
THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING TO REDUCE DEATH ANXIETY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic that has occurred over the past two years has caused increased public anxiety, especially anxiety about death. This study aims to determine the role of psychological well-being on death anxiety during the covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. This study uses accidental sampling with 301 respondents aged 13-60 years. Instruments of this study used PWBS (Psychological Well-Being Scale) by Ryff and DAS (death anxiety scale) by Templer. Data analysis used correlation test spearment. The result show there is a relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety $r = -.142$ ($p = .014, p < 0.5$), greater Psychological well-being the lower the level of anxiety experienced. This research is expected to contribute to reducing death anxiety of COVID -19 by increasing psychological well-being. Future research is expected to find specific variables that can reduce death anxiety and treatments that can be increase psychological well-being for society.

Keywords: Anxiety, Covid-19, Death Anxiety, Psychological Well-Being

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic caused by the *Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19)* which started December 2019 in China, has spread to all parts of the world including Indonesia. Based on WHO survey conducted in April 10 2020, the result showed that 1.439.516 people were positively infected by Covid-19 and 85.711 people died from 212 countries. In Indonesia, on April 10, 2020 has reached 306 people died and 3.512 people confirmed positive for the covid-19 virus (BNPB, 2020).

The current phenomenon of the covid pandemic certainly creates anxiety

in the Society, because the transmission rate is increasing very quickly and various news of death in the media. The death rate that continues to grow can have an impact on the psychological society of death anxiety that no one can predict. Since the COVID-19 epidemic, we have observed a number of public stigmatizations of certain demographics as well as the establishment of several really harmful stereotypes (WHO, 2020). People are more prone to suffer anxiety in stressful circumstances, such as the ones that have just occurred, especially when they feel threatened by the spread of the contagious virus Covid-19. Anxiety is an unpleasant condition or feeling insecure that includes feelings of fear, worry, and anxiety (Alvarado et al., 1995). In general, anxiety can result from a variety of unexpected events and specific situations, anxieties that something will happen, and a person's extreme depressive state. During the COVID-19 epidemic, fear of dying has been one of the most prevalent issues that the populace has been dealing with. Death is unavoidable because death is often accompanied by pain and lost enjoyment of life, this may contribute to communal anxiety over death (Aghababaei et al., 2016), particularly when a patient dies due to covid-19, which has numerous procedures.

Death anxiety is often associated with a lot of psychological stress and mood disorders that affect quality of life and well-being (Shukla & Rishi, 2014). Well-being plays an important role in improving physical and mental health, In addition to real encounters with death, other factors that might cause death anxiety include unpleasant endings, a lack of time or energy, or untested ideas that question the purpose of life (Abqori & Risnawati, 2018; Nurmaria & Risnawati, 2022; Risnawati Erna & Arisandi Alfida, 2019; Wardani et al., 2021). Death is an event that cannot be avoided, and unexpected death allows individuals to feel anxious, (Alvarado et al., 1995; Templer, 1970; Yang et al., 2016). people who experience a period of crisis generally feel a severe mental shock, which will later have an effect on each person's mental health. Anxiety about death when an outbreak occurs is normal, but people are not only worried about the impact of a deadly virus, but also health protocols. towards individuals who died due to COVID-19 also added to the anxiety. Isolation, unable to be accompanied when sick, funerals arranged by health procedures adds to a long series of public anxiety, not to mention being ostracized by the surrounding community is also a psychological problem.

Templer, (1970) defines death anxiety as the unpleasant emotions and feelings that an individual experiences when thinking about death in an unclear state. Death anxiety is described by several dimensions, namely: thoughts about death, pain of death, conditions of death, short life, and worries about the future (Alvarado et al., 1995). The uncertain condition of the pandemic when it will end has an impact on increasing anxiety about death, but also groups of people who tend to ignore the COVID-19 pandemic for various reasons, such as economic needs, etc. Because of this pandemic, people continue to carry out their activities to earn a living with reasons to survive, as well as the termination of employment relationships, very many employees are laid off, therefore we can analyze that the number of unemployed is increasing and crime is rampant the community. Without thinking, some community groups violate social values and norms, especially violating the health protocol rules that have been affirmed by the government (Wardani et al., 2022; Risnawati et al., 2022)

There is no definite hope when this pandemic will end, the emergence of new variants that continue to develop is also increasing public anxiety. In the case of the second wave of COVID-19, the 2021 delta variant, Indonesia experienced the highest peak in the death toll. People panicked and the emergency was felt by various shortages. People are also "forced" to hunt for medical devices such as oxygen cylinders, oximeters, which are increasingly scarce to save themselves and their families (Kohli et al., 2020; Wardani et al., 2022) for patients with moderate to mild symptoms, it is also difficult to get medicines due to the scarcity of medicines related to COVID-19 symptoms so that the mortality rate of patients who are self-isolating is increasing (reporting COVID-19, 2021).

Although the government continues to encourage vaccination programs by Carefully, after passing the second wave of COVID-19 2021, it does not mean the storm has passed, various new variants have emerged (omicron) and further add to the uncertainty of when the pandemic will end and increase so that it seems that people must be forced to live side by side with Covid-19. This means that people have to adapt to the anxiety of death due to COVID-19 that will continue to loom.

Previous research explained that anxiety about death is related to

individual welfare conditions or *Psychological well-being* (PWB), the higher the *psychological well-being*, the lower the anxiety about death (Nazira et al., 2020; Shukla & Rishi, 2014).

Varaee et al., (2017) explains that there is a significant relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety. This shows psychological well-being as perceptions of various dimensions of individual and social life, autonomy, positive relationships with others, dominance over the environment, personal growth, purpose in life, and self-compassion. Psychological well-being depends on various conditions and factors such as fear and thinking about death cause anxiety which results in loss of psychological performance and creates psychological problems.

Psychological well-being requires understanding the existentialist challenges of life and conflict with ontological challenges as well as having existentialist and mental challenges that end life, death anxiety is one of the most important ontological and existentialist challenges in life (Varaee et al., 2017). This shows that death anxiety can predict changes in psychological well-being in human life.

Research on cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic showed that psychological well-being was negatively correlated with anxiety about death (Afrashteh & Masoumi, 2021), patients who had good psychological conditions were able to accept pandemic situations and had lower depression and death anxiety. When one's psychological well-being increases, death anxiety decreases, this is because the mechanism of fear of the COVID-19 virus creates anxiety and different individual conditions in a society create variations in death anxiety related to psychological well-being.

According to Ryff, the concept of well-being has six dimensions, namely self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, life goals, and personal growth. In addition to the factors that influence, among others; demographic factors, social support, evaluation of life experiences, and locus of control (Risnawati & Arisandi, 2019; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Well-being is not simply the absence of disease or illness but a complex combination of a person's physical, mental,

emotional and social health status. It is closely related to happiness and life satisfaction. In short, well-being can be described as how one feels about oneself and one's life (Shukla & Rishi, 2014).

Psychological *well-being* is an individual's psychological condition that plays an important role in functioning very well and positively. Individuals who apply and have psychological well-being will tend to be positive towards themselves and others, always try to establish good relationships with others, have good and clear life goals, are able to adapt to the environment and always try to develop themselves to be better.

From previous research, it can be concluded that an individual's psychological well-being has a relationship with how he deals with conditions and situations that occur in his life, but there has been no PWB research in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, apart from that, the pandemic condition of our COVID-19 novel virus is also not yet get an idea of how the condition of the community, especially anxiety about death due to the covid-19 virus. This research is expected to contribute to efforts to overcome the risk of the COVID-19 pandemic in psychological aspects and efforts to increase immunity, prepare for coexistence with COVID-19 through minimizing public anxiety and increasing PWB.

Death Anxiety

Templer (1970) defines *death anxiety* as the unpleasant emotions and feelings that are being experienced by individuals, where a person thinks about death in unclear circumstances. Based on Templer's theory, death anxiety is described by several dimensions, namely: thoughts about death, pain of death, conditions of death, short life, and worry about the future (Templer, 2006).

People who have greater belief power have less anxiety. of death, death depression, and death pressure. People with greater belief in an afterlife have less death anxiety, death depression, and death pressure study, it was explained that strong religious beliefs and beliefs in life after death were associated with death anxiety, death depression, and less death pressure. Efforts to reduce one's death anxiety or death depression are greater about participation in religion and not about guaranteed drugs (Templer, 1970).

Dimension of Death Anxiety

Templer et al. (1970) revealed that there are several factors that support death anxiety in individuals, these factors define a construction full of thoughts about death, mixed with psychological experiences and things related to death:

- Thoughts about death. Individuals who think about about death, mixed with fear of death that is not certain to happen. Individuals think about death repeatedly which tends to have a psychological impact on death.
- The pain of death. Where individuals who are fixated on death tend to be painful and miserable.
- The condition of an individual's death, which is often haunted by the shadow of death, is related to an individual's condition or illness and the things that accompany the death.
- Time of life. Individuals who are not ready to die and are aware of the short life that is because during his life was full of all sins and mistakes.
- Worry about the future. Individuals who believe the most important aspect of religion that there is torment in life will have higher death depression.

Psychological well-being

The meaning Psychological Well Being is not only due to its potential effect on physical health but it also influences the purpose of human life. PWB reflects more than the absence of psychological distress, such as anxiety or depressive symptoms in an individual(Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Psychological well-being follows from a developmental life-span perspective, emphasizing the various challenges faced at different phases of the life cycle. Ryff argues that PWB dimensions, including the dimensions of purpose in life, personal growth, mastery, autonomy, ikigai, life satisfaction, positive affect, sense of coherence, and optimism, may relate differently to all causes of death. According to Ryff the concept of psychological well-being has six dimensions, namely self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. In addition to the factors that influence, among others; demographic factors, social support, evaluation of life experiences, and locus of control (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

METHODOLOGY

Respondents

This study obtained respondents as many as 301 (71.1% female) respondents with an age range of 13-60 years.

Table 1: Respondents

Sex	N	%
Male	87	28.9
Female	214	71.1
Total	301	100

The population in this study is the public, male and female, aged 17-60 years, Indonesian citizens living in Jabodetabek. The sampling method used in this research is incidental sampling. The sample obtained in this study was 325 people, but only 301 were included in data analysis, 24 others did not meet the criteria, the questionnaire was incomplete. Respondents consisted of consisting of 71.1% female (N=214) and 28.9% male (N=87).

Research Designs

The sampling technique in this study used non-probability sampling, namely accidental sampling. distribute questionnaires online various social media, then to anyone who gets the questionnaire and according to the characteristics of research respondents, they can participate as respondents.

Research instruments

The researcher translated the scale into Indonesian and then looked at the construct validity by involving three expert judgment experts in the field of psychology. In this study, research instruments and equipment include:

Death Anxiety Scale (DAS) by Templer (1970) Based on Templer's theory, death anxiety is described by several dimensions, there is: thoughts about death, pain of death, conditions of death, short life, and worries about the future (Templer, 1993). The score given to items with a favourable is 4 for the response "strongly disagree" and so on to 1

"strongly agree". Then for unfavourable items, scoring is done in reverse (reversed score), 1 for "strongly disagree" and so on up to 4 "strongly agree".

Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS). The Psychological Well being, based on aspects of Ryff's theory (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Aspects in this scale are: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and growth. Personal growth which consists of 19 favourable and 23 unfavourable items. This study uses a Likert consisting of six item scores.

All research instruments have gone through a forward and back translation process, ie, adapting measuring instruments from English to Indonesian After this process, all instruments went through an expert judgment process to assess the readability and understanding of the items by four experts in the field of developmental Psychology.

After the expert judgment process was carried out, the measuring instrument was tested to see the validity and reliability of each measuring instrument. The content validity test was carried out by expert judgment. All measuring instruments were categorized as valid. Meanwhile, the process of reliability of the procrastination instrument was classified as reliable with = .810 (death anxiety Scale, 14 items valid) and .812 (PWB) was also quite reliable. After testing the measuring instrument, the data collection procedure was conducted using questionnaire given online via Google Form and distributed through social media.

Data analysis

Before this research was carried out, the researchers tried out the scales, To analyze the validity of the items, IBM SPSS Statistics version 25 for Windows with a significance level of 5%. The test used in this research was the Pearson correlation, T-test, and regression.

RESULTS

This study obtained respondents as many as 301 (71.1% female) respondents with an age range of 13-60 years. Based on age, the majority of respondents were aged 13-18 years 53.5%,(N= 161), 19-21 years 41.9% (N=126) and 4.7% 30-60 years old. The results of the normality test using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* significance value obtained is 0.313 where

$p > 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tested data has a residual value which is normally distributed.

Table 2. Pearson Analysis

	Pearson Correlation	sig
PWB & Death Anxiety	-.142	.014

The results of the analysis in table 2 above show that psychological well-being and death anxiety obtained a correlation coefficient of $-.142$ with a significance value of $.014$. This shows that there is a significant negative relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety. The negative correlation means that the greater the respondent's efforts to fulfil the welfare of life, the lower the level of anxiety experienced. This shows that the hypothesis in this study can be accepted and shows that there is a relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety.

Table 3. Compare mean

Sex	N	Mean	Sig
Male	161	178	.000
Female	126	189	

Based on table 3 above, the results of the different test scores and the Psychological Well Being and Death Anxiety based on Gender resulted in a sig (2-tailed) coefficient of $0.000 < 0.05$. This shows that there is a significant difference between the sexes of men and women. Male respondents had a lower average score of 178.29 , while female respondents had a higher average score of 189.29 .

DISCUSSION

Researchers conducted this study with the aim of finding a relationship between psychological well-being and anxiety about death from corona virus disease (Covid-19). Based on the results of the research analysis, it can be concluded as follows. The results of the research analysis show that there is a negative relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety. This shows that the higher the psychological well-being of the individual, the lower the level of anxiety experienced. From the results obtained, it can be seen that there is a significant negative relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety.

The results of the two variables that have a negative correlation between psychological well-being and death anxiety can be interpreted as the greater a person's efforts to meet the welfare of life, the lower the level of anxiety experienced. Everyone wants to have psychological well-being in their lives, but not everyone can control themselves from various stimuli or conditions from what is happening in their lives. Not spared from life, anxiety is one of the factors that interfere with human psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is the fear of death. Death anxiety involves thoughts, fears, and emotions related to the end of life, where a person experiences anxiety, worry, or fear related to death and dying (Varaee, P. et al., 2017).

The results of the analysis that have been carried out by researchers show that the correlation between psychological well being and death anxiety results in a correlation coefficient of -0.142 with a significance value of 0.014. In this case, it shows that the results of significant positive correlations between psychological well being and death anxiety. The results that have been obtained between psychological well being and death anxiety show that the higher the psychological well-being of the individual, the lower the level of anxiety experienced. Death anxiety is often associated with a lot of psychological distress and mood disorders that affect quality of life and psychological well-being (Shukla & Rishi, 2014).

The significant relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety indicates psychological well-being as perceptions of various dimensions of individual and social life, autonomy, positive relationships with others, dominance over the environment, personal growth, purpose in life, and self-compassion. Psychological well-being depends on various conditions and factors such as fear and thinking about death cause anxiety which results in loss of psychological performance and creates psychological problems (Payam Varaee, 2018). Anxiety can arise from various unexpected circumstances and certain situations, fears that something will happen and where the individual feels very depressed (Alvarado et al., 1995; Clark & Watson, 1991).

Individuals who experience a period of crisis generally feel a strong mental shock. In this case, if it is continuously left unchecked, it will have an impact on the mental health of the individual. The Rules have

been implemented from the government, the community continues to carry out daily activities to survive Lock down Likewise, with the termination of employment relationships, many employees are laid off, therefore we can analyze that the number of unemployed is increasing and crime is rife in the community. Without thinking, some community groups violate social values and norms, especially violating the health protocol rules that have been affirmed by the government.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research analysis, it can be interpreted as follows. The results of the research analysis show that there is a negative relationship between psychological well-being and death anxiety. This shows that the higher the psychological well-being of the individual, the lower the level of anxiety experienced.

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Authors' Contribution

Erna Risnawati has contributed substantially to the conception and design, data analysis and interpretation, drafting or critically revising for important intellectual content, design, data acquisition, data analysis and interpretation, and also given final approval of the version to be published. Fiqh Fajri has been involved in data acquisition, data analysis and drafting. Muhammad Al. Falaq HR has been involved in revision of the manuscript and interpretation.

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