



Preventive Efforts of Psychosocial Physical and Mental Health Problems Due to COVID-19 Through the Implementation of Psychosocial Mental Health Support

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Abstract. The decreasing prevalence of COVID-19 does not necessarily indicate the end of the pandemic. Various efforts to maintain this condition as well as to strive for zero COVID-19 cases are essentially needed. Those efforts include improving physical and mental health of the community that can be done by providing psychosocial mental health support. This study aimed to describe people's behavior in doing self-management to prevent any physical and psychosocial impacts of COVID-19 through the provision of psychosocial mental health support. The design of this research was a pretest and post-test quasi-experiment without a control group. There were 334 samples who were selected by making use of a purposive sampling technique. Their physical and mental health were measured through the Self Reporting Questionnaire-29 (SRQ-29). The average age of the respondents was 25.41 years and the majority of them were female (82.33%). The initial physical health related to COVID-19 resulted to an average score as 53.59%. In the final measurement at the eighth week, the average score increased and reached 100%. Respondents' psychosocial health were also increase from 54.49% in the initial test to 100% at the eighth week. The provision resulted to 98.80% respondents with physically healthy status and 100% of them did not experience psychosocial mental health problems. The provision of psychosocial mental health support can be given to the community in longer period of time to form people's healthier behavior to prevent the community's psychosocial physical and mental health problems, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19 · Psychosocial Mental Health Support · Psychosocial Problems

1 Introduction

Coronavirus Disease (COVID) is a virus-borne illness caused by the SARS CoV-2 virus that was discovered at the end of 2019. The disease was later known as COVID-19 and was declared a pandemic in March 2020 [5]. In confirmed cases, this infectious

disease that attacks the respiratory system causes several symptoms such as shortness of breath, coughing, fever, pneumonia symptoms, and respiratory failure. As an easily transmitted contagious disease, confirmed patients must be quarantined for 14 days to prevent transmission [3]. Self-quarantine is done at home for confirmed asymptomatic individuals with mild symptoms, and in hospital for confirmed individuals with severe symptoms.

The goal of self-quarantine is not only to reduce transmission but also to focus more on handling it. It is because severe to critical symptoms can result in death [10]. However, the prevalence of cases has decreased until now indicating the success of the COVID-19 prevention and management program.

Although the prevalence of COVID-19 is decreasing, it does not mean that the virus is no longer present. Efforts are required to maintain these conditions and even eliminate COVID-19 cases. These efforts are necessary to improve the community's physical and mental health because one of the effects of COVID-19 is the emergence of stigma and discrimination. People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 may face stigma and discrimination from society. The impact of stigma and discrimination is the emergence of psychosocial problems such as anxiety [3].

Anxiety arises not only as a result of stigma but also as a result of the management of confirmed COVID-19 people who must undergo self-isolation and feel separated from their families [15]. People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 believe they are not free to engage in social activities with friends and family. Anxiety becomes a more severe condition, causing stress and depression [11].

Previous research has shown that the general public is experiencing moderate to severe anxiety as an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic [13]. Even in Indonesia, it has been demonstrated that up to 78% of study participants expressed anxiety about the spread of COVID-19 [7]. Anxiety, as one of the most common psychosocial mental health problems during the COVID-19 pandemic, requires attention and proper management to avoid a more severe mental health problem.

Preventive measures can be used to manage psychosocial mental health problems in the COVID-19 pandemic. They can be carried out by preventing the transmission of the disease and the emergence of psychosocial mental health problems. These efforts can include the provision of psychosocial mental health support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Psychosocial mental health support is a type of social support that the community can receive to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. Previous studies have reported that providing social support is an interpersonal approach to dealing with someone's anxiety and stress [16]. Forms of psychosocial mental health support include the provision of information through education, assistance in handling psychosocial physical and mental health problems due to COVID-19, and habituation of new behaviors.

Psychosocial mental health support amid the COVID-19 pandemic is a comprehensive effort to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on physical and psychosocial aspects in order to assist the community in surviving in pandemic conditions. Therefore, researchers describe people's behavior in managing themselves as an effort to prevent the physical and psychosocial effects of COVID-19, which can be experienced through the provision of psychosocial mental health support.

2 Method

The research is a quasi-experimental pre and post-test without a control group. The sample was selected using the purposive sampling technique, with the criteria of respondents being Indonesian aged > 15 years old and willing to participate in the research for eight weeks. There were 34 respondents consistently involved from the first week to the eighth week. The questionnaire used to measure psychosocial mental health problems was the Self Reporting Questionnaire-29 (SRQ-29). Physical health measurements were taken following the Ministry of Health guidelines, which include determining individual health status based on groups of healthy people, travelers, close contacts, probable cases, and confirmed cases. The data were presented in the form of descriptive frequency to describe the condition before and after receiving psychosocial mental health support, as well as the respondent's efforts for eight weeks of independent implementation. This research has fulfilled ethical principles, which is registered with Ethical Clearance number SK-146/UN2.F12.D1.2.1/ETIK2020.

3 Results

A total of 34 participants took part in this research, which lasted a total of eight weeks. The average age of the respondents was 25.41 years old, with the majority of gender was female, that was 82.35%. At the beginning of the research, 11.76% of respondents were in the category of suspected cases and 23.53% in the category of travelers in terms of physical health condition, and at the end of the measurement, there were only 2.9% traveler categories and the rest were healthy (97.1%). The data on the respondents' psychosocial mental health status at the beginning of the research revealed that 35.29% of the participants had mental and emotional problems and 14.71% had PTSD. Efforts to prevent COVID-19-related physical health concerns yielded an average initial measurement result of 53.74%, which improved to 100% by the eighth week. Meanwhile, efforts to prevent psychosocial mental health problems were as high as 53.70% at the beginning of the research and grew up to 100% by the eighth week. Tables 1 and 2 show the efforts made by respondents to prevent psychosocial, physical, and mental health problems.

4 Discussion

Efforts to prevent COVID-19-related physical health problems yielded average of initial measurement results of 53.59%, increasing to 100% at the final measurement at the eighth week. On the other hand, efforts to prevent psychosocial mental health problems were as high as 54.49% at the beginning of the research and increased to 100% by the eighth week. As a result of these efforts, the physical health status of the respondents was improved, where 98.80% of them were in the healthy category and 100% did not have psychosocial mental health problems.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health threat that can lead to psychosocial and mental health issues. According to earlier studies, a pandemic of a contagious bodily condition that spreads widely and swiftly, as well as pressure and challenges in society, can lead to anxiety and depression [2]. People were more susceptible to depression

Table 1. Efforts to prevent physical health problems related to COVID-19 (Transmission)

No	Efforts	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
1	Practicing social distancing of 2 m	58.73	89.28	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	Practicing physical distancing of 2 m	57.14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
3	Wearing masks	57.14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4	Washing hands	58.73	77.38	100	100	100	100	100	100
5	Staying at home – avoiding the crowd	46.03	80.95	86.90	100	100	100	100	100
6	Applying coughing and sneezing etiquette	41.27	100	92.86	100	100	100	100	100
7	Cleaning phones	57.14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Mean	53.74	92.52	97.11	100	100	100	100	100

as a result of the continual exposure to stressors that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic [1]. Acute stress, panic attacks, PTSD, anxiety and depression, and even suicidal tendencies are all possible responses to the COVID-19 pandemic's stressors [17]. The pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic have prompted a wide range of reactions that have been labeled as psychosocial mental health problems.

Individuals with a deteriorating immune response as a result of psychosocial mental health issues are more vulnerable to COVID-19 transmission. Furthermore, according to the WHO studies, anxiety and depression might result in yearly global economic losses of USD 1 trillion due to a loss of human resource productivity [14]. Anxiety and depression, which are common, are also the leading causes of suicide deaths [15]. As a result, psychosocial mental health issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic must be adequately addressed and managed. In a long term, psychosocial mental health support can be provided to the community to shift people's behavior into a healthy behavior, preventing psychosocial physical and mental health problems, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2. Efforts to prevent psychosocial mental health problems related to COVID-19

No	Efforts	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
1	Relaxing the body	52.38	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2	Positive emotion	53.97	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
3	Positive thinking	57.14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
4	Positive attitude	57.14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
5	Positive relationship	46.03	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6	Positive spirituality	55.56	95.24	95.24	100	100	100	100	100
	Mean	53.70	99.21	99.21	100	100	100	100	100

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus must be not only on detecting, preventing, and responding to the disease, but also on providing psychosocial mental health support to prevent and treat physical and mental health problems that have arisen as a result of the pandemic. The promotive and preventive efforts for mental and psychosocial health need to be carried out on the community considering that all community groups can be infected with COVID-19 and can experience its psychological impact, namely experiencing psychosocial problems. These promotion and prevention activities are carried out by all levels of a society guided by health officers and cross-sectoral programs and collaboration. These efforts are performed by providing communication, information, and education about COVID-19 and physical and mental health problems that can arise due to this pandemic, as well as how to prevent and handle them. The purpose of these efforts is to maintain the physical and mental health of individuals and families as well as the community [9]. Communication, information, and mental health education are delivered through programmed training with independent implementation for eight weeks.

The COVID-19 psychosocial mental health support program can help with efforts to prevent physical, mental, and psychosocial health problems associated with COVID-19. Psychosocial mental health support provided to respondents includes adaptation to increasing physical immunity, increasing mental immunity, preventing physical transmission of COVID-19, and preventing mental health problems in individuals, families, and communities [8]. Some suggestions provided to the respondents include relaxing the body, building positive emotion, positive thinking, positive attitude, positive relationship, and positive spirituality [8].

5 Conclusion

The provision of psychosocial mental health support to the community for a long time is necessary to shift people's behavior into healthy behavior and prevent community physical and psychosocial mental health problems, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 psychosocial mental health support services are integrated with independent implementation, and changes in physical and mental health problems are closely measured. During this pandemic, it is vital to increase the psychosocial mental health support program as a form of concern and efforts to prevent physical and psychosocial mental health problems.

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