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Mental health with COVID-19: Health crisis intervention

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Abstract

Purpose - The research objective is to describe and explain health crisis interventions in mental health with COVID-19.

Method - This paper uses a literature study of various literature on mental health with COVID-19: health crisis interventions.

Result - This study indicates that crisis intervention assists those afflicted by a crisis that requires quick handling to be resolved immediately, and the psychological balance is immediately restored during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications - This research is expected to be the basis for determining intervention models in mental health disorders.

Originality - A concept of health crisis intervention assistance.

Keywords: Crisis intervention, mental health, COVID-19.

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Abstrak

Tujuan - Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan dan menjelaskan intervensi krisis kesehatan pada kesehatan jiwa dengan COVID-19.

Metode - Peper ini menggunakan studi literatur dari berbagai literatur tentang kesehatan mental COVID-19: intervensi krisis kesehatan.

Hasil - Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa intervensi krisis membantu mereka yang terkena krisis dimana membutuhkan pendampingan cepat untuk segera diatasi, dan keseimbangan psikologis agar segera pulih selama pandemi COVID-19.

Implikasi - Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi dasar untuk menentukan model intervensi pada gangguan kesehatan jiwa.

Orisinalitas - Konsep bantuan intervensi krisis kesehatan.

Kata kunci: Intervensi krisis, kesehatan mental, COVID-19.

Introduction

Human life cannot be separated from threatening events or troublesome situations. This event is called a disaster or crisis, defined as the perception or experience of an event or situation that becomes a difficulty beyond one's own ability (James, 2008). As is currently the case, the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it creates anxiety and difficulties and a health threat. Coronavirus is categorized as a global pandemic. Thus, it affects many countries to reduce the number of positive cases of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 outbreak is of global concern. The COVID-19 virus is an infectious disease that has the potential to cause deadly health threats. This virus began to appear in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. This virus is of great concern because it has caused thousands of people dead in various countries. The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia recorded that on June 26, 2020, the number of positive cases of COVID-19 was 51,427 people, 21,333 people were declared cured, and the number died due to positive COVID-19 was 2,683 people. The COVID-19 virus pandemic threatens not only physical health but also mental health. Blowing information about COVID-19 can affect people's mental health in the form of panic, stress, fear of losing a loved one, depression, and deep frustration.

The COVID-19 pandemic threatens not only physical health but also mental health. Anyone can experience mental health problems such as excessive anxiety, lack of desire to work, lifeless body, etc. Mental health problems that arise during a pandemic include fear of the plague, feelings of isolation from undergoing quarantine, and anxiety due to being away from loved ones.

These pressures and worries are of concern to many people in society, including the government, psychologists, counselors, social workers, community movements, etc. Crisis intervention assists those affected by a crisis, and quick handling can resolve the problems, and the psychological balance is immediately restored (James, 2008). The goal of crisis intervention is to break a series of events that disrupt the individual's normal functioning. From the description above, it can be concluded that many crisis intervention models should be applied to maintain mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As research from Efendi et al (2020), psychological advocacy due to COVID-19 in online counseling services (e-counseling) conducted by the Lidzikri Foundation is an empathetic effort in overcoming psychological problems from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic cheaply and quickly. In line with Clark's view, one aspect of counseling and therapeutic interventions delivered over the Internet is a rapid psychological clinical innovation. One other advantage of online-based counseling or therapy services can be lower costs compared to face to face face-to-face.

The developing conditions that occur in various fields of community life force people into a psychological crisis. A psychological crisis is a condition faced by individuals in a troublesome situation that becomes obstacles to achieving life goals. These obstacles can no longer be resolved through functional problem solving, so failure to solve the problem creates a period of disorganization and chaotic emotions. Based on this crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic situation has been going on for months has hampered various life activities and community goals. If this situation continues, the community can lose control of the emotions, actions, and feelings that will continue to impact the next life after the pandemic ends.

So that the pressure and wider spread should be prevented, the community must have a strong and healthy mental defense to face various changes and

pressures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation fails self-management and trauma conditions, both during the COVID-19 pandemic continuation and after the pandemic.

Research Method

This research is a conceptual article model in which the author reviewed mental health theories' development or evaluation. According to Jonker (2011), the employed theoretical concepts to build conceptual models provided a perspective or view of empirical phenomena. This study employed data collection methods through a literature study. This literature study is related to the object of research from any book, journal, or article that supports the entire research process (Chang, 2014).

Results and Discussion

1. Community Mental Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Being mentally healthy is essential, as important as being physically fit. Mental health is defined as realizing mental harmony in facing problems and feeling positive happiness, and having survival abilities (Darajat, 2001). Mental health can be observed from individuals who do not judge themselves, have awareness or response, focus, have good relationships with the social environment, and do not have symptoms of excessive worry.

Meichati (1971) argued that the characteristics of mentally healthy people are individuals who have a healthy view of the reality of themselves and their surroundings. These individuals can adapt and can overcome problems at hand and achieve peace of life without harming others. Individuals can achieve personal satisfaction with their awareness and have a positive outlook.

Anxiety arises due to the COVID-19 outbreak, which triggers psychosomatic behavior caused by social media, false news, too much information, and the inability to control stress. The outbreak caused disappointment about canceled events, unpreparedness for threats, and a sense of worthlessness for those affected by the termination of employment.

The general public, medical personnel, workers, and health nurses may fear contracting COVID-19 or are afraid of passing it on to family members. This fear worsens, faced with confusion because the spreading information cannot be trusted. Many social media spread news, which is still confusing. This situation caused the individual to have mental health problems such as depression or generalized anxiety disorder.

Panic, stress, fear of loss may appear as a form of personal anxiety facing the COVID-19 pandemic. There are ways to manage emotions that can be relational, maintain health by exercising and eating nutritious foods, seek reliable sources, think positively, and always be connected with family or loved ones. The factors that influence psychological and behavioral health responses and consequences of disaster events as follows:

- a. Social media can raise anxiety more than traditional media.
- b. Too much media exposure of any kind can be detrimental to mental health.
- c. Information that is not reliable.
- d. Lack of control triggers stress.
- e. Managing stress can prevent long-term problems.
- f. The need for health care workers.
- g. Quarantine and isolation can increase the chance of a negative outcome.

The stress that lasts during a pandemic can cause disturbances in the form of excessive anxiety about the safety and those closest to us, boredom and stress at having to be at home, worsening physical conditions, and the appearance of psychosomatic disorders. The Indonesian government has made efforts to reduce mental health problems that arise with various intervention forms, especially concerning information services regarding positive case data. This limitation of the report can be observed from the police who were incessantly catching fake news spreaders and understanding that accurate news is only published by government agencies such as the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia.

Another effort is to provide social support from online services to facilitate the public in accessing information. Online services in the form of this application can be in the form of health services such as medical doctors, care to protect, trace together, etc. This is the government's effort to reduce the psychological impact of society. It cannot be denied that the circumstances or situations every day are different from before the onset of this pandemic. Everyone may experience difficulties, but these difficulties can vary from person to person.

The double workload experienced by adults when working at home is between work done at home and the homework itself, even to other difficulties such as economic difficulties due to work and income. Besides, students who use distance learning methods are also not completely fun for some people because they limit their direct interaction with others. Adaptation to current conditions can affect people's mental health, such as anxiety and stress (Aufar, 2020).

Agree with Rini Setyowati; one of the measures to anticipate the psychological impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic requires an adaptive coping strategy, namely how to adapt problems to both sufferers and the wider community. Feelings of anxiety, depression, and feelings of worry, if processed or appropriately managed, can guide individuals to have positive reactions to protect themselves appropriately and increase individual religiosity. Conversely, suppose the strategy is maladaptive coping as in cases that have appeared to the public by spreading unhealthy information, confusing information, and leaking patients' and others' identities. In that case, the community may experience more anxiety, distress, and obsessive symptoms.

Martina in Nurkholis (2020) said that many people might develop symptoms similar to the coronavirus simply because of anxiety. The amount of information that explains that COVID-19 causes death makes individuals feel anxious, Excess anxiety about death will cause emotional dysfunction such as neurotics, depression, and psychosomatic disorders. Martina also said that panic attacks could easily be mistaken for the onset of the coronavirus. The somatic weakness theory states that psychosomatics occur as an organ is biologically weak. It means that psychosomatics will often occur, including in students. Besides, this symptom

will continue to develop along with the development of information and a lack of knowledge on this subject, especially in individuals with weak biological organs. On the other hand, some symptoms arise in the community due to the psychological impact on COVID-19, where many people are affected by panic buying by buying all the necessities in supermarkets, supermarket shelves that are usually full are now empty and out of stock.

The psychological impact that occurs in a pandemic outbreak, many people feel depressed and worried there are several factors, namely, (1) The risk of becoming infected and infecting other people, especially if the mode of transmission of COVID-19 is not 100% known, (2) Common symptoms such as health problems others (e.g., fever) can be mistaken for COVID-19 and cause fear of infection, (3) Carers can become increasingly worried about their children who are living in their own homes (because schools are closed) without proper care and support, (4) The risk of deteriorating physical and mental health among vulnerable groups such as the elderly and persons with disabilities (Intervention 2), if caregivers are quarantined, and there is no other service and support (WHO, 2020).

Besides the psychological disorders above, psychosomatic disorders occur due to the spread of COVID-19. Psychosomatic disorders are disorders of physical illnesses whose primary cause is a person's psychological condition. Symptoms of anxiety that arise from this pandemic condition can also cause excessive stress, which is feared to interfere with a person's social functioning in carrying out their daily activities. Special treatment is required to deal with the symptoms that appear in mental health during this pandemic, either individually, in families or in groups. This process is referred to as stress coping activities. Coping is a condition or condition for someone experiencing stress and requires personal ability and support from the environment to go through it (Rasmun, 2004).

Another psychological impact is extreme protective attitudes to protect other people they care about from people diagnosed with COVID-19, in the form of psychological reactions from sufferers in dishonest attitudes and behaviors with a history of their illness. Cover information about trips and stopovers has had contact

with positive sufferers of COVID-19 before. Information needed like this is unlikely to be conveyed to medical personnel (Effendi et al, 2020).

Anxiety in someone is a normal reaction to threatening and unexpected situations such as the coronavirus pandemic. This reaction is closely related to stress. The coronavirus pandemic's impacts include reduced concentration, irritability, anxiety, insomnia, productivity, and interpersonal conflicts. However, it is particularly true for groups that are directly affected (e.g., health professionals). Apart from the threat by the virus itself, many quarantine measures are being carried out in many countries, which have adverse psychological effects and increase stress symptoms. Symptoms severity, depending on the duration and extent of quarantine, feelings of loneliness, fear of infection, adequate information, and stigma, in more vulnerable groups including psychiatric disorders, health care workers, and people with low socioeconomic status.

Based on the description above, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis condition has affected a person or even society that must consider an economic perspective and mental health. COVID-19 has an impact on disrupting people's mental health; Darmawan, a member of the West Java Psychologist COVID-19 Task Force (farmasetika.com, 2020), said that the cause of mental disorders experienced by the people of the COVID-19 Pandemic era was due to a feeling of uncertainty that attacked their minds. It is straightforward to understand if the current situation causes various mental health problems, such as being quickly carried away by emotions, anxiety, and even depression. Besides the three reported significant impacts due to COVID-19, people are bombarded with information about COVID-19, both through mass media and through social media. Not all of the news is positive. Most of the news that was reported triggered people's anxiety. Mental health disorders that arise will eventually reduce the body's immune system to be susceptible to disease.

The importance of public mental health shows that a mentally healthy society will support the body's immunity as an essential factor in avoiding exposure to COVID-19. Therefore, handling the crisis from a psychological perspective is considered essential to be the concern of psychological health experts,

psychologists, psychiatrists, and counselors in maintaining the mental stability of the Indonesian people in general. Attention to mental health in facing this pandemic crisis in guidance and counseling can help implement crisis counseling by counselors.

2. Forms of Crisis Intervention for Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

A disaster or crisis is an event that can threaten and endanger a person's physical, psychosocial, and mental condition. A person's crisis level is different from one another. In the first stage, a crisis occurred if someone needs help from others to help overcome his crisis. This incident is depressing or dangerous and triggered a trauma. Traumatic conditions are originated from a state of deep and continuing stress.

Traumatic events or experiences would be lived differently from one individual to another to have different reactions when facing traumatic events. A traumatic experience is an event experienced or witnessed by an individual, which threatens his / her safety. Therefore, it was natural to experience shocks both physically and emotionally as a stress reaction to the traumatic event. A crisis could be caused by a pressing or traumatic event.

Uncertain conditions, threats to individual health, and quarantine measures can exacerbate pre-existing conditions such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Besides, disease transmission risk may increase the fear of contamination in patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder and hypochondria or individuals with a history of paranoid ideation. Although quarantine measures protect against the coronavirus's spread, they require isolation and loneliness, which creates significant psychosocial stresses and may trigger or worsen mental illness (Vahia et al, [2020](#)).

Crisis intervention can awaken individual strengths and skills to deal with stressful or dangerous events. Besides, crisis intervention reflects a contemporary trend towards short, focused, and structured theories relating to urgent and practical problems, which will be criticized to avoid long-term individual problems

and social issues that lead to social exclusion. The carried out crisis intervention must have specific objectives; the objectives include:

- a. In general, it aims to break a series of events that lead to the disruption of people's normal functioning.
- b. To return the individual to the pre-crisis level of functioning.
- c. To support the method in users or help individuals who are trying to rebuild coping and problem-solving abilities and help them take concrete steps towards managing their feelings of developing an action plan.
- d. Can provide opportunities for personal growth and development by awakening old forces, resources, and coping skills from individuals, at the same time, encouraging the development of new forces that can be utilized when faced with a stressful event or dangerous in the future.

As for some solutions to crisis intervention to maintain mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, namely:

- a. Counseling by telephone/hotlines. This counseling service can be implemented in several hotlines such as Alodokter, a group between quarantine patients and medical personnel to support the work from home program, making it easier for the public to access information.
- b. Short crisis counseling (1-6 sessions). This counseling can take place in health services between therapy and clients.
- c. Assistance. Assistance can be provided to clients by psychologists, medical personnel, counselors, or social workers. The assistance aims to provide convenience in obtaining information or solving problems at hand.
- d. Training for survivors. The training was conducted in order to provide an understanding of the importance of psychosocial support for survivors. During the pandemic, the government has prepared pre-employment cards, a program to minimize the impact of the COVID-19 virus for workers affected by layoffs or people who have lost their income.

An intervention that can be done by a counselor is through disaster counseling. In this case, the client should be sorted first. This sorting is classified into healthy victims, the second victim under surveillance (ODP), and the third patient under surveillance (PDP). Crisis intervention aims to stabilize the individual's condition (emotional, cognitive) such as the original state according to its function, prevent mental disorders, or inappropriate behavior by exchanging perceptions of threats or dangers in order to restore the client's existing social function. For the first client (healthy), it means that you only feel trauma, anxiety, and excessive fear, indicates that they require trauma counseling services. Counselors should provide trauma counseling services by creating a sense of security and individual counseling employing systematic desensitization techniques preceded by relaxation techniques.

The counselor can employ a method in conducting counseling practices for individual, family, and group clients by doing relaxation. Relaxation is an activity to relax the body's muscles, which is useful for reducing tension felt by the body. Furthermore, in the relaxation stage, by eliminating anxiety and even stress during the pandemic, it is the delivery of healthy suggestions to be well received by clients or anyone carrying out these activities.

The potential for severe mental health impacts on health care professionals during the COVID-19 crisis can lead to an increased risk of mental health impacts compared to the general public and emphasizes the need to implement essential steps to maintain mental health (Rosyanti & Hadi, 2020). Interventions for mental health and psychosocial support health services conducted by mental health specialists (psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, counselors, etc.), non-specialist primary health services (doctors), strengthening community and family support, and advocating for safe, accepted, safe essential services and protecting individual self-esteem (IASC, 2020).

This social support can be conducted through contact from their family through social media. Furthermore, professional support via telephone and platform has been provided. Survivors have access to psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers or support groups.

Various existing news portals also recommend this relaxation activity to be carried out in prevention or in activities to overcome anxiety tendencies and even stress during a pandemic, such as:

- a. CNN Indonesia reports about relaxation methods to reduce anxiety. The news article provides a relaxation method that can be conducted at home. It was taken from the psychology Help Guide site, included deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, visualization, mindfulness meditation, rhythmic movements, and yoga sports activities that combine a series of pose and also use deep breathing.
- b. Halodoc, a health media that provides useful tips for the public to access health information and counseling. It provides a news article about the sophrology method as an effective relaxation. This article explains that sophrology is a dynamic meditation that engages the mind and body. It encourages the interaction between the right and left hemispheres. The sophrology method also involves many aspects of the body, such as relaxation, breathing, meditation, gentle body movements, and visualization. The benefits of sophrology include sleeping soundly, releasing the tension, and controlling regular breath.
- c. Lifestyle, Kompas, discussed relaxation techniques to deal with stress. It included progressive muscle relaxation (Plum Counseling and Wellness, Jessie Bohnenkamp); taking a deep breath, and walking (Hammond Psychology & Associates, PA, Nekeshia Hammond); contacting the loved ones (counselor Louis Laves-Webb); performing stress management (Sandra Thébaud); relaxing and rejuvenating (Wellness IRL, Tasha Holland-Kornegay); stretching (Jason Moser), and meditation (Moser).

The three news reports represented other news, which also recommended relaxation activities as one of the festive activities that could be conducted to reduce stress during this pandemic and maintain the community's mental health. Furthermore, the Jambi Psychology Association chairman, Novrans Eka Saputra, said psychological assistance or advocacy for positive COVID-19 patients or their families was required to restore their condition from treatment to recovery.

Psychological services were required to help them get out of their condition when they were as COVID-19 patients. According to Novrans, the patient's psychological condition should be considered, both by family and society. This was to ensure they could make a good recovery from illness and psychological stress.

The widespread epidemic and the significant impact of this virus in aspects of the Indonesian people's life should be well maintained, and keeping mental health in prime condition is a must. Mental health will lead to life satisfaction, which is closely related to happiness. Happy people will have a high immune system so they can ward off the virus outbreak (Edmawati, 2020). Support from the immediate family is essential, including the medical treatment concerned. COVID-19 is an outbreak caused by a virus, and a person's immune system can be an antidote. Novrans said it is necessary to conduct socialization and education related to prevention efforts and psychological approaches so that the community's explanation is correct and does not cause concern.

The spread of Covid 19 impacts are conditions that cause increased stress and public panic and establish a crisis. Crisis is a perception or experiencing an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds the person's current resources and coping mechanism (James, 2008). James wrote that a crisis is a perception or experience of a moment or situation, challenging to accept beyond one's resources and coping mechanisms. A crisis is a person's experience of a situation that is difficult for him to resolve. A crisis is a pressure that a person experiences and negatively affects his or her ability to think, plan, and solve problems effectively. (Sugiyanto in Fauziah, M, 2017).

Attention to mental health in facing this pandemic crisis in guidance and counseling can help implement crisis counseling by counselors. Crisis-based counseling approaches are not new in the world of guidance and counseling. However, usually, crisis-based guidance and counseling are only carried out in the school environment to only focus on students. In crisis counseling facing the COVID-19 pandemic, the implementation target is oriented towards the people affected by this virus's spread.

The aim and focus of crisis counseling are to provide immediate assistance to someone in a crisis. Gladding (2012) stated that what happened during a crisis would determine whether the crisis would become a container for a disease that lasts in the long term or not. The crisis counseling implementation for the community during this pandemic certainly required careful planning to resolve people's crisis conditions during this pandemic, and it required an extended period.

The employed techniques in crisis counseling varied from person to person, depending on the individual's type of crisis. Baldwin (Sandoval, 2013) generally divided crises into six types; one of them is anticipated life transitions or anticipation of life changes. This type indicated the existence of a crisis of individuals who experienced changes in situations in their life. The COVID-19 pandemic is forcing the wider community to be subject to significant changes in their daily life situations. This condition forces almost all affected people to have good survival life skills during a crisis period.

Furthermore, Baldwin (Sandoval, 2013) revealed that in this type of crisis, counseling is a feeling of comfort in the current reality for the community regarding changing conditions during a pandemic. In general, intervention for this type of crisis employed two techniques: individual guidance in anticipating change and group guidance as a forum for strengthening groups experiencing crisis.

The importance of the crisis counseling program for the community cannot be separated from the counselor's role. The counselor who applies crisis counseling must be a counselor whose personality is mature and has many life experiences that he has dealt with success. Counselors in implementing crisis counseling can also master the first intervention in helping individuals experiencing a crisis. It will be very significant to implement crisis counseling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Good understanding and attention to mental health and psychosocial aspects is the key to stopping transmission and preventing the risk of long-term adverse impacts on the community's welfare and ability to survive in difficult situations; includes the integration of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support approaches and activities in community strategies, community outreach, case identification, contact tracing, and activities in health care facilities and quarantine sites and post-

treatment strategies. Mental health interventions should be conducted in public health services (including primary health care and arranged within existing community structures, such as schools, community centers, youth, and elderly organizations).

The health and mental well-being of frontline officers should be fully supported. Health workers, case identification officers, corpse review workers, staff, and volunteers should be supported with Mental Health And Psychosocial Support during and after the outbreak. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that crisis counseling is an essential alternative in solving psychological problems during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, conducting massive social restrictions to prevent the virus spread and implementing crisis counseling should be carried out by employing various media or technology by counselors or psychologists.

Conclusion

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus creates anxiety, difficulties, and health threats. These pressures and depressions are of concern to many people in society, including the government, psychologists, counselors, social workers, community movements, etc. The goal of crisis intervention is to break up and help overcome a series of events that lead to individual mental disorders. The author suggests that further research is required to excel in crisis intervention models in dealing with mental health disorders.

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- JAGC | 156 Vahia, I. V., Blazer, D. G., Smith, G. S., Karp, J. F., Steffens, D. C., Forester, B. P., . . . Reynolds, C. F. (2020). COVID-19, mental health and aging: A need for new knowledge to bridge science and service. *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*. 28(7). doi: [10.1016/j.jagp.2020.03.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jagp.2020.03.007).
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