APLIKASI PSIKOLOGI KESEHATAN KOMUNITAS SELAMA MASA PANDEMI COVID-19

APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRAK


Kata Kunci: Psikologi Kesehatan Komunitas, Pandemi Covid-19, Kesehatan Masyarakat

ABSTRACT

Introduction: In the pandemic situation, the role of Health Psychology is increasing significantly, especially in building public health, both physically and mentally. It takes a long time to convince the public and professionals to accept that psychological conditions have a huge role to play in physical health. In order to contain the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak and to draw up stringent measures to contain the spread of infection, council scholars may feel quite stressed. Academic workload, psychological separation from school, and fear of contagion were positively related to perceived stress and also to physical and psychological health.
Method: All of these issues are discussed through a literature review. Result and Discussion: This article starts with the definition of health psychology; the phenomenon of the pandemic in Indonesia, such as problems related to vaccination (inadequate coverage, delays, and vaccination instability); the function of the community approach, to the linkage of health psychology with the COVID-19 pandemic. Conclusion: Changing behavior towards healthy behavior, the massive amount of information through social media also seems to open public understanding of the importance of psychological well-being to increase immunity.

**Keywords:** Community Health Psychology, Pandemic Covid-19, Public Health

**INTRODUCTION**

The accomplishments of a few countries have lately achieved resilience in the continuing COVID-19 pandemic situation. The ranking of the country in reaching resilience after the COVID-19 pandemic is a monthly snapshot of where the virus is being dealt with most successfully while causing the least amount of social and economic disruption. The Ranking, which is based on 12 data indicators that include virus containment, healthcare quality, vaccination coverage, overall mortality, and progress toward resuming travel and easing border restrictions, shows that the 53 largest economies are responding best—and worst—to the same once-in-a-generation threat (Chang et al., 2021). While Ireland has recovered, Southeast Asian countries continue to dominate the bottom rungs of the Ranking in September 2021, with Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the Philippines making up the top five (Chang et al., 2021).

How can a resilient country have that achievement? Is there a role for psychology, especially health psychology in that? The importance of psychology in health has become more widely recognized in terms of improving public health through health institutions and psychoeducation, as evidenced by a growing body of research in the field of health psychology. The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly helped to raise awareness of the need for psychological well-being in promoting health through stress reduction. Professional psychology has also paid close attention to personality traits that regulate stress management. Earlier research on coping and social support is now beginning to look at additional variables, such as resilience. How to assess a person's resilience does not depend on his health status, but rather on how a person manages health-related challenges.

Because Indonesia has recorded the highest daily death rate from Covid-19, during the second serious outbreak of COVID-19, the role of Health Psychology should receive an increasing share. As it continues to battle the spread of the virulent Delta variant, some non-governmental organizations working on the ground to help the most vulnerable, marginalized communities. There have been over three million confirmed cases in Indonesia, with 2069 deaths recorded on Tuesday, 27th of July. On average, 50,000 new cases are reported every day, estimates that are widely regarded as grossly underestimating the true effect due to low testing rates and inadequate contact tracing (Caritas Australia, 2021). This second wave of the COVID-19 outbreak has caused anxiety and stress in the community that has lasted a long time. Various danger factors were also raised in this risky condition. However, this psychological state has had a good impact. Although not for all categories, public awareness of health appeared to improve, as seen by changes in health-related behavior.

Besides changing behavior towards healthy behavior, the massive amount of information through social media also seems to open public understanding of the importance of psychological well-being to increase immunity. Inevitably, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused high levels of public
anxiety about contracting this disease and feelings of fear of death. According to Frissa, Dessaleg, Luo, Guo, Yu, Wang (Ameyaw et al., 2020), research on the psychological effects of infectious diseases that occurred before the Covid-19 pandemic, such as MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus); SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) which is like COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) shows that psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, panic attacks, or psychotic symptoms are experienced by many health workers and the public. Quarantined professionals, those who worked in SARS units or had family or friends who contracted SARS exhibited higher levels of anxiety, depression, frustration, fear, and post-traumatic stress than their colleagues who did not have the same experience (Maun, Hunter, Vincent, Bennet, Péladeau and Lesczcz, et al.; Xiang, Yang, Li, Zhang, and Cheung, et al. in Ameyaw et al., 2020). In the case of the COVID-19 Pandemic, several studies have shown the prevalence of insomnia, depression, and anxiety in different populations such as healthcare workers and the general population during COVID-19 in several countries (e.g., China, Italy, Iran, Israel, Singapore, Spain, UK, USA) (Kisely, Warren, McMahon, Dalais, Henry, Siskin in Ameyaw et al., 2020) (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Psychological Effects of Infectious Diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Transmitted Diseases</th>
<th>Psychological Impact</th>
<th>Affected Groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MERS-CoV (Middle East respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus)</td>
<td>Anxiety, depression, panic attacks, or psychotic symptoms; higher frustration, fear, and post-traumatic stress.</td>
<td>Health workers and the public; those who work in SARS units or have family or friends who contracted SARS</td>
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**METHOD**

This type of research is literature research, which aims to explore the concept of Community Health Psychology and it’s applications during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Library research is conducted using literature (library), either in the form of books, notes, or reports on research results from previous research (Iqbal Hasan, 2002). According to Dananjaya (Danandjaja, 2014), library research is a bibliographic research method, in a scientific systematic way, including the collection of bibliographic materials related to the research objectives, collection techniques using library methods and data presentation. Literature-based research in this research is carried out through critical and comprehensive analysis of a phenomenon or concept.

**RESULT**

Hasil penelusuran literatur menemukan beberapa topik berkaitan dengan Aplikasi Psikologi Kesehatan Selama masa Pandemi Covid-19 yang akan dipaparkan sebagai berikut:

1) The Role of Psychology in Health

Prawitasari (Prawitasari, 2011) suggests that clinical psychology is not only for mental health but also for physical health. Research reports on applied clinical psychology at various levels of mental or physical health have been widely published in the APA journal of clinical psychology and health psychology. It takes a long time to convince the public and professionals to accept that psychological conditions have a huge role to play in physical health. Based on biomedical theory and research, the factors that cause diseases are viruses, bacteria, lesions, and carcinogens. The etiology of disease from a biomedical perspective is being questioned in
the field of health psychology as well as in the field of sociology. Health psychology says that psychological factors contribute to the cause of disease, while medical sociology emphasizes the role of social factors in health status that are influenced by variables other than biology, is socially structured, and vary by gender, socioeconomic class, race, and age (Nettleton in Ogden, 2012).

2) The Transactional Stress Model: The Role of Stressors in Disease

Health research has discovered the role of stressors in disease. Theoretical perspectives such as the transactional stress model say that, if someone assesses the presence of a stressor as having the potential to cause stress, the stressor will contribute to a decline in their health (Lazarus and Folkman in Ogden, 2012).

So, How Exactly Does Stress Contribute to Illness? These early contributions to the study of stress have helped researchers identify the pathways by which stress leads to poor health (Taylor, 2018):

1. The direct effect on physiology, and stress, alters biological function. Direct physiological effects include processes such as elevated blood pressure, a weakened immune system's ability to fight infections, and changes in lipid and cholesterol levels.

2. Health behaviors. People with chronic stress have poorer health habits than those without, and acute stress often interferes with health habits, even if they are short-lived. These bad health habits include smoking, poor eating habits, lack of sleep, lack of exercise, and the use of substances such as drugs and alcohol. In the long run, each of these bad health habits contributes to a particular illness. For example, smoking can cause lung disease. Even in the short term, changes in these healthy habits may increase the risk for illness and set the stage for long-term adverse health outcomes.

3. Stress affects psychosocial resources in ways that can adversely affect health. Supportive social contact protects health, but stress can cause a person to avoid such social contact or, worse, drive others away. Optimism, self-esteem, and a sense of personal control also contribute to health, but many stressors undermine these positive beliefs. To the extent that time, money, and energy must be put into combating the stressor, these external resources are compromised as well, falling especially hard on people who have very little of those resources.

4. Use of medical services and adherence to recommended treatments. People under stress are less likely to stick to a treatment plan and are more likely to delay treatment of the disorder to be treated. Or they can't take care of them at all.

The causal sequence can involve two routes: (1) a direct route, resulting from changes stress produces in the body's physiology, or (2) an indirect route, affecting health through the person's behavior (Sarafino & Smith, 2011).

3) Health Psychology

Health Psychology is a branch of psychology that studies the effects of psychology on health, such as how people stay healthy, why people get sick, and how they respond when they are sick. In addition, health psychology develops interventions to help people stay healthy or recover from illness. This branch of science make many contributions to understanding and facilitating the processes and conditions that occur in the field of health and promoting resilience in the face of declining physical conditions and functional limitations.

There are four parallel approaches in health psychology (Marks, 2012). The first is "Clinical Health Psychology," which is based on a biopsychosocial model and involves work within the health care system (see picture 1). It places health psychology professionals within hospitals and clinics and
is similar to (and partly overlaps) clinical psychology. The environment for practice is similar to that of the healthcare market. Outside the clinical domain, the second approach is 'public health psychology, which includes the psychological aspects of health education and health promotion. Public health psychology views individual health as the result of social, economic, and political factors and as a simple consequence of an individual's behavior and lifestyle. Public health psychology is a multidisciplinary activity involving epidemiological studies linear health intervention and evaluation. The third approach is "community health psychology" based on community research and social behavior. It is a subset of community psychology, working on health promotion and disease prevention among healthy people as members of communities and groups. A fourth approach that has evolved is the "critical health psychology" approach, which aims to analyze how power, economics, and macrosocial influences affect health, health care, and health psychology to study the implications of the theory and practice of health psychology.

4) Community Health Psychology

According to Prawitasari and Novianti (2021), the term community health can have a broad connotation. When referring to public health, it is usually related to the presence of an infectious disease that is spreading somewhere. Public health indicators use life expectancy, birth and infant mortality rates, maternal mortality rates, prevalence and incidence of infectious diseases that spread in the community. However, if it is called community health psychology, this term will be more on the function of society.

What are the factors that affect one's health and the other's health? (Taylor, 2018)

1. Demographic Factors
Young, wealthy, and well-educated people with low levels of stress and high social support tend to practice better health habits than those with high levels of stress and low resources. (Hanson & Chen in Taylor, 2018).

2. Age
Health habits are usually good in childhood, worsen in adolescence and young adulthood, but improve again in the elderly.

3. Values
Values influence the practice of healthy habits. For example, exercise may be considered desirable for women in one culture, but not desirable in another (Guilamo-Ramos, Jaccard, Pena, & Goldberg in Taylor, 2018).

4. Personal Control
People who consider their health to be under their control practice better health habits than those who consider their health to be casual. The Health Status Control Scale (Wallston, Wallston & DeVellis in Taylor, 2018) measures how much people feel their health to be under personal control, controlled by the health practitioner, or accidental.

5. Social Influence
Family, friends, and colleagues at work influence health-related behaviors, sometimes in the positive and sometimes in the negative (Blumberg, Vahratian & Blumberg in Taylor, 2018). For example, peer pressure often leads to smoking in adolescence but one may quit smoking in adulthood.

6. Personal Goals and Values
Health habits are tied to personal goals. If personal fitness is an important goal, one is more likely to be involved in sports.

7. Perceived Symptoms
Some health habits are controlled by the perceived symptoms. For example, a smoker who wakes up with a smoker cough and buzz may remove the belief that
he is prone to health problems at that point.

8. Access to the healthcare system

Access to the healthcare delivery system affects health behaviors. For example, getting regular pap smears, mammograms, and vaccinations for childhood illnesses depends on access to health care. Other behaviors such as weight loss and smoking cessation may be indirectly facilitated by the healthcare system through lifestyle advice.

9. Knowledge and Intelligence

The practice of health behaviors is tied to cognitive factors, such as knowledge and intelligence (Mõttus et al. in Taylor, 2018). More experienced and wise people tend to take good care of themselves. People who are identified as intelligent in childhood have better health-related biological profiles in adulthood, which may be explained by their practice of better health behaviors in early life (Calvin, Batty, Lowe, & Deary in Taylor, 2018).

5) Pandemic, Stress, and Health

COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the WHO after numerous cases across China were verified. Due to the inflexibility of COVID-19, numerous countries worldwide introduced different measures to contain the pathogen of COVID-19. Various studies show the vulnerability of public health during a pandemic due to stress factors. Not only because of being exposed to the covid-19 virus, but also exacerbates various diseases or giving a rise to potential diseases in the human body.

The study aimed to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on mental health and the quality of life among residents of the MENA regions shows that after two months of the lockdown the participants from the North Africa region were more likely to have higher stress scores compared to those residing in the Gulf and Levant regions (Al Dhaheri et al., 2021). Another study shows that, during the stressful situation of the pandemic, Polish students mainly chose such coping strategies as acceptance, planning, and seeking emotional support. The studies showed that students more often use coping strategies which are emotion-focused (acceptance, seeking emotional support). (Babicka-Wirkus et al., 2021).

Defying the COVID-19 outbreak and similarly rigorous measures to help the spreading of the infection, council scholars may be feeling stressed out. Academic workload, psychological separation from school, and fear of contagion were positively associated with perceived stress and also associated with physical and psychological health. In addition, perceived stress is a crucial medium in the connections between three stressors and two forms of health (Yang et al., 2021). Learning about how people perceive COVID-19-affiliated stress and its impact on their health, particularly in the pandemic beforehand and most uncertain stages can allow business and health professionals to develop targeted interventions for different population groups, including strategies that can impact pandemic precautionary behavioral patterns. (Ermasova & Rekhter, 2021).

The study results conducted by Jianhui Dai (Dai et al., 2021) show that the COVID-19 pandemic (CP) and the Lockdown policies (LPs) negatively impact the health-related quality of life (HRQoL) among the Chinese population. Additionally, the mediating role of emotional regulation (ER) was found to significantly improve the HRQoL. Stability and a proper ER play a vital role in overall well-being (OW), physical activity (PA) is also important for OW, but due to the COVID-19 LPs across China, PA participation decreased. The mediating role of ER is critical for the quality of life during the sudden emergence of an outbreak. ER can be defined as an individual’s efforts to monitor and control their ecstatic response. It is suggested that ER intervention reduces the negative psychological impacts for improving the quality of life. ER can function one’s sentiments in their social environment.
effectively for the quality of life.

In the book named “Kesehatan Perspektif Nonmedis dan Multidisplin”, a patient who was exposed to Covid-19 explained that the psychological health that the patient had before being exposed to Covid-19 greatly helped his worst condition during the quarantine period. The psychological fitness that the patient has really helps him through his difficult times (Nasution et al., 2021).

Not only adults, but the COVID-19 pandemic also exposes children and adolescents to stress in both a direct and an indirect way. Pediatricians and pediatric endocrinologists should be informed about the potential consequences of exposure to the stress related to the pandemic to provide more careful monitoring of children’s health in the coming years. Media should be involved in an awareness campaign to inform parents and caregivers, in a communication tailored to meet children’s needs, and in a global education strategy aimed at mitigating the short- and long-term impact of stress on the health of children and adolescents. The consequences of stress related to social insulation and anxiety generated by the pandemic on internal and physical health are contributory goods that are yet inadequately delved (Cianfarani & Pampanini, 2021).

DISCUSSION

The era of COVID-19 pandemic has provided great opportunities for the application of global community psychology, but unfortunately, the application of this field has not yet been seen in real terms. In Indonesia, the government has difficulty in carrying out health promotion related to vaccination, where one of the causes is political and cultural issues. However, the government places more emphasis on imposing sanctions than involving community health psychologists in its handling (Fadjroel: Jokowi Persuasif Dan Humanis Dalam Vaksinasi Covid, 2021). The resilience of the community itself, especially during the pandemic, will be easier to build if

the handling of public health has been carried out in a multidisciplinary way in carrying out health promotion.

The Public Health model sees that meeting individual needs is critical to improving the health of a population. There is a synergistic relationship between people, communities, and the environment at large, so it is necessary to repair existing structural barriers. Population-based health approaches have a direct impact on people and populations. This relationship can be enhanced by implementing multi-level resilience interventions and programs that involve interactions between people, communities, and the wider environment (Krause, 2020).

The massive development of information technology gives color to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Although the use of social media as an application that is widely used at this time causes high levels of public anxiety about disease transmission and feelings of fear of death, information obtained from social media can also increase public understanding of the importance of psychological well-being to increase immunity.

The problems that arise during the Pandemic in Indonesia are mostly related to political issues by utilizing the values adopted, social problems, and knowledge and intelligence of the community. This is also evident in dealing with the issue of vaccination. According to Brewer et. al. (Prawitasari & Novianty, 2021), there are three major problems related to vaccination, namely inadequate coverage, delays, and vaccination instability. The results of the literature review show that from the various research results three psychological propositions are usually used to explain and intervene, namely: 1) thoughts and feelings can motivate a person to want to be vaccinated; 2) social processes can motivate a person to want to be vaccinated, and 3) Interventions that try to facilitate action for vaccination, without changing what a person thinks and feels. This intervention is built on
the intention of someone who wants to be vaccinated by facilitating action (through reminders, prompts, and primes) and reducing barriers (through logistics and healthy defaults). This intervention will also strengthen behavior (through incentives, sanctions, and requirements). The first and second have been poorly tested and have minimal effectiveness; the third proposition has been extensively tested and yields effective results.

If healthy practices are advocated or promoted by community groups, such as governmental institutions and the healthcare system, people are more likely to adopt them. Since they have historically focused on treating illness and injury rather than preventing it, health practitioners frequently lack precise information about their patients' health-related behavior. But a few years ago, this emphasis started to shift, and clinicians started to show more interest in prevention. (Radecki & Brunton, 1992 in Sarafino & Smith, 2011).

In terms of controlling self (personal control), there are two types of control that patients can use to feel empowered again, namely Cognitive and Behavioral Control (Sarafino & Smith, 2011). To encourage behavioral control, patients learn how to reduce discomfort or encourage rehabilitation through specific actions they can take, such as doing leg exercises to increase strength or deep breathing exercises to reduce pain. For cognitive control, patients learn ways to focus their minds on the pleasant or beneficial aspects of surgery, rather than the unpleasant aspects. Optimism is also important in controlling stress because pessimism will only increase people's potential for stress and can hurt their health. Participants' coping mechanisms during the lockdown attempt to control their emotions for the benefit of their psychological, physical, and general well-being. That's why they need ER (Emotional Regulation) intervention to reduce the negative psychological impacts and to improve their quality of life. ER can function one's sentiments in their social environment effectively for the quality of life. The consequences of stress related to social insulation and anxiety generated by the pandemic on internal and physical health are contributory goods that are yet inadequately delved into.

CONCLUSION

The effect of pandemic situations such as academic workload, psychological separation from school, and fear of contagion was positively associated with perceived stress and associated with physical and psychological health. As the impact of stress caused by the pandemic will exacerbate various diseases or giving a rise to potential diseases in the human body. A study conducted on Polish students shows that the students more often use coping strategies which are emotion-focused while coping with their stress. However, this psychological state has had a good impact. Although not for all categories, public awareness of health appeared to improve, as seen by changes in health-related behavior. Besides changing behavior towards healthy behavior, the massive amount of information through social media also seems to open public understanding of the importance of psychological well-being to increase immunity. Yet, the application of health psychology has not been seen in real terms. For example, in Indonesia, the government has difficulty in carrying out health promotion related to vaccination, where one of the causes is political and cultural issues. The government places more emphasis on imposing sanctions than involving community health psychologists in its handling.

SUGGESTION

Learning about how people perceive COVID-19-affiliated stress and its impact on their health can allow businesses and health professionals to develop targeted interventions for different population groups,
including strategies that can impact pandemic precautionary behavioral patterns. ER (Emotional Regulation) intervention is suggested to reduce the negative psychological impacts for improving the quality of life.

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