellitus, CAD;Coronary Artery Disease COPD;Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease BP; Blood Pressure

Continuous variables are presented as mean±standard deviation, categorical variables are presented

Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B) is presented in Table 7.

DISCUSSION

Reminding everyone that the concept of health is the most important issue, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant changes worldwide. When the studies conducted are examined, it has been stated that people with advanced age and chronic diseases can experience a bad picture and result in death (Huang et al. 2020). Since effective management of chronic diseases will increase the quality of life and prolong life, all factors affecting the quality of life

should be considered. In our study, we wanted to contribute to the disease management process by determining the personal meaning and the level of suffering in those with chronic diseases and determining the effect of the pandemic process on the personal meaning and suffering level.

Considering the findings of our study, the mean TPSS score was found to be 24.65 ± 6.30 . In our study, it was determined that the participants' mean TPSS score was above the middle level. It was concluded that those who had an active working life and those whose income is more than their expenses had higher average scores. The expression with the highest mean score on the scale is "If suffering is taken with patience and gratitude, it gets converted to happiness". According to

Table 2. Patients' experiences in the pandemic process (n:407)

Characteristics	n	%
Did you pay attention to social isolation during the pandemic process?		
Yes	340	83.5
No	14	3.4
Sometimes	53	13.0
Did you have problems meeting you needs during the pandemic process?		
Yes	101	24.8
No	176	43.2
Sometimes	130	31.9
During the pandemic process did you get the support you wanted from health institutions and health professionals on issues related to your health?		
Yes	191	46.9
No	94	23.1
Sometimes	122	30.0
Have you been informed about your illness by health professionals during the pandemic process?		
Yes	200	49.1
No	138	33.9
Sometimes	69	17.0
Did you fully comply with the medical treatments related to your disease during the pandemic process?		
Yes	344	84.5
No	15	3.7
Sometimes	48	11.8
Did you easily obtain your medicines during the pandemic process?		
Yes	317	77.9
No	20	20
Sometimes	70	70
Is your health important to you?		
Yes	388	95.3
No	1	0.2
Sometimes	18	4.4

Table 3. The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile-Brief mean scores (n: 407)

Scale	min-max	mean±S.D.
TPSS	6-35	24.65±6.30
PMP-B	62-147	113.98±17.58
Achievement	6-21	16.21±3.45
Relationship	6-21	17.53±3.06
Religion	5-21	16.57±3.10
Self-transcendence	4-21	14.84±3.93
Self-acceptance	5-21	16.45±3.25
Intimacy	3-21	17.03±3.32
Fair treatment	3-21	13.58±4.05

a study, it was reported that the mean score of the same expression was the highest and had an average score of 4.41 (Uğurluođlu et al. 2018). According to another study, it was stated that the same item got the highest value and the average value was 3.72 (Izgüden et al. 2017). This result supports our study. According to a study conducted with hospital staff, the transformative power of suffering questionnaire averages did not change according to marital status, age, gender, income level, and the working year, but a difference was found

according to educational status (Izgüden et al. 2017). According to the results of a study conducted on the COVID -19 outbreak in the province of Istanbul, it was stated that urban residents with lower income and/or education levels felt the social and economic negative effects of this process more (Sayın et al. 2020).

In our study, individuals' perception of personal meaning was determined to be above the medium level. It was found that the level of perception of Personal Meaning was higher in those who had an active

Table 4. The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B) mean score according to socio-demographic and disease-related characteristics

Characteristics	TPSS	PMP-B	Achievement	Relationshi p	Religion	Self- transcendence	Self- accepta nce	Intimacy	Fair treatment
Gender									
Female	24.35±6.40	114.14±17.62	16.13±3.44	17.56±3.04	18.82±2.75	14.68±4.01	16.47±3.30	17.16±3.23	13.30±4.27
Male	25.14±6.12	113.73±17.57	16.35±3.46	17.49±3.10	17.47±3.79	15.10±3.81	16.43±3.18	16.84±3.45	14.03±3.65
	T:-1.23	T: 0.22	T:-0.62	T:0.21	T:4.14	T:-1.06	T:0.12	T:0.92	T:-1.75
	P:0.21	P:0.82	P:0.53	P:0.83	P:0.00	P:0.28	P:0.89	P:0.35	P:0.08
Marital Status									
Married	24.69±6.17	114.09±17.02	16.19±3.44	17.47±3.06	18.58±2.86	14.74±3.87	16.38±3.15	17.10±3.19	13.60±3.88
Single	24.53±6.73	113.63±19.40	16.28±3.48	18.58±2.86	17.34±4.16	15.18±4.16	16.71±3.56	16.81±3.71	13.53±4.59
	T:0.21	T:0.22	T:-0.21	T:-0.76	T:3.29	T:-0.97	T:-0.87	T:0.76	T:0.13
	P:0.83	P:0.82	P:0.82	P:0.44	P:0.00	P:0.33	P:0.38	P:0.44	P:0.89
Is your spouse alive (n:312)									
Yes	24.77±6.11	115.13±16.99	16.36±3.52	17.67±3.07	18.55±2.91	14.95±3.82	16.43±3.18	17.35±3.12	13.80±3.73
No	25.14±6.37	112.05±17.96	15.71±3.25	17.14±3.04	18.62±2.79	14.08±4.51	16.84±3.02	16.42±3.48	13.20±4.67
	T:-0.46	T:1.39	T:1.44	T:1.34	T:-0.18	T:1.67	T:-1.01	T:2.26	T:1.17
	P:0.64	P:0.16	P:0.15	P:0.17	P:0.85	P:0.09	P:0.30	P:0.02	P:0.24
Are you currently actively working?									
Yes	25.67±6.67	116.73±18.98	16.47±3.63	17.92±3.18	18.08±3.36	15.50±3.93	16.84±3.46	17.45±3.46	14.43±4.14
No	24.21±6.08	112.78±16.83	16.10±3.36	17.36±3.00	18.39±3.20	14.55±3.91	16.28±3.15	16.85±3.24	13.21±3.96
	T:2.16	T:2.09	T:1.00	T:1.70	T:-0.86	T:2.25	T:1.59	T:1.66	T:2.81
	P:0.03	P:0.03	P:0.31	P:0.09	P:0.38	P:0.02	P:0.11	P:0.09	P:0.00
Smoking									
Yes	24.91±6.14	112.34±19.50	16.21±3.84	17.58±3.10	17.75±3.56	14.57±4.13	16.24±3.77	16.65±3.52	13.31±4.16
No	24.57±6.36	114.54±16.87	16.21±3.31	17.52±3.05	18.48±3.12	14.93±3.87	16.53±3.06	17.17±3.24	13.67±4.02
	T:-0.01	T:-1.10	T:0.47	T:0.18	T:-1.96	T:-0.80	T:-0.79	T:-1.37	T:0.78
	P:0.98	P:0.27	P:0.63	P:0.85	P:0.05	P:0.42	P:0.42	P:0.17	P:0.43

Alcohol									
Yes	25.14±6.82	110.17±21.76	15.77±4.35	18.05±3.34	15.60±5.21	15.20±4.54	16.62±4.00	15.25±4.74	13.65±5.01
No	24.61±6.25	114.34±17.13	16.25±3.35	17.48±3.03	18.55±2.88	14.81±3.88	16.44±3.18	17.20±3.11	13.58±3.96
	T:0.47	T:1.34	T:0.79	T:1.04	T:-5.30	T:0.55	T:0.32	T:-3.36	T:0.10
	P:0.63	P:0.18	P:0.42	P:0.29	P:0.00	P:0.57	P:0.74	P:0.00	P:0.91
Education Level									
Illiterate	25.35±6.40	107.35±16.85	15.50±3.12	15.82±3.97	18.00±2.86	14.38±4.24	15.05±3.74	15.88±3.52	12.70±3.30
Literate	24.03±4.56	108.81±14.83	14.94±3.01	16.50±2.90	18.91±2.52	13.33±4.02	16.20±2.59	16.13±3.15	12.76±3.97
Primary education	24.44±6.55	114.08±15.45	16.55±3.11	17.74±2.63	18.77±2.86	14.52±3.70	16.19±2.68	17.13±2.96	13.15±3.82
Secondary education	25.42±5.77	115.77±18.24	16.35±3.88	18.17±2.32	17.98±3.67	15.32±3.86	16.37±3.52	17.33±3.69	13.88±4.11
Higher Education (university)	24.55±7.05	117.94±19.16	16.90±3.46	18.22±3.07	17.66±3.92	16.09±3.88	17.20±3.48	17.67±3.23	14.51±4.30
	F:0.44	F:3.26	F:3.03	F:5.57	F:1.90	F:4.64	F:2.72	F:2.45	F:2.20
	P:0.81	P:0.00	P:0.01	P:0.00	P:0.09	P:0.00	P:0.02	P:0.03	P:0.05
Occupation									
Housewife	24.42±6.07	111.86±16.30	15.71±3.30	17.16±3.06	19.06±2.46	14.02±3.90	16.18±3.02	16.80±3.24	12.90±4.03
Retired	25.78±5.44	116.19±16.22	16.84±3.42	17.75±2.48	17.69±3.14	15.38±3.64	16.86±2.72	17.51±2.76	14.13±3.20
Officer	25.28±6.76	118.45±19.34	16.70±3.65	18.10±2.99	18.07±3.29	16.14±3.92	17.09±3.71	17.65±3.56	14.67±3.97
Freelance	23.91±6.60	112.43±18.10	16.28±3.44	17.54±3.34	17.54±4.09	14.78±3.85	16.15±3.40	16.63±3.42	13.48±4.36
	F:1.39	F:3.28	F:2.36	F:1.89	F:5.81	F:6.17	F:2.08	F:2.17	F:4.09
	P:0.24	P:0.02	P:0.07	P:0.13	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.10	P:0.09	P:0.00
Who are the people you live with?									
Alone	23.44±7.02	106.19±19.48	15.86±3.13	16.50±3.61	16.80±4.65	14.19±4.22	15.77±3.82	14.52±4.48	12.52±4.46
Spouse	24.35±5.58	112.48±17.59	16.11±3.79	17.20±3.32	17.73±3.32	14.37±4.10	16.13±2.79	16.84±2.92	14.06±3.24
Child	24.09±5.85	110.14±16.06	15.16±3.39	17.00±2.99	18.59±2.82	13.09±4.16	17.11±3.03	16.73±2.84	12.42±4.27
Spouse and child	25.00±6.34	116.52±16.54	16.53±3.29	17.83±2.92	19.01±2.57	15.35±3.50	16.41±3.30	17.62±3.10	13.74±3.93
Relative	25.44±7.38	118.32±17.37	16.60±3.12	17.76±2.55	17.56±4.13	15.76±3.38	17.24±3.39	17.40±3.39	16.00±3.73
	F:0.56	F:3.07	F:1.25	F:2.02	F:4.57	F:3.13	F:1.16	F:5.75	F:3.80
	P:0.72	P:0.01	P:0.28	P:0.07	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.32	P:0.00	P:0.00

What is your
diagnosis of chronic
disease?

HT	24.34±6.76	117.71±16.38	16.58±3.38	18.25±2.75	18.79±2.80	15.08±4.18	16.70±2.90	18.34±2.50	13.93±4.13
DM	24.55±5.94	115.59±17.25	16.11±3.70	17.56±2.68	18.62±2.49	15.10±3.55	16.63±3.24	17.21±3.13	14.33±3.57
HT+DM	25.49±5.24	113.53±16.13	15.34±3.97	16.89±2.84	17.98±2.39	14.35±3.56	16.56±3.12	16.76±3.02	12.47±3.97
CAD	24.84±6.41	113.65±16.84	16.26±3.26	17.10±3.85	18.94±2.54	14.84±3.87	16.44±3.39	16.63±3.57	13.42±5.12
COPD	23.00±6.48	109.90±19.78	15.62±3.66	17.03±3.59	17.12±3.83	14.43±4.42	16.28±3.58	15.90±4.22	13.50±3.64
HT+DM+CAD	25.76±5.41	107.43±19.99	14.87±3.21	16.14±2.39	16.79±2.19	14.01±3.15	16.13±3.04	15.32±2.98	12.34±4.17
Other	25.67±6.58	113.01±18.58	16.63±3.39	17.63±2.91	17.37±4.29	15.10±3.89	16.22±3.78	16.53±3.29	13.50±4.05
	F:0.93	F:1.46	F:0.62	F:1.54	F:3.39	F:0.20	F:0.25	F:5.11	F:0.51
	P:0.44	P:0.21	P:0.64	P:0.19	P:0.01	P:0.93	P:0.90	P:0.00	P:0.72

What is your
income status?

Less than my expenses	24.10±5.67	109.47±17.27	15.77±3.43	17.08±3.06	18.30±3.22	14.43±4.17	15.60±3.22	16.45±3.40	11.81±3.98
Equal to my expenses	24.42±6.44	114.88±17.58	16.31±3.41	17.57±2.97	18.20±3.31	14.89±3.68	16.65±3.17	17.19±3.25	14.05±3.83
More than my expenses	26.60±6.43	117.79±16.89	16.53±3.61	18.17±3.37	18.68±3.06	15.34±4.56	17.08±3.44	17.36±3.41	14.60±4.27
	F:3.35	F:5.04	F:1.15	F:2.37	F:0.51	F:1.02	F:5.00	F:2.09	F:13.68
	P:0.03	P:0.00	P:0.31	P:0.09	P:0.59	P:0.36	P:0.00	P:0.12	P:0.00

What is your
perception of the
economic situation?

Good	26.01±6.72	119.04±15.94	16.91±3.37	18.28±3.08	18.16±3.87	15.86±3.78	16.92±3.35	17.85±2.77	15.04±3.79
Intermediate	24.33±6.25	113.09±17.63	15.99±3.43	17.44±3.01	18.31±3.13	14.57±3.87	16.50±3.23	16.90±3.38	13.35±4.00
Bad	24.18±5.36	109.83±18.79	16.40±3.62	16.64±3.11	18.48±2.68	14.72±4.46	15.10±2.97	16.29±3.68	12.16±4.25
	F:2.36	F:4.84	F:2.30	F:4.16	F:0.13	F:3.44	F:4.09	F:3.62	F:8.28
	P:0.09	P:0.00	P:0.10	P:0.01	P:0.87	P:0.03	P:0.01	P:0.02	P:0.00

Table 5. The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B) mean score according to patients' experiences in the pandemic process

Characteristics	TPSS	PMP-B	Achievement	Relationship	Religion	Self-transcendence	Self-acceptance	Intimacy	Fair treatment
Did you pay attention to social isolation during the pandemic process?									
Yes	24.88±6.41	115.77±16.94	16.55±3.29	17.74±2.95	18.46±3.20	15.26±3.77	16.68±3.10	17.32±3.19	13.74±4.05
No	25.14±5.89	114.35±22.15	14.85±4.18	17.35±4.46	17.57±2.87	14.07±4.99	17.64±3.83	17.28±3.66	15.57±3.67
Sometimes	23.07±5.46	102.41±16.25	14.41±3.67	16.26±3.07	17.45±3.53	12.33±4.11	14.71±3.53	15.16±3.47	12.05±3.75
	F:1.94 P:0.14	F:14.08 P:0.00	F:10.37 P:0.00	F:5.49 P:0.00	F:2.58 P:0.07	F:13.75 P:0.00	F:9.69 P:0.00	F:10.08 P:0.00	F:5.83 P:0.00
Did you have problems meeting you needs during the pandemic process?									
Yes	25.06±6.88	112.55±18.43	16.29±3.50	17.34±2.95	18.39±3.14	14.56±4.16	16.57±3.16	16.59±3.45	12.78±4.45
No	24.77±6.21	116.73±16.86	16.38±3.49	17.99±3.11	18.60±3.31	14.93±4.03	16.79±3.31	17.76±2.96	14.26±3.89
Sometimes	24.18±5.95	111.36±17.47	15.93±3.36	17.06±3.01	17.81±3.22	14.94±3.62	15.91±3.20	16.40±3.50	13.29±3.83
	F:0.61 P:0.54	F:3.98 P:0.01	F:0.67 P:0.51	F:3.71 P:0.02	F:2.25 P:0.10	F:0.34 P:0.71	F:2.83 P:0.06	F:7.79 P:0.00	F:4.89 P:0.00
During the pandemic process did you get the support you wanted from health institutions and health professionals on issues related to your health?									
Yes	25.83±5.90	118.51±16.59	16.96±3.11	18.13±2.63	18.43±3.49	15.78±3.82	17.08±2.93	17.85±2.97	14.26±3.87
No	23.70±6.24	109.29±17.30	15.71±3.80	17.28±3.14	18.24±2.86	13.73±3.90	16.17±3.64	16.12±3.80	12.02±4.45
Sometimes	23.54±6.65	110.50±17.70	15.43±3.44	16.79±3.44	18.12±3.16	14.23±3.83	15.70±3.26	16.46±3.16	13.73±3.70
	F:6.49 P:0.00	F:12.77 P:0.00	F:8.94 P:0.00	F:7.78 P:0.00	F:0.36 P:0.69	F:11.09 P:0.00	F:7.37 P:0.00	F:11.67 P:0.00	F:10.16 P:0.00
Have you been informed about									

your illness by health professionals during the pandemic process?										
Yes	25.92±5.78	117.55±16.87	16.74±3.18	17.81±2.84	18.35±3.30	15.76±3.54	16.84±2.97	17.67±3.09	14.37±3.78	
No	23.50±6.39	112.11±17.14	15.97±3.63	17.77±2.96	18.59±2.87	13.96±4.24	16.48±3.37	16.68±3.38	12.63±4.42	
Sometimes	23.31±6.88	107.39±18.24	15.17±3.56	16.26±3.56	17.55±3.71	13.95±3.84	15.30±3.57	15.92±3.46	13.21±3.62	
	F:8.18	F:10.17	F:5.91	F:7.45	F:2.43	F:11.13	F:5.84	F:8.58	F:8.06	
	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.08	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.00	
Did you fully comply with the medical treatments related to your disease during the pandemic process?										
Yes	24.92±6.15	115.22±16.90	16.34±3.39	17.68±2.97	18.49±3.10	14.95±3.97	16.80±2.33	17.29±3.10	13.72±3.95	
No	23.46±7.30	113.00±18.16	15.46±3.11	17.46±2.35	17.20±2.73	15.06±3.53	16.72±3.10	17.06±2.86	13.93±5.11	
Sometimes	23.12±6.84	105.43±20.07	15.52±3.87	16.47±3.70	17.25±4.12	13.97±3.76	14.47±3.89	15.20±4.31	12.52±4.37	
	F:2.00	F:6.72	F:1.57	F:3.32	F:4.02	F:1.32	F:10.53	F:8.61	F:1.90	
	P:0.13	P:0.00	P:0.20	P:0.03	P:0.01	P:0.26	P:0.00	P:0.00	P:0.15	
Did you easily obtain your medicines during the pandemic process?										
Yes	25.19±6.03	114.88±17.67	16.28±3.47	17.63±3.09	18.35±3.30	14.89±3.88	16.67±3.24	17.22±3.25	13.81±3.95	
No	21.20±7.26	104.90±16.38	14.90±3.75	17.35±2.75	17.60±2.76	11.90±4.80	15.90±2.73	15.85±2.73	11.40±5.71	
Sometimes	23.22±6.73	112.48±16.91	16.27±3.22	17.15±3.03	18.24±3.15	15.45±3.61	15.62±3.32	16.52±3.65	13.20±3.80	
	F:6.10	F:3.38	F:1.53	F:0.73	F:0.52	F:6.63	F:3.32	F:2.63	F:3.75	
	P:0.00	P:0.03	P:0.21	P:0.48	P:0.59	P:0.00	P:0.03	P:0.07	P:0.02	
Is your health important to you?										
Yes	24.68±6.31	114.22±17.05	16.23±3.43	17.58±3.00	18.31±3.19	14.88±3.96	16.50±3.17	17.11±3.17	13.59±4.01	
No	21.00±0.00	108.00±0.00	20.00±0.00	16.00±0.00	20.00±0.00	8.00±0.00	15.00±0.00	19.00±0.00	10.00±0.00	
Sometimes	24.33±6.33	109.11±27.09	15.50±3.86	16.66±4.21	17.94±4.46	14.44±3.05	15.66±4.87	15.27±5.56	13.61±4.97	
	F:0.19	F:0.78	F:0.99	F:0.89	F:0.24	F:1.62	F:0.66	F:2.83	F:0.39	
	P:0.82	P:0.45	P:0.37	P:0.41	P:0.78	P:0.19	P:0.51	P:0.06	P:0.67	

Table 6. Relationship between continuous variables and mean scores of The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B) (‘r’ values of the correlation analysis)

	Chronic disease duration	TPSS	PMP-B	Achievement	Relationship	Religion	Self-transcendence	Self-acceptance	Intimacy	Fair treatment
Age	0.429*	-0.040	-0.179*	-0.148*	-0.217*	0.033	-0.224*	-0.103	0.141**	-0.098
Chronic disease duration		-0.022	-0.115	-0.088	-0.120	0.065	-0.137*	-0.024	-0.113	-0.141**
TPSS			0.399*	0.315*	0.217*	0.217*	0.307*	0.384*	0.274*	0.294*
PMP-B				0.800*	0.770*	0.597*	0.755*	0.697*	0.791**	0.653*
Achievement					0.592*	0.356*	0.657*	0.471**	0.544*	0.422*
Relationship						0.405*	0.517*	0.520*	0.631**	0.321**
Religion							0.307*	0.370*	0.454*	0.211**
Self-transcendence								0.362*	0.515*	0.395*
Self-acceptance									0.462*	0.399*
Intimacy										0.435**

* *p-value<0.01; * p-value<0.05

Table 7. Means of the responses to the scale of The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale and The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B)

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Transformative Power of Suffering Scale		
1 Sometimes sadness and suffering can lead us to happiness	4,46	1,844
2 Sadness can be a transcendent state with some benefits for one’s ultimate perfection and happiness	4,52	1,677
3 It is necessary to go through sadness, hardship, and misfortune to achieve happiness	5,10	1,608
4 Without sadness and suffering one cannot become perfect	5,04	1,655
5 If suffering is taken with patience and gratitude, it gets converted to happiness	5,53	1,487
The Personal Meaning Profile – Brief (PMP-B)		
1 I believe I can make a difference in the world	4,59	1,725
2 I have someone to share intimate feelings with	5,58	1,451
3 I strive to make this world a better place	5,16	1,515
4 I seek to do God’s will	5,89	1,361
5 I like challenge	5,47	1,485
6 I take initiative	5,16	1,423
7 I have a number of good friends	5,47	1,446
8 I am trusted by others	6,04	1,146
9 I seek to glorify God	6,22	1,185
10 Life has treated me fairly	4,46	1,669
11 I accept my limitations	5,27	1,362
12 I have a mutually satisfying loving relationship	5,38	1,589
13 I am liked by others	6,03	1,145
14 I have found someone I love deeply	6,09	1,210
15 I accept what cannot be changed	5,41	1,558
16 I am persistent and resourceful in attaining my goals	5,59	1,338
17 I make a significant contribution to society	5,10	1,482
18 I believe that one can have a personal relationship with God	6,18	1,223
19 I am treated fairly by others	4,55	1,481
20 I have received my fair share of opportunities and rewards	4,57	1,688
21 I have learned to live with suffering and make the best of it	5,78	1,213

working life, university graduates, officers, those living with relatives, and those whose income is more than their expenses. In our study, it was determined that as age increases, personal meaning perception decreases. In a study, lower levels of significance were found among young participants, especially men (Reker 2005). In the literature, it has been shown that the presence of meaning in life is associated with life

satisfaction and positive emotions, and the search for meaning is associated with neuroticism, depression, and negative emotions (Steger et al. 2008). In our study, it was determined that as the transformative power of suffering increases, the level of perception of personal meaning also increases. People's traumas can cause them to suffer. For chronic patients, the COVID-19 pandemic is a major trauma, and the fear, anxiety, and

stress it creates causes them to suffer. According to our study, this suffering caused them to live life more meaningfully and increase their perception of personal meaning. When the literature is examined, it has been stated that there is a positive relationship between posttraumatic growth and altruism, optimism, and positive coping skills (Joseph et al. 2008, Tedeschi et al. 2004). According to some studies; It has been observed that individuals establish stronger bonds with people around them, feel happier with the little things in life, feel stronger and mature, and begin to better understand the value of life after negative events (Arıkan 2007, Danhauer et al. 2013, Tarhan 2011, Joseph et al. 2008, Tedeschi et al. 1996, Tedeschi et al. 2004, Powell et al. 2003). In a study conducted by Joshanloo (2015) with Iranian university students, it was found that there is a positive significant relationship between the transformative power of suffering and subjective well-being and happiness. Sarı (2018) showed that there is a moderately positive relationship between the transformative power of suffering and life satisfaction. Dinçer et al. (2015) found that there are positive significant relationships between the transformative power of suffering and life satisfaction and psychological resilience.

LIMITATIONS

The study sample was limited to Turkey a province. There was no face to meet with individuals.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings obtained from the study, most of the individuals have adapted to the changes in the pandemic process, maintained their ties with health institutions and health professionals, and did not disrupt their treatment. Generally; Those who were able to adapt to the changes in the pandemic process, those who were active, those with a high-income level, and those with a high level of education had a higher level of transformative power and personal meaning. It was determined that as the transformative power of suffering increased, the level of personal meaning also increased.

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