

## Gratitude and Anxiety In Families With Covid 19

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### ABSTRACT

Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by SARS COV 2. The SARS COV 2 virus can spread very quickly and can even cause death, making most people feel anxious. Anxiety about COVID 19 certainly has a huge impact, especially on the families of COVID 19 patients. One of the efforts to reduce anxiety is by increasing a sense of gratitude. Gratitude is one way of diverting individuals from negative psychological states to positive ones. The purpose of this study was to provide an overview of the relationship between gratitude and anxiety in the families of Covid 19 patients. This study used a quantitative descriptive method. The study participants involved 71 people (N = 71) who were selected using convenience sampling technique. Data collection in this study was conducted online using google form. This study used the HARS (Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale) scale to measure anxiety. And the adaptation of the gratitude scale according to the average size of Indonesians compiled by Listiyandini, et al. The results showed that gratitude has a significant negative measure between the level of gratitude and the reduction rate in the family of covid 19 patients (co-efficiency has = -267; p = 0.024). These results indicate that a high level of gratitude can reduce family anxiety of Covid 19 patients. The suggestion from this study is that the victim's family can increase a sense of gratitude as an effort to reduce anxiety due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Keywords: Gratitude; anxiety; family of covid 19 patients

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### INTRODUCTION

Since December 2019, the world has been shocked by a new infectious disease commonly called acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV 2) or better known as coronavirus-19 (COVID-19). The virus is quite a worry because it has quite severe symptoms especially in individuals who are impaired by immunity and spread is also very fast (Wang C, 2020; Zarghami M., 2020). Prevention efforts in the form of social distancing, maintaining body and hand hygiene, as well as government-backed policies in the form of "stay at home, work from home, and school from home", make very significant changes in all areas of human life. People who are accustomed to socializing directly (physically) become distant for fear of contracting the virus through physical contact. Like other infectious diseases, preliminary evidence suggests that COVID-19 also causes public panic and mental health stresses; Symptoms of anxiety and depression are common psychological reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic, and may be related to sociodemographic factors and sleep quality (Bao Y, 2020; Zhou SJ, 2020; Wang C, 2020; Huang Y, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has created concerns about a variety of conditions. Uncertainty and distancing yourself from the outside world has the potential to affect everyone's mental health. In a survey conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), 69.43% of respondents admitted to being very anxious when out of the house. Similarly, the massive media coverage of Covid-19 caused anxiety

for 65.03% of respondents. This is said in the publication of bps survey results titled "Social Demographic Impact of Covid-19 2020". The survey took place on April 13-20, 2020, reaching 87,379 respondents.

The definition is presented by Jeffrey S. Nevid, et al (2005) "anxiety is an emotional state that characterizes physiological distress, unpleasant tense feelings, and an apprehensive feeling that something bad is about to happen". In line with his previous opinion, Gail W. Stuart (2006) described "anxiety as an obscure and diffuse concern, relating to feelings of uncertainty and helplessness".

During the pandemic quite a lot of research on anxiety. However, the studies focused primarily on covid-19-related mental health issues in covid-19 patients, the general population, medical staff, children, pregnant women with husbands, people with mental illness, and isolated individuals (Dai, 2020; Rajkumar, 2020; Chen, 2020; Ahorsu, 2020; Chang, 2020). From each study showed very significant levels of anxiety during the covid-19 pandemic and from the research that has been done, there has been no research on anxiety in the family of covid 19.

According to Lee (2019) anxiety levels during covid-19 can be treated by increasing gratitude. Even treatment against anxiety by increasing gratitude can be a simple therapy, free, and perhaps most important of all, it has no negative side effects as well as this treatment can last a long time.

Based on the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (2009), gratitude comes from Latin, namely *gratus* or *gratitude* which means thankfulness or pleasing. According to Peterson and Seligman (2004), gratitude is a feeling of gratitude and happiness in response to a gift, whether it is a tangible benefit from a particular person or a moment of peace gained from natural beauty.

Being grateful makes one have a more positive outlook and a broader perspective on life, which is the view that life is a gift (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Watkins et al (2003) states that one's gratitude can indicate how far he or she feels (well-being) judging by satisfaction with life.

Several studies examining the effect of gratitude on anxiety levels showed positive results. Some studies show high gratitude can lower anxiety levels (Petrocchi, 2016; Creeg, 2020; Umi, 2017).

The purpose of this writing is to know the relationship between being suitable for anxiety in the families of covid 19 patients.

## METHOD

### Research Design

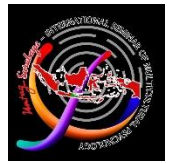
This type of research is quantitative descriptive with correlational research methods, namely research using characteristics that are in the form of a relationship between two or more variables. The purpose of this study is to investigate variations in a variable related to variations in one or more other variables based on correlation coefficients (Azwar, 1999). The correlational research design in this study was used to describe the relationship between gratitude and anxiety in the families of covid 19 patients.

### Participants

Sampling technique in research is convenience sampling which is where respondents are selected based on their ease and availability (Creswell, 2019). The subjects in this study were 71 respondents who came from the families of covid 19 patients and were willing to be respondents.

### Research Instruments

The measuring instruments in this study used a likert scale with five answer options namely Strongly Agree (SS), Agree (S), Hesitation (R), Disagree (TS) and Strongly Disagree (STS). In this study, the anxiety scale adapted from HARS (Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale) was compiled in the



Indonesian version by Ramdan (2018) consisting of 14 items with a reliability value of 0.859. Meanwhile, the scale of dependence in this study uses scale adaptations compiled by Listiyandini et al (2015) that make up the scale of ness by adjusting the characteristics of the Indonesian population that there is an aspect of godliness in it. Aitem of ness consists of 22 items with a reliability value of 0.908.

### Research Procedures

The data collection process in this study was conducted online on November 10 – 14, 2020 using google form. Google form contains informed consent and the scale of research distributed using Whatsapp social media. The scale is only distributed to families infected with covid-19. Before distribution, respondents were asked about the willingness to fill out google form. After respondents are willing participants are given access to google form links that can be filled in using PC/smartphones. After the respondent filled out the anxiety and emergency scale, the research data tabulation was done. Prior to the collection of research data, the scale of anxiety and the scale of immunity in the test first validity and reliability to 40 research samples. The validity test of anxiety scale aitem and the scale of immunity is performed with a discrimination test using ibm SPSS version 26 for Windows program. The minimum limit used to determine the validity of an item is to use a corrected item-total correlation index greater than  $>0.300$ . In addition to validity tests, reliability tests are also carried out. The reliability test in this study used Cronbach Alpha reliability based on internal consistency techniques formulated by Cronbach with the help of the IBM Statistical Product for Social Science (SPSS) computer program version 26 for Windows.

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique in this study is spearman brown correlation analysis technique because it is a non parametric statistic. Because of the sampling technique in this study in a non random sampling way. Another analyst used is a test of data normality with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method. The results of the normality test analysis show normality. The second phase is a test of Spearman Brown's correlation analysis with the aim of knowing the relationship between anxiety and ness in the families of covid-19 patients. Analysis using the help of IBM Statistical Product for Social Science (SPSS) version 26 for Windows.

## RESULTS

The subjects in this study were families of patients infected with covid-19 and willing to be respondents. The number of respondents in this study was 71 people. Respondents who were able to fill in this study were families of covid 19 patients including fathers/mothers, spouses, and children of covid 19 patients.

Table 1. Data Description (N = 71)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	19	26,76 %
Female	52	73,24 %

The aitem reliability test uses Cronbach Alpha reliability to obtain a valid item. Results from the aitem/try out test yielded 14 anxiety items from 20 initial items and 22 aitems of 30 initial items

Table 2. Number of Item and Reliability Measuring Instruments

Measure	Number of items	Reliability
Anxiety	14	0,859
Gratitude	22	0,908

### Assumption Test

#### a. Normality Test

Results from the spread normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality. Since  $N < 100$ , in this case the rule used is if  $p > 0.05$  then the spread is declared normal and if  $p < 0.05$  spread is declared abnormal (Hadi, 2004). Distribution test calculation using IBM Statistical Product for Social Science (SPSS) version 26 for Windows. Spread normality test results for anxiety variables using Shapiro-Wilk Test obtained significance  $p = 0.477 > 0.05$  which means normal distributed data spread

Table 3. Normality Test

Variabels	Shapiro-Wilk			Description
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	
Anxiety	.984	71	.477	Normal

#### b. Homogeneity Test

The homogeneity test results using Anova obtained significance of 0.388 ( $p > 0.05$ ). This means that the distribution of group data to be compared is homogeneous.

Table 4. Homogeneity Test

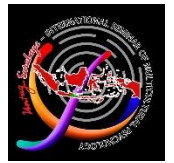
Levene Statistic	Df	Sig	Description
.754	69	.388	Homogen

#### c. Hypothesis Test

Spearman Brown correlation technique is a statistical test tool that can be used when the data of both variables is ordinal and based on the population does not have to be distributed normally.

Table 5. Pearson Product Moment Correlation

		Gratitude		Anxiety
Spearman's rho	Gratitude	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.267*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.024
		N	71	71
	Anxiety	Correlation Coefficient	-.267*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.
		N	71	71



\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of the analysis of the research data showed a correlation of Spearman Brown of = -267 with  $p = 0.024$  at the level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ). This means that between a life-free variable and an anxiety-bound variable has a negative and significant correlation. Based on these results shows increased ness can lower anxiety levels with significant results

## DISCUSSION

A growing number of recent research findings suggest that the disposition to be grateful has strong associations with various aspects of mental health. Grateful people not only tend to show more fulfilling and meaningful relationships (Algoe, Gabel, & Meisel, 2010), but also lower levels of many psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety (Kendler et al., 2003). However, research on possible mediation factors The relationship between grateful nature and mental health is still rare.

The results found a significant negative correlation between the level of emergency and anxiety levels in the families of covid-19 patients. These results are the same as those expressed by some researchers who have noted a special relationship between gratitude and anxiety. Waktins et al. (2003) found gratitude as opposed to anxiety, depression. Similarly, McCullough et al. (2002) (N=238) found the nature of gratitude was negatively related to anxiety and depression, as measured using the Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Spencer, 1982). Some observations can be developed to explain the relationship between grateful attitudes and positive self-relationships. McCullough et al. (2002) suggested that seeing one's self-esteem as a recipient of other people's generosity can make one feel valued, valued, and with a sense of "worth," which can increase self-esteem, reduce self-criticism and a sense of worthlessness. A correlational study with many respondents on the role of religion in mental illness (N=2621) found that 'gratitude' was one associated with a reduced risk of a number of internalization and externalization disorders, including major depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and phobias (Kendler et al., 2003).

These results also reinforce Lee's assertion (2019) that gratitude can be used as an alternative therapy to lower anxiety levels. Lee (2019) also states that one can feel gratitude in a variety of ways and intensity. There are many individual benefits that may be experienced gratefully, including improved physical and psychological health, increased happiness, life satisfaction, positive mood, meaning in life, and quality of sleep. The nature of gratitude is also associated with a more positive outlook on life, increasing optimism and hope, and having a more positive interpretation of social situations. This positive perspective can prevent a person from overfocusing on a negative problem or experience, so in this case it can lower anxiety levels even depression over time.

Other studies show that grateful attitudes are also associated in certain ways of dealing with one another, particularly with higher self-confidence, and less self-criticism and self-attack. Grateful, as a "other person-oriented" process, has been found to promote prosocial behavior (Tsang, 2006) and improve relationships with others (Algoe, Fredrickson, & Gable, 2013; Williams & Bartlett, 2014). This discovery suggests that gratitude is also associated with an increased "relationship with the self", in the form of a more positive and loving way of treating yourself when something is wrong in life, which partly explains why grateful people are also depressed and anxious. Recent findings suggest that grateful disposition is significantly associated with higher oxytocin secretion, a neuropeptide that has been shown to lead to motivation and behavior-related social approaches (Algoe & Way, 2014). In addition, Colonnello and heinrichs (2014) have shown that oxytocin administration affects the business stage of self-related information processing, increasing self-attribution of positive adjectives, thereby

increasing self-representation. Cardoso, Ellenbogen, and Linnen (2012) have also reported acute intranasal oxytocin effects in improving positive self-perception of personality, with participants in oxytocin conditions showing extraversion and openness to higher experiences (traits characterized by positive emotions, warmth, trust, altruism, and openness to values and ideas) than participants in placebo conditions. Similarly, the kind of calm and peaceful positive feelings associated with feeling noticed, reassured, and warmly supported, rather than harshly criticized, are also associated with the neurohormonal profile of increased oxytocin (Depue & Morrone-Strupinsky, 2005; Gilbert, 2010). Thus, it is possible that a grateful mindset can facilitate the activation of cognitive and emotional processes that exhibit similar physiological psycho profiles, such as warmth and self-assurance (Gilbert, 2014).

According to Lee (2019) when gratitude is increased it will activate the medial prefrontal cortex area. This part of the brain is located in the frontal lobe where the two hemispheres of the brain meet. The medial pre-frontal cortex is associated with socialization and pleasure, seeing other people's perspectives, empathy, and feelings of relief. When activated, this area of the brain can increase positive emotions and protect against feelings of anxiety and stress, leading to a calmer mood.

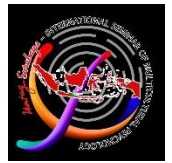
The disposition of gratitude is a protective factor against depression and anxiety because it is significantly grateful to reduce feelings of incapableness and self-denigrateness, in addition to feeling a lower hatred of either self-hatred or others. Being grateful spurs individuals to show kindness, understanding, support, and compassion for themselves when a problem occurs. So in this case gratitude can be categorized as a useful treatment to overcome anxiety in many people, gratitude can be an important supplement to improve symptoms. Evidence supports that gratitude interventions - activities that help a person focus and increase gratitude - drastically minimize depression and improve socialization. There is an increased use of gratitude interventions in clinical settings as additional therapies. This intervention has a lasting positive effect (Wood, 2008). Gratitude interventions can offer a safe and low-risk alternative approach to combating anxiety and depression. Unlike treatment, gratitude is simple, free, and perhaps most important of all, it has no negative side effects.

Lee (2019) also expressed gratitude can also make a person more able to accept the situation and can lead to increased awareness. People are more likely to be generous, kind, and helpful when they are grateful. This can strengthen relationships and improve the family environment. Research shows that grateful people "find, remind, and bind" each other, because gratitude helps them find others who have the potential to get high-quality relationships and reminds them of the positive aspects of their current relationship. With gratitude, the family can provide positive support and care for covid 19 patients and not make covid 19 patients more worried.

The results of this study reinforce that high levels of emergency can decrease anxiety levels so that this study is expected to inform the entire community, especially families, parents, and friends who are close friends of covid 19 patients or families.

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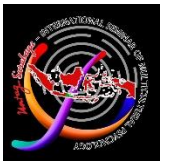
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