Life Skills and Life Meaning for Employees Affected by The Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Each individual is responsible for himself. Surviving in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic is our responsibility. The Covid-19 pandemic, which has an impact on many sectors, forces individuals to think quickly to face various changes. Individual unpreparedness to face change will have an impact on mental health problems. One of the factors that affect mental health today is the meaning of life. This study aims to determine the relationship between Life Skills and the meaning of life. This quantitative study involved 60 employees who were affected by the pandemic, such as layoffs (layoffs), contract terminations, being laid off and working hours reduction. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling. Retrieval of research data using a meaningful life scale with reference to the Logotherapy theory proposed by Viktor Frankl and the Lifeskill scale using the aspects put forward by Hadjam and Widhiarso (2011). The analysis technique used in this study is the product moment correlation analysis. The results of the study show that there is a significant relationship between life skills and meaningfulness for employees who experience the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Meaningful life; Lifeskill; The covid-19 pandemic

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 outbreak was identified as entering Indonesia since March until now and it is still ongoing and there is no certainty when it will end. The Indonesian government responded to the COVID-19 outbreak by taking preventive steps to implement policies to avoid crowds (social distancing) which then became distancing when interacting with other people (physical distancing) and appealed to reduce activities outside the house if there was no need that was deemed important

Many sectors that have been affected are the COVID-19 epidemic. One of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is the weakening of the people's economy. Many people experience termination of employment with the company where they work because the company is no longer carrying out production activities or reducing its productivity. So that they carry out various policies in the form of reducing working hours, being temporarily laid off, cutting wages to terminating employment with various purposes for reorganization or effectiveness of company work during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Finance (Kemenkeu) noted that as of April 11, 2020 more than 1.5 million employees dropped out of work or were laid off (layoffs) and were laid off. Where 1.2 million workers come from the formal sector, 265,000 from the informal sector(Mediatama, 2020).

Meanwhile, according to the Ministry of Manpower (Kemnaker) until July 31, 2020, the number of workers who were dismissed (PHK) and laid off reached more than 3.5 million both formal and informal workers(Dewanti, 2020).

With the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on work and the government's appeal to carry out social restrictions and self-isolation or quarantine, it has created many new problems in society, especially when these conditions occur suddenly so there is no preparation to deal with them both materially and non-materially. For the impact of material unpreparedness, it can be identified and measured and can be predicted for later anticipation and handling steps. However, for non-material, namely the mental health of the community, it is very difficult to identify and the resulting impacts cannot be measured comprehensively. Even though mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be paid attention to in order to achieve comprehensive health because there is a lot of information about COVID-19, which transmission is very fast and there is a high increase in mortality which can cause problems that lead to mental disorders.

Preventive and curative measure for mental health need to be taken by the government considering the importance of mental health is an important aspect for overall health in fighting COVID-19. This is in accordance with the research conducted by Ridlo (2020) which states that the Government can play a role in integrating the implementation of the COVID-19 pandemic policy such as integrating mental health services into community-based services so that community productivity will be maintained both during the pandemic and post-COVID-19 pandemic(Ridlo, 2020).. In addition, the public also needs to realize the importance of maintaining mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, this is supported by research conducted by Norhanifah, et al. (2020) which from the activities carried out it is hoped that the community will be able to know, recognize and overcome mental health problems(Norhapifah, 2020). Because basically mental health is one's own responsibility.

The COVID-19 pandemic has occurred and this condition cannot be changed, an easy thing that can be done to maintain mental health in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic is to determine the attitude of the situation that is being experienced, namely by finding the meaning of life. Debatz (1995) argues that meaning is an important issue in human existence, especially in modern society(Sumanto, t.t.). Many individuals during this pandemic experienced existential problems, especially individuals who experienced termination of employment. Work, which is aexistence form, must stop due to a reduction in working hours, temporarily home or even termination of employment coupled with government policies regarding social distancing and physical distancing causing individuals to carry out many activities at home for a long time and possibly with the same activity. This condition has the potential for individuals to experience existential frustration, namely not having certainty about what to do, so according to Muzambik (2020) one of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a low life expectancy(Muzambik, 2020). When this happens, life will feel so heavy that it loses the meaning of its life.

Everyone wants a happy life, happy life is a life full of meaning. Bastaman (2007) states that the meaning of life is things that are considered very important and valuable and provide special value for someone, so that they are worthy of being a purpose in life(Bastaman, 2007). Feelings of meaning and happiness will arise in a person when they can find and fulfill these things. The condition of employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, whether they have experienced a reduction in working hours, cutting wages to layoffs, is a condition that is unpleasant, sad and even makes someone worse off. However, these employees can still feel happy if they are able to find the meaning of these conditions, for example interpreting life that with a pandemic, they can have a lot of time with their
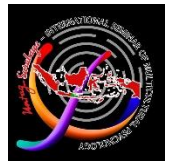
family which has been used a lot for work, or with this pandemic, they can have time to look for new opportunities that have so far been. already worked on. All conditions can find meaning in life. This is reinforced by Frankl (2003) who states that meaningful life is a strong desire to carry out useful activities, while a useful life is life that continuously gives meaning to oneself and others(Frankl, 2003).

Employees who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in their work must be able to adapt in responding to these sudden changes in order to still feel valuable, have a purposeful life goal. According to Sagone&Caroli, (2014) When faced with adversity, a person with a life goal tends to be more resilient, not easily give in to temptations, and is better able to recover from negative experiences(Yuliawati, 2020). Koeswara (in Bukhori) The meaning of life is an individual's appreciation of his or her existence, contains things that are considered important, felt valuable, and can give a special meaning which is the purpose of life so as to make the individual meaningful and valuable(Bukhori, 2012).

According to Frankl in Bastaman (2007), the meaning of life can be found by the three values of the sources of the meaning of life, namely, first, creative values, namely creative activities, work to create and carry out duties and obligations responsibly. The meaning of life can be found through work and work. Second, experiential values, namely belief and appreciation of the values of truth, virtue, beauty, faith and religion as well as love. There are individuals who find meaning in their lives from their belief in God. There are also individuals who find meaning in their lives when pursuing their hobby. Finally, attitude values (Attitudinal value), namely to accept with full grit, patience and courage all forms of suffering that cannot be avoided anymore. Employees who have experienced the impact of the pandemic in their work can take a stand to accept the company's policies with patience and dare to take new opportunities in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Life meaning, which is a component of mental health, can operate optimally if individuals have life skills. Life skills contain individual knowledge and skills in dealing with and overcoming life problems. WHO (1999) defines life skills as a culturally appropriate set of psychosocial skills that contribute to personal and social development, prevention of health and social problems and protection of human rights(WHO, 1999). According to Hadjam (2003) mental health can be identified through psychological constructs that can prevent psychological symptoms from arising. These constructs are the elements of a person's Life Skills. According to Hadjam and Widhiarso (2011) Life skills are the interaction of various individual knowledge and skills so that they are able to live independently and have the courage to face all problems without feeling pressured and the ability to solve problems proactively and creatively. During this pandemic, many employees have experienced the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in their work, so it has become new pressure for individuals who experience it. However, the response to the impact received varies depending on the life skills they have. The individual who has optimized his Life Skills will survive under stressful conditions and vice versa.

In this study, mental health is represented by the meaning of an individual's life who uses 6 dimensions of life skills from Hadjam and Widhiarso (2011) which have an influence on mental health, namely emotional skills, social skills, self-esteem, communication, critical thinking, and problem solving. These six dimensions are used as a reference in making a scale to measure Life Skills. Emotional skill is the ability to motivate oneself and to withstand frustration, be able to regulate mood and keep the burden of stress from stifling the ability to think. Social skills are the abilities possessed by individuals to interact socially with the people around them. Self-esteem is an individual's positive

assessment or appreciation of himself. Individuals who have high self-esteem will view their lives more optimistically so that their quality of life will also be high. Communication is the ability to communicate effectively with others to convey ideas, feelings and behaviors. Critical thinking refers to the ability to analyze and sort out information, problems and surrounding situations. Solving the problem of an individual's ability to solve problems related to life's pressures can be done by accepting pressure, tolerating it, avoiding it or minimizing its impact.

From some of the explanations above, it describes the importance of paying attention to mental health in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially mental health which is directly affected, such as employees who experience reduced working hours, reduced wages, and even termination of employment. Mental health in this study is represented by the meaning of life. One of the efforts to find meaning in life is by having life skills. It means that someone who has Life Skills will easily find meaning in his life so that his mental health will be maintained. On the other hand, individuals who do not have life skills are predicted to experience difficulties in adapting to sudden changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, so they are very vulnerable to having a low life expectancy which leads to mental disorders. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between life skills and life meaning in employees who experience the impact of COVID-19 at work.

METHOD

Research design

This non-experimental research uses correlational quantitative research, which is to determine the relationship between Life Skills and the meaning of life in employees affected by COVID-19.According to Azwar, research with a quantitative approach emphasizes its analysis on numerical data (numbers) which are processed by statistical methods(Azwar, 2007).

Research Samples

The sampling technique in this study was purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono, purposive sampling is a technique of determining the sample with certain considerations in order to fit the research objectives(Sugiyono, 2011). Roscoe (1975) eligible subjects in a study ranged from 30-500 subjects. Subjects who participated in this study were 60 people with the criteria of being employees who experienced the impact of COVID-19 at work in the form of salary cuts, reduced working hours, being temporarily laid off to termination of employment. The reason for choosing subjects with these criteria is that the sector most affected by the COVID-19 period is the economic sector. Many people whose economies have weakened due to the impact of the pandemic at work. This condition greatly affects the mental health of the individual.

Research Instruments

This study has two variables, namely life skills as the independent variable and meaningful life as the dependent variable. The data collection method in this research uses two scales, namely the meaningful life scale and the life skills scale. The scale has a Likert scale consisting of five answer choices, namely Strongly agree with a score of 5, agree with a score of 4, Doubt with a score of 3, disagree with a score of 2 and strongly disagree with a score of 1.To measure the meaning of life, researchers develop items which is based on the theory of Viktor Frankl which includes creative values, experiential values, and attitudinal values. To reveal life skills, researchers used aspects of life skills from Hadjam and Widhiarso's research (2011) which consisted of six aspects, namely emotional skills, social skills, self-esteem, communication, critical thinking and problem solving.

Research procedure

The procedure in this research begins with the preparation stage, namely making a life meaningful scale with 24 items and a life skills scale with 24 items. The research was conducted on 14-16 November 2020 using google form. This study uses used trials, which means that the results of the trials are directly used to test the research hypothesis. The use of the trial scale used is based on the consideration that the scale used by the measuring instrument is considered to represent every indicator in the study as well as considering its effectiveness in research due to the limited time of the research both from the subject and from the researcher. By using this unused trial, the researcher does not need to waste time, effort, and money for the purposes of testing alone(Hadi, 2000). Furthermore, taking the respondent's answer data in excel form and analyzing the data using the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 21.0 for windows program.

Data analysis technique

Respondent data that has been collected, tested the validity and reliability of the two research scales. From the results of these tests, for the meaningfulness scale of life, 21 items were valid. For the life skills scale, 22 items were declared valid. Then it is analyzed by performing an assumption test which includes a normality test and a linearity test. Then the research hypothesis is tested to test the relationship between the meaningfulness of life variables and life skills using Pearson product moment correlation analysis.

RESULT

In the distribution scale carried out by the researcher, two research scales were analyzed. Based on this, an overview of the age range and gender of the research subject is obtained, which will be explained in more detail in the research subject description table below:

Description of Research Subjects

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	44	73%
Female	16	27%
Total	60	100

Age	Frequency	Percentage
21 – 30	35	58%
31 – 40	21	35%
>40	4	7%
Total	60	100

Assumption Test

The researcher tested the assumptions before testing the hypothesis, namely doing the normality test and linearity test. The results of these two tests qualify for the product moment correlation hypothesis test.

a) Normality Test

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistics	df	Sig.	Ket
Meaningful life	0.989	60	0.885	Normal

The results of the distribution normality test for the meaningfulness of life using the Shapiro-Wilk test obtained a significance of p = 0.885> 0.05. This means that the distribution of data is normally distributed

b) Linearity Test

Variable	*F*	*Sig.*	Ket
Life skills – Meaningful life	1.303	0.259	Linier

The results of the linearity test for the relationship between the life skills variable and the meaningfulness of life obtained a significance of 0.259 (p> 0.05). This means that there is a linear relationship between the variables of Life Skills and the meaning of life.

Hypothesis Test

Variable	N	Rxy	Sig
Life skills – Meaningful life	60	0.864	0.000

Based on the analysis that has been used using the product moment correlation test, a score was obtained (rxy = 0.864, p = 0.000). Because p <0.01, the results of the analysis are very significant. Thus, there is a very significant positive correlation between life skills and life meaning.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of data analysis that has been carried out on research data, it is found that there is a significant positive relationship between life skills and life meaning in employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic at work (rxy = 0.864; p = 0.000 <0.01). Thus, it can be said that employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in jobs with life skills tend to be able to find meaning in their lives. Which is when an individual finds meaning in his life, it is predicted that the individual will avoid mental disorders. Likewise, when employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic at work do not have life skills, they tend to have a low life expectancy which is very susceptible to mental disorders.

Employees who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have life skills that can be used to find meaning in their lives so that their mental health is maintained during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are 6 six dimensions of life skills according to Hadjam and Widhiarso (2011) that employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic can have in their work, namely emotional skills, social skills, self-esteem, communication, critical thinking and problem solving. In terms of emotional skills, individuals can manage emotions by trying to take lessons from everything that has happened and are able to have valuable things. This can motivate oneself even though they feel sad or disappointed due to the impact of the pandemic in their work. This internal motivation can make individuals survive so they avoid stress. Furthermore, the existence of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on work should not make individuals sink into and shut themselves up. Individuals can still interact intensely with the
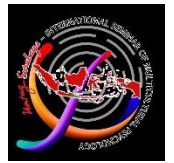
environment according to the government's appeal.Even though the individual's capacity has changed due to the impact, there are still many things that can be done, for example by doing many new useful things every day from home so that the economy that is predicted to weaken during the pandemic is still guaranteed, for example by starting entrepreneurship.

Individual skills can be possessed by self-esteem. Assessment or positive individual appreciation of himself. Individuals who have high self-esteem will view their lives more optimistically so that their quality of life will also be high. Employees who have experienced the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, experienced the worst impact, namely termination of employment, still have a bright future, so they must remain enthusiastic and see everything from the positive side this will make it easier for individuals to overcome all the problems that will be faced later. Individuals who are able to think critically and positively will easily grasp opportunities even in bad conditions.

Life skills are interactions between skills and knowledge possessed by individuals so that they are able to independently face all the problems they face. Individuals who have the life skills to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will look for new ways to get out of their difficult conditions, namely to face changes in their jobs. Looking for ways to survive with the capital of skills and knowledge possessed. Then analyzing and taking lessons from everything that happens and making progress steps and being responsible for his life, those are the values in life's meaning. The meaning of life is one of the predictors in an individual's mental health.

Research on the relationship between life skills and mental health has been conducted by Kaligis et.al (2009) which found life skills training has a positive effect on mental health. Where in this study using a module to improve mental health in the form of a self-esteem module, a module to recognize and deal with emotions, a module for dealing with stress, a module for dealing with peer pressure and a module for conflict resolution(Kaligis dkk., 2009). Hadjam and Widhiarso (2011) show that life skills are proven to be able to improve the quality of individual mental health which is manifested in quality and life satisfaction(Hadjam & Widhiarso, 2015). Research on the meaning of life and mental health has also been conducted by Bukhori (2012) which shows a significant positive correlation between the meaning of life and mental health(Bukhori, 2012). The importance of life skills to mental health which in this study is represented by the meaning of life is also supported by the research results of the quadratic correlation coefficient (R2) of 0.746. This shows that the life skills in this study have an effect of 74.6%. while only 25.4% which is influenced by other factors.

Based on the description of the analysis results above, it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between Life Skills and meaningfulness of life. These results can be interpreted that if an individual has the life skills to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on his job, it will be easy to find the meaning of his life so as to prevent mental disorders, and vice versa. Having life skills during the COVID-19 pandemic is indeed necessary to maintain mental stability because in the process of the adaptation journey known as the new normal era, there are many things that can cause a person to experience mental disorders. Apart from originating from the economic sector that has been described in this study, economic problems also cause many children to drop out of school due to constraints on school fees and the problems that occur subsequently touch social problems with the large number of unemployed which then lead to crimes that occur in the community. From the education sector, a very striking change is the teaching system, which was initially taught face-to-face and finally online. Not a few experience boredom, boredom, confusion or even consider it a burden with this online

teaching model because there are more and more tasks that must be done in order to gain an understanding of a subject matter. The discussion about the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on various sectors affecting mental health is very broad, this research only focuses on the economic sector, especially on the impact of the pandemic on jobs. With the limitations of the scope of this study, it is hoped that this research will be able to provide a reference for research replication or develop this research with other independent variables that affect mental health which in this study are life meaningfulness such as social support, resilience, religiosity, self-efficacy and psychological interventions for mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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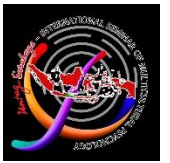
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