

## **Quarantine Measures and Our Forgotten Rights**

We have long been witnessing warnings of or restrictions to “stay at home” by the state, as well as the media and all doctors, public health officials, and politicians. The same situation is true not only in Turkey but also all around the world. “The necessity of quarantine and the measures it brings should not be questioned at all” could be the most agreed upon position by mankind in history.

The "acceptance without questioning" reflex that I am familiar to see in my country seems to have spread all over the world.

I am an attorney and I have been unable to practice law due to the pandemic and the measures taken against it for some time now. This not only deprives my clients of their rights in an unacceptable way but also, I believe, creates concerns among my employees regarding the future of their jobs depending on how long this situation lasts. I believe the situation is not different in similar sectors.

The main priority to be protected in this pandemic is, without doubt, human health. However, I believe it is time to start questioning the related measures taken, especially those restricting human rights and freedoms.

Certain employees (especially in the service sector) have been ordered to work from home, but the employees in the manufacturing sector have still been working together at their respective production facilities without any change.

I believe it is important for us to know the difference between those still working in their workplaces in the manufacturing sector and those who have been ordered to work from home, in terms of the speed of the spread of Covid-19. Because if those who are still working together in the production facilities are getting infected quicker, no one has the right to make them work in such circumstances “just to face the coming financial crises stronger”, or if they are being infected in the same rate as those sent home, in that case, no one has the right to prevent them from going back to their workplaces.

Since I could not find any data on this, I gathered my own data.

The data is as follows:

In a holding company with 860 employees, 670 of the employees are in the manufacturing sector and they have still been working in the same way, together in manufacturing facilities, as before Covid-19. They have also been wearing masks for protection for the last week.

200 employees of the same holding company were sent home three weeks ago and have been working from home.

In such three weeks, there was no difference in terms of Covid-19 complaints between 200 employees who have been working from home and the 670 employees who have been working in manufacturing facilities, measured proportionately. Also, all applicants were tested three times for Covid-19 and all were found to be negative.

I asked my doctor and statistician acquaintances about what this could mean. I think they liked neither the question nor the potential answer and told me to get more data.

I made the same inquiry for a company with 2200 employees. The results were very similar.

I believe that the problem is not the way I collect data or how much data I collect, but that no one wants to know the answer to this question.

I believe Ministry of Health should make a broader and more detailed research on this subject.

The following are also important with regard to the actions to be taken against to fight Covid-19:

We should start testing not only those applying to hospitals with symptoms and their living-together relatives but also the general population to see what percentage is already infected and follow their medical history and future. I know we will not find the anti-core or that the ones who have been sick are not guaranteed not to get sick again, but isn't it time by now not to be paralyzed by that 1% in our viral diseases knowledge in over 100 years of history and focus on the 99%?

Based on the data from several countries, it is hard to argue that if everyone were to go back on the streets the virus would spread much faster and that there would be more casualties (because of the fact that the health care systems would collapse due to the excess number of patients). However, many countries have taken positive results with partial quarantines or alternative methods. Also, the current choice of quarantine does not mean:

- 1) We cannot question the conditions and severity of the quarantine measures and that,
- 2) Either no research has been conducted or any research done was not made public by the Ministry of Health, regarding the speed of contagion between those in the manufacturing sector (mostly blue-collar workers) and those who have been working from home (mostly white-collar workers).

As I have said, I am a lawyer. I am looking at this issue from the perspective of a lawyer and with my logic. Some people's rights are being denied and many things that we live does not seem very logical. It is time we start questioning.

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