



READINESS OF HEALTH CADRES AS PROMOTERS OF ADAPTATION TO NEW HABITS OF COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

The application of the new normal policy order is an adaptive response to the existence of the current pandemic. Mental health and psychosocial support training is an alternative to support this. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of training on the readiness of mental health cadres to adapt to new habits. Readiness is assessed from knowledge and stress. This is pre-experimental design research used a single group pretest-posttest. The research sample was 60 people who could read and write, committed to participating in the training for three consecutive days. The sample was taken using purposive sampling technique. Data was obtained using a questionnaire and analyzed by the paired t test. The results showed that there was an average difference between pre-test and post-test, meaning that the intervention had an effect on increasing knowledge and decreasing respondents' stress.

Keywords: cadre; covid-19; knowledge; new habits; stress

First Received

11 August 2021

Revised

20 September 2021

Accepted

20 November 2021

Final Proof Received

24 November 2021

Published

28 November 2021

How to cite (in APA style)

Febriana, B., & Rochmawati, D. (2022). Readiness of Health Cadres as Promoters of Adaptation to New Habits of Covid-19. *Indonesian Journal of Global Health Research*, 3(4), 659-664. <https://doi.org/10.37287/ijghr.v3i4.744>

INTRODUCTION

For almost two years since the first case of Covid-19 was announced in March 2020, the government has continued to take mitigative steps and optimal handling so that this virus does not further spread and cause fatalities. Experts and epidemiological institutions have not been able to accurately predict when this pandemic will end soon. This means that all people in the world, including Indonesia, must get used to living side by side and at peace with COVID-19. As of December 29, 2021, COVID-19 cases in Indonesia continued to grow, reaching 4,262,351 people with 4,113,742 recoveries, meaning the cure rate was 96.5% (covid19.go.id). However, the impact of this pandemic on mental health is still high for the community. The main risk of depression is a factor that affects people's mental health. This condition is caused by the economic recession, factors of distance and social isolation, as well as stress and trauma to health workers. The influence caused by COVID-19 on changes that occur suddenly, makes it difficult for people to adapt and causes stress to trauma (Nasrullah & Silaiman, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic that hit the world has undeniably brought a significant impact on various sectors, not only health. The imposition of social distancing, directly or indirectly, has had an impact on the economic-industrial sector which has to reduce production costs by closing factories, laying off employees, and doing layoffs, as a rational effort in responding to the decline in demand and income. This brings a domino effect such as an increase in the

number of unemployed and a decrease in the quality of life of the community (Brooks et al., 2018). This situation is like a circle where the non-health sector also affects the health sector, especially the mental health of the community.

Meanwhile, the impact of the pandemic on the health and mental well-being of children and young people has continued to deteriorate into its third year. Recent data from UNICEF shows that, globally, at least 1 in 7 children is directly affected by quarantine, while 1.6 billion children are affected by the cessation of the teaching and learning process. Disruptions to routines, education, recreation, and anxiety around family finances and health make many young people feel afraid, angry, and worried about their future (UNICEF, 2021).

This condition has brought the Indonesian government to an understanding of implementing a new normal policy or a new normal life order as a realistic response to the existence of COVID-19. As stated by the Expert Team Leader of the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling COVID-19 Wiku Adisasmita, new normal is defined as a change in people's behavior to continue carrying out normal activities. New normal is also defined as a scenario to accelerate the handling of COVID-19 in health and socio-economic aspects. The main principle of the new normal plan that will be implemented is the adaptation of new habits with a lifestyle that will lead to the creation of new people's lives and behaviors until a COVID-19 vaccine is found (Widiyastutik, 2021).

Social support, especially from health workers, can be one way to accelerate the adaptation process in the community. This can be achieved by providing education about the adaptation of new habits through psychosocial mental health support. The purpose of this support is as an effort to prevent, treat, and manage psychosocial mental health problems that arise due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Psychosocial mental health support is an effort that can overcome mental health and psychosocial problems in the community in various conditions that occur due to COVID-19 (Dkk & ., 2020). The provision of psychosocial mental health support for COVID-19 is provided through the following stages: education and implementation of new habit adaptation skills so that the community can prevent and manage psychosocial mental health problems due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A community-based approach can expand the scope of mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, researchers empower the community, namely mental health cadres to become a mouthpiece for mental health support in the adaptation era in the new normal period. Health cadres are the embodiment of the active role of the community in integrated services (Depkes RI, 2007). They are voluntary workers selected by the community and play a role in developing the community, recruited from, by, for their own neighborhood community to improve the health status of the surrounding residents. This study aims to determine the readiness of mental health cadres assessed from their knowledge and stress.

METHODS

This study uses a pre-experimental design with a single group pretest-posttest. The number of samples is 60 people, namely mental health cadres in Bandarharjo sub-district, Semarang. Inclusion criteria are being able to read and write, being committed to participating in training for three consecutive days. Interventions include knowledge about Covid-19, DKJPS – dukungan Kesehatan jiwa dan psikososial- (mental health and psychosocial support), the concept of jogo tonggo launched by the Central Java government as well as skills to deal with stress and anxiety and other mental disorders that can be experienced by the community. Stress was measured using the DASS questionnaire. The results of the normality test for

knowledge using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov are $p=0.235$ because the number of samples is above 50 respondents. Meanwhile, the normality test for stress using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was $p=0.21$ for the pre-test and $p=0.34$ for the post-test. It can be concluded that the distribution is normal so that researcher used the paired t test.

RESULTS

Table 1.
Respondent characteristics (n= 60)

Respondent characteristics	f	%	
Age	30-40	9	15
	40-50	22	36
	50-60	29	49
Gender	Men	3	5
	Women	57	95
Education	Primary school	10	6
	Junior high school	13	21
	Senior high school	34	68
	University	3	5
Income	< 1.000.000	46	76
	1.000.000-2.000.000	11	18
	2.000.000-3.000.000	3	5
	> 3.000.000	1	1

Table 2.
The result of the paired t test (knowledge)

	Mean	Difference	p
Knowledge before intervention	8.11	0.39	< 0.001
Knowledge after intervention	8.5		

Table 3.
The result of the paired t test (stress)

	Mean	Difference	p
Stress before intervention	7.66	1.65	< 0.001
Stress after intervention	9.31		

From the table presented above, it can be concluded that there is an average difference between the pre test and post test, meaning that there is an effect of intervention, namely the training of cadres as promoters of mental health in adapting to new habits. This is measured by increasing knowledge and reducing stress on mental health cadres.

DISCUSSION

The attention and assistance obtained through social support training can provide a protective effect for individuals when facing problems (He F. et al., 2013; Wang X, et al., 2014). Appropriate social support can provide benefits for individuals in managing stress, regulating responses to stressors, and preventing psychosocial mental health problems (Maulin, 2009). Health handling, especially during a pandemic, does not only focus on healing efforts, but

requires preventive and promotive efforts. Therefore, mental health cadres are urgently needed as health promoters in their environment. Cadres are expected to be able to help individuals to assert control over health. The process includes an individual's sense of responsibility for their own health (Gibson, 2011).

New habit adaptation taught to respondents are adaptation to increase physical immunity, increase mental immunity, prevent physical transmission of COVID-19, prevent mental health problems related to COVID-19 in individuals, families, and communities (Rahayu, Rita; Budiarto, Eka; Keliat, 2021). Health cadres in carrying out their roles are influenced by various factors. One of these factors is knowledge (Burhan et al., 2019) this is in line with research conducted by (Misbah & Tansah R, 2017) where knowledge and attitudes affect the role of cadres. The results of the study after being given training there was an increase in the knowledge of cadres so that it is hoped that this can be a provision for cadres to carry out their roles well. The provision of psychosocial mental health support for COVID-19 is provided through the stages of education and implementation of new habit adaptation skills.

L. Green's procedure - proceed theory (Green & Kreuter, 1992) shows that there are factors that influence behavior, namely supporting factors. Supporting factors for cadres in carrying out their roles include knowledge. The research findings show that knowledge has an influence on the ability of mental health cadres to carry out their roles in society. Knowledge is obtained from the learning process, in this case participating in basic health training related to COVID-19. The training provides educational information about mental health, the application of healthy behavior, adaptation of new habits, both for healthy people, close contacts, suspected cases, vulnerable people, on the way. And the concept of helping each other or known as *jogo tonggo*. Another skill is the concept of tracking and self-quarantine management.

The training provided to mental health cadres is the basis for cadres in carrying out their roles in community mental health programs. The data obtained show that the cadres have never received this kind of training or if they have been exposed it is only limited to reading on social media. Actual experience in meetings contributes to increasing the perception and knowledge of cadres. cadres with little experience should be given structured training and recommendations for cadre recruitment are carried out for the younger generation (Wardaningsih & Kageyama, 2016). The results of this study cadres are able to mention again and give examples of skills that have been taught. This is in line with a study by (Kurniawan & Sulistyarini, 2017) that training helps cadres increase knowledge in dealing with mental health problems in their community.

Another factor that can affect the performance of cadres is stress. Study by (Chen et al., 2019) have shown that knowledge and stress influence each other. We can call cadres as informal caregivers because of their very important role in the community. Like other people, cadres get experience stress either from problems experienced by himself or because of his role as a cadre. They interact with people with various different characteristics, can be accepted well or experience rejection or ridicule. This leads to stressful conditions and ultimately affects their mental health. This is where the role of training exists as a basis for dealing with the stressors they experience. They can use the handling resources they have, both from outside and from within. Stress coping skills have been taught in training.

The application of positive emotions can improve the quality of psychosocial mental health because positive emotions can reduce stress responses, increase immunity, and create a better

mood (Dkk & ., 2020). Positive thinking is done with five-finger hypnosis, positive thinking, and mind-stopping exercises (Keliat et.al., 2020). These three activities relax the mind so that it can reduce tension, anxiety, and stress that interfere with the mind both because of repeated and persistent stressors (Saswati et al., 2020). Positive thinking exercises on adapting new habits can prevent and manage psychosocial mental health problems in cadres. This study resulted in reduced stress after respondents (cadres) received a number of trainings.

The position of mental health cadres in the community is very important because they are part of the community who are closer to other community members. The problems experienced by families from the effects of the pandemic become a burden for their family members. Stress, worry, depression and shame can be one effect. Seeing these problems, cadres are expected to provide motivation and encouragement to patients and their families to achieve good mental health conditions. Social support as verbal or non-verbal information, advice, real assistance or behavior given by people who are familiar with the subject of their social environment or in the form of presence and things that can provide emotional benefits or affect the behavior of the recipient (Gottlieb, 1983).

The role of cadres is divided into three, namely promotive and preventive roles. The real step in this regard is to provide education to other residents regarding improving immunity both physically and mentally, to track residents who are suspected of having COVID-19. The curative role is to report to the nearest health service center, provide assistance in the form of food or other materials and direct social support to COVID-19 sufferers and their families. While the role of rehabilitative is to motivate to eliminate trauma or stress syndrome experienced by sufferers and their families.

CONCLUSIONS

Cadres have an important role in maintaining mental health during a pandemic. This study found that there was an increase in knowledge and a decrease in stress of mental health cadres after being given treatment in the form of training. Training should be carried out periodically to provide support to cadres as promoters in adaptation to new habits of covid-19 both from the knowledge and stress they get while carrying out their duties as health cadres. This research implication suggests that the findings can be used to understand problems, stress levels, and knowledge carried out by cadres during the Covid-19 pandemic to help himself, his family and the community.

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