KEEP SPIRIT, EVEN THOUGH COVID-19 IS IN YOUR LIFE
(Phenomenological study on COVID-19 survivors in Malang City)

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ABSTRACT

Covid-19 is a disease that attacks the human respiratory system. The condition is caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2, which is characterized by cough, fever, fatigue, and loss of smell. This study aims to understand the life journey of COVID-19 survivors, how they can survive in difficult times, and what are the underlying things using a phenomenological approach. In conducting qualitative phenomenological research, four processes are passed: phone, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meaning. In analyzing and interpreting the data by bracketing, horizontal exploring, meaning unit to get a structural description, innovative take to get a structural elucidation, and combining it to make a universal meaning and represent the respondent's experience. The selection of respondents using purposive sampling with the number of subjects three new students. The data collection instrument used a tape recorder with in-depth interview data collection techniques. The results of this study state that there are various ways that respondents have done in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for themselves and their families, there is motivation as encouragement in themselves to be able to recover from the coronavirus, the role of the family as an emotional boost for respondents to achieve recovery, and still the lack of knowledge possessed by the community related to the transmission of the coronavirus and health protocols which resulted in a miss perception of covid survivors.

Keywords: Covid-19; Phenomenology; Invariant Constituent; Cognitive Dissonance; Covid Survivors

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is a disease that attacks the human respiratory system. This disease first appeared in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2, which is characterized by fever, cough, fatigue, and loss of taste or smell (Varalakshmi & Swetha, 2020). This is considered to have spread very quickly throughout the world, so on March 11, 2020, WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic (Reese et al., 2020). Until June 2020, there were 7,805,148 cases spread throughout the world, and then for almost two years, Corona also mutated with the emergence of new virus variants that became easier to transmit with the characteristics of each different virus, for example, the Delta variant which has immunity. To several types of vaccines or variants of omicron that do not have symptoms. Corona cases in the world alone have reached 363 million cases with a death toll of 5.63 million, while in Indonesia, there were 4.3 million cases with a death toll of 144,000.

The radiographic results of several patients infected with the Coronavirus showed changes in the lung organs, including a low average number of platelets and lymphocytes in corona patients accompanied by hypoxemia (Chan et al., 2020). So that to prevent this, the WHO, especially the Indonesian government, is intensively socializing so that the public applies health procedures to prevent COVID-19 by using masks, hand sanitizers, and maintaining distance. However, this is considered less effective because it can only control it and does not guarantee the public to avoid the Coronavirus. This, of course, creates its polemic in the community, which has an impact on their daily lives and feelings and thoughts that tend to think of Corona as a scourge. One of them is because Covid does not only have an impact on health but also has an impact on the economy, one example of which is the number of employees being laid off to reduce the company's burden, the number of traders, entrepreneurs who have gone out of business, many people who have lost their livelihoods due to the policy of implementing the lockdown, PSBB or PPKM so that these conditions also affect the mentality of the community because they feel they cannot support themselves and their families and have an impact on the mindset of the community. While mental health is one of the factors that can affect immune immunity (Rahmawati & Rindayati, 2014). Decreased immunity will increase the risk of contracting the Covid virus.

This kind of condition will undoubtedly bring up different experiences for each individual. An incident is an event that someone has experienced. Then, each individual will interpret the event based on their understanding and knowledge. The community's stigma against COVID-19 is very deadly and can be transmitted quickly, so much stigma will affect community activities, especially for people who tested positive for COVID-19. This is a unique experience that the researcher wants to reveal in this study.

Research Method

This study uses a qualitative research method using a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach aims to explain the meaning of the experiences experienced by individuals, about certain concepts or phenomena, by exploring the structure of human consciousness (Taufiqurrahman, 2012). In this case, the researcher wants to know the meaning of the experiences experienced by COVID survivors through phenomenological studies. By following the philosophical method of phenomenology formulated by Husserl, Moustakas explains each stage of the process in phenomenology, namely phone, phenomenological reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meanings essences (Moustakas, 1994; Taufiqurrahman, 2012). The instrument in this study is the researcher himself (Hanurawan, 2012), using the in-depth interview method. Interviews can be conducted in three forms, namely open discussions, interviews with researcher question guidelines, and informal interviews (Moustakas, 1994; Taufiqurrahman, 2012).

Moustakas presents a phenomenological data analysis model modified by Van Kaam: initial registration and grouping (horizonalizing), reducing and eliminating to form (Invariant Constituents), building an individual textural description of an experience to

build a unique structural characterization of an experience described. Through imaginative variations. Next, create a Textural-Structural Description of the meaning and essence of the experience which can produce a representative Composite Description as a whole. The validation carried out in this study was by asking the respondents whether the descriptions that had been made followed the experiences they had experienced, and then the researchers revised them. This process is called Intersubjective Validity with retesting (testing out) through back-and-forth interactions (Mamik, 2015; Taufiqurrahman, 2012).

Respondents were determined based on the criteria specified by the researcher, namely: first, having a history of COVID-19; second, having family members who have or have experienced COVID-19; Third, experiencing COVID-19 symptoms with the conditions of fever, cough, fatigue, and loss of taste or smell. Based on these considerations, respondents were selected using purposive sampling. This method was chosen by the researcher based on the relation of certain groups selected as research respondents by the research objectives.

Table 1 Characteristics of Respondents

No Subject	Age	Gender	Occupation	Other Family Members Who Affected by Covid-19
1	24 years	Female	Student	Uncle
2	25 years	Female	Student	Mother and husband
3	26 years	Female	Housewife	Husband
4	25 years	Female	Student	Parent
5	21 years	Female	Student	Father
6	23 years	Male	Student	Mother and Aunt
7	30 years	Male	Entrepreneur	Wife
8	26 years	Male	Student	Sister

The flow of the phenomenological method used in the study consists of six steps. First, the researcher collected data using a semi-structured interview method followed by probing questions or additional questions that we're digging into the context of COVID-19 suffered by the respondent. Second, the researcher conducts transcription, which includes the transfer of data from recordings to written data. Third, the researcher conducted the codification and themes. Fourth, the researcher classified the similar themes found. Fifth, the researcher formulates the findings of similar facts into a theme in a theoretical framework. Sixth, researchers searched the literature to understand and explain the theoretical framework that had been created.

Participants were asked seven main questions related to 1) Can you tell us how you first contracted COVID-19?; 2) How did you feel knowing you had COVID-19?; 3) What do you think about when you experience COVID-19 symptoms?; 4) What kind of treatment have you taken to overcome this condition?; 5) How did your family react when they

found out you had COVID-19?; 6) What are the views of those around you regarding people who have contracted COVID-19?; 7) What is your motivation for trying to recover from COVID-19?

Result And Discussion

The findings of this study are that the journey that COVID-19 survivors go through is certainly not as easy as recovering from a common illness. Whether or not someone recovers from a disease is, of course, based on each person's perspective. When a person believes in himself in his abilities, he can overcome all the obstacles faced in achieving healing. In detail with the constituent components (Invariant constituent) phenomena that can be described texturally (textural description) accompanied by the explanation below:

1. Respondents' feelings and perceptions of covid-19

   Respondents thought that COVID-19 was a disease or epidemic they had to face and sometimes seemed scary. These fears and concerns are exacerbated by reports from the mass media or online, which state that the death rate is high and the thought that exposure to the virus will take lives quickly. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly made the economic side that is not only personal but also national decline with employee salary cuts, employee efficiency, and the holidays for employees affected by COVID-19. This causes concern for fear of not being able to support his family. In addition, with the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has implemented a curfew in every area and tightened health protocols by authorities and local mass organizations.

2. Causes affected by covid-19

   The COVID-19 transmission comes from the closest people who have activities outside the home with the frequency of often meeting face to face with many different people from people who are only at home. When infected with the virus, the initial symptoms felt are like a person has a flu fever. Viruses can infect the respondent's body because the respondent is the person who cares for the closest person with the same symptoms.

3. Symptoms experienced by respondents

   The symptoms experienced by respondents when infected with the coronavirus were loss of sense of smell, dizziness or headache, dry throat, cold sweat, body fever chills, and body aches. These symptoms occur after one day of being infected with the virus and last for three days.

4. The reaction of the respondent's family of covid-19 survivors

   The people most worried about the respondent's condition are their parents. The reaction from the respondent's parents, especially the respondent's mother, was to impose strict rules on the respondent, such as sending medicines far from their children. Some mothers panicked, so they were confused about what to do, and a mother reacted calmly—trying to strengthen the respondents so as not to be down with what happened. All of the respondent's families have something in common. Namely, when the respondent has symptoms of COVID-19, it is better to be treated

independently at home with various efforts because it is feared that when treated in a hospital, it will increase stress and cannot be visited when sick or even dead.

5. Public opinion regarding the impact of covid-19

Regarding responding to various people affected by the corona, some people view those affected as not worthy of being approached, and also the emergence of issues that are far from the truth experienced by respondents. A group of people wanted to know, so they disturbed the respondent's rest by calling him many times to prove it. In addition, because the respondents are far from their parents, people generalize that their families are affected by the coronavirus and are careful when close to affected families. The impact of this is that the shop, which is usually busy, becomes quiet, and issues that are not pleasant to hear, such as "If you are close to this family, you will get COVID-19, you will die right away." In addition, some people in an area still underestimate COVID-19, such as making jokes to respondents and laughing at respondents when wearing masks and hand sanitizers as a form of implementing health protocols.

6. Respondents' feelings when infected with the coronavirus

The feeling experienced by the respondent is that sometimes he cries until he is short of breath with what he is experiencing and does not want to be a burden on the mind of his parents, who ask him every 2 hours. Other respondents are calmer when experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. They are still trying to find out how to smell again, feeling that what the respondent feels is not as scary as what is reported. The respondent is ready with the supply of vitamins he has prepared and support from his extended family to help. If anything. The respondents feel restless when they can't feel anything, feel hopeless, and subside when they see their husband calm in dealing with the symptoms he is experiencing.

7. Thoughts while infected with the coronavirus

As for the contents of the respondents' thoughts when they were infected with the coronavirus, there was anxiety and many opinions about what to do. There was a fear of being able to infect their extended family. In addition, the main thought of the respondent is the fear of dying and being left behind, which of course, is based on the experience of the respondent, such as his brother who died from Covid, and also because of the influence of the media, which does play a role in shaping thoughts like this. Respondents also initially assumed that only someone with a high level of health protocol could get it. What about those who don't heed the health protocol? As a result of the overthinking experienced by the respondent, the respondent's behavior is more over-reaction and direct towards his family to behave in a healthy manner, such as taking medicine.

8. Handling when infected with the coronavirus

In terms of handling, of course, respondents don't want to bother the people around them, so they can do it independently, such as doing Zumba at home, sunbathing outside to get vitamin D, eating fruits, and cooking themselves such as vegetables and side dishes, still taking vitamins that the doctor has recommended. Respondents

when consulting in stages. Also, in recovering from olfactory insensitivity by inhaling steam from hot water infused with eucalyptus oil.

9. Motivation to heal

   In the face of a disease that has become a global pandemic, respondents have the motivation to get well soon and be healthy again. Several explanations strengthen respondents' ability to recover from COVID-19, namely the thought of continuing their master's degree. When infected, the respondent entered the first semester. A master's degree was the desire for himself and his mother, so there was a strong urge to continue it because he felt he already had a responsibility. In addition, another motivation is that the respondent does not want anything to happen to the child she is carrying, so she must return to health and does not want to leave her young child.

10. Feelings after experiencing Covid-19

    When they recovered from the coronavirus, respondents continued to observe distance rules even with their families, such as not shaking hands, washing their dinner plates many times after eating, and not meeting their nephews, there was a little sense of being underestimated, and the respondents seemed relaxed in responding to it. In addition, respondents also provide encouragement and motivation for their friends affected or infected with the coronavirus by drinking milk and eating eggs mixed with honey.

11. Precautions to be taken so as not to be infected with the coronavirus

    After recovering from the coronavirus, the respondent continued to apply various ways so that he was not infected by the coronavirus, namely by not leaving the house unless there were essential things such as college assignments and others, after which he returned home—applying environmental hygiene and personal hygiene by showering after being outside and washing clothes that have been worn immediately. In addition, it is mandatory to have hand sanitizer ready always follow the health protocol, and take vitamins to maintain the body's immune.

Discussion

From the results that the researchers did, it can be explained that the eight respondents interpreting something are classified differently depending on their thinking skills, educational background, and life experiences that have been passed as well. Knowledge has a significant role in a person's mindset, so knowledge dramatically affects the way of acting and also the way of thinking. This kind of thing distinguishes individuals from one another, mainly when tested positive for Covid-19. As stated by the eight respondents who said they were anxious, up to afraid to die and be abandoned by their loved ones. This relates to the cognitive dissonance theory, which explains that inner conflict is caused by what the respondents believe is different or contrary to the reality experienced, causing mental imbalances and mental conditions that make them feel insecure when faced with these two different beliefs (Cancino-Montecinos, Björklund, & Lindholm, 2020; Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones, Harmon-Jones, & Levy, 2015; Williamson, Reed, & Wickham, 2020).

One's knowledge by itself will be the basis for someone to form a meaning. Awareness in constructing this meaning will encourage someone to take specific actions. Events or phenomena that each individual has experienced will become experiences. Then this will eventually become knowledge for each individual. And this knowledge will increase personal understanding. The experience that is used as the basis for individuals to take action is an experience that is attached to something because each individual has memories of the experiences of events that have been passed. The experience itself consists of negative and positive experiences. This means that positive experiences can be revisited through relationships that show warmth, acceptance, and concern for one another (Clark & Beck, 2010; Frankl, 1959). Whereas negative experiences mean the opposite.

Human motives can work consciously and unconsciously to understand how motives conflict with visible behavior (Harmon-Jones et al., 2015). Human motives are drives, desires, and other driving forces that come from within themselves when experiencing Covid-19. This means that all human behavior has a motive. Motives arise because of needs (needs). Needs can be seen as a lack of something and want to be fulfilled immediately to get a balance. This deficiency state serves as a force or impetus for a reason, which causes a person to act to fulfill a need.

To achieve meaningful healing from the impact of the coronavirus, of course, everyone has their way (Bahar, Shahriary, & Fazlali, 2021; Frankl, 1992). A person recovering is not only with drugs but the belief in oneself and support from people around who can help every survivor recover. In the family environment, there are significant aspects of love and affection. It can be said that families have strong instincts when they see that one of them is exposed to Covid. They are sure to be spontaneous in helping in any way possible to heal their relatives based on love. The last side of the family is the emotional support from the family. This is in line with the role of the family for the respondents, who are responsive to what happened to the respondent and provide what is needed by the respondent so that the respondent can survive.

When a person experiences difficulty, he needs encouragement or recognition from his social environment. Ristianti (Munawarah, Latipun, & Amalia, 2019) explains that social support is crucial in forming self-identity. Respondents were worried about the public's perception of the impact of corona on the environment. Those who lack knowledge of COVID will tend to isolate people affected by the Coronavirus. Therefore, respondents chose the city of Malang because of the support from the community that obeyed the health protocol.

In this case, the respondent has a motive to recover. There are two kinds of explanations: the Because of Off and motifs (Festinger, 1957; Harmon-Jones et al., 2015). The Cause of motive is a motive based on the reasons for the actions that have been taken, while the motif is the goal to be achieved by taking action (Darmalaksana & Garnasih, 2021). So, in this study, the because of motive that emerged from COVID-19 survivors was family, and then in order motive was the motivation to want to make the family happy.

Conclusion

The results of this study describe the life journey of COVID-19 survivors, which can be concluded as follows: In dealing with something or a problem, each person has a different way. This is due to the experience and knowledge that everyone has. so that they can sort out what is good and bad, to realize the need to achieve balance, then there is a strong urge to fulfill that need, namely motivation, and family support greatly affect the recovery rate of Corona survivors who prioritize emotional support, there is still a lack of understanding about the spread of covid-19 among the community, especially in rural areas, which results in the isolation of covid-19 survivors.

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