

The Relationship Between Emotional Maturity and Altruism In Covid-19 Volunteers

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ABSTRACT

Altruism is a positive and necessary characteristic especially during crisis condition; Covid-19 pandemic being one of the example. A degree of altruism is needed to mobilize people to help each other by providing necessary care. Volunteers of Covid-19 pandemic, especially, have been driven to provide help and crisis-related actions by alleviating the suffering of others on a voluntary basis without expecting anything in return. In the midst of global anxiety toward the disease, Covid-19 volunteers from over the world still provide necessary assistance and support to Covid-19 patients and related community impacted by the pandemic. Studies have identified factors influencing altruism, which are: empathy, mood, emotional maturity, situational and personal characteristics. This study aims to contribute to the discussion of altruism in the context of Covid-19 pandemic, by examining relationship between emotional maturity and altruism in Covid-19 volunteers in East Java, Indonesia. The subject of this research are Covid-19 volunteers who were based in East Java and who work either in hospitals that handle Covid-19 patients or those who provide pro-bono services within the Covid-19 crisis intervention framework in the country. A total sample of 125 volunteers were taken using purposive sampling technique. This research utilizes non-experimental quantitative method with a correlational approach. The questionnaire-based data collection technique was presented in the form of a Likert scale consisting of an altruism scale, and a scale of emotional maturity. Hypothesis testing was carried out by Pearson's product moment analysis techniques. The result of the analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional maturity and altruism.

Keywords: Altruism, emotional maturity, volunteer, Covid-19 pandemic

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INTRODUCTION

According to BNPB, the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency (2014), a volunteer is a person or group of people who have the ability and concern to work voluntarily and sincerely in disaster management efforts. During the Covid-19 outbreak, spontaneous volunteers were present since the first case was announced in Indonesia. Some were working by their sole organization, organizing themselves in small numbers, and some others gather through communities and associations with the aim of trying to help as much as they could. The involvement of volunteers is needed, but in the paradigm of infectious diseases handling, this voluntary work needs to be accommodated so that it is not counterproductive, namely through volunteer channels and by establishing clear guidelines for providing assistance. The acceptance of Covid-19 volunteers is officially carried out through recruitment organized by the task force for handling Covid-19 and institutions appointed by the Indonesian government. Volunteers are divided into two groups, namely

medical and non-medical volunteers. Medical volunteers are volunteers who have competencies in the health sector such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, etc. The non-medical Covid-19 volunteers are volunteers who come from other field of professionals. Volunteers who have been declared accepted will receive training for handling Covid-19.

Covid-19 volunteers have their respective roles, including a) helping to disseminate accurate information to the public, b) helping to educate and provide psychological support to reduce community panic during the Covid-19 outbreak, c) to assist in organizing and directing people who need information regarding the test flow as well as the flow of actions in the community and hospitals, d) assisting in providing information needed by OTG (those who are contracting the Covid-19 without any symptoms and ODP (those who have close contacts with someone(s) contracting the Covid-19 virus which carry out self-quarantine, e) assisting in channeling the basic needs of the community, especially OTG and ODP. in home quarantine and vulnerable groups, and f) for medical volunteers, these volunteers can provide support for doctors, nurses, hospital workers, ambulance workers, etc. If needed, trained medical volunteers can carry out prevention education and rapid tests to the OTG group and public facilities using PPE (non-sterile, single-use masks and gloves) and the test results are reported through a reporting mechanism as an infection control effort (bnpn.go.id, 2020).

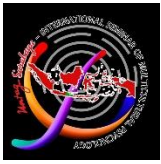
The behavior of unconditional help is closely related to the image of volunteers. Helpful behavior is often juxtaposed with the terms prosocial and altruism. Prosocial is a term for general helping behavior with the aim of improving the welfare of others. However, the study of helping behavior in Covid-19 volunteers is more suitable with the term altruism because altruism requires risks that must be accepted by the helper, where the most common risk is contracting covid-19 virus.

In times of crisis like today, the attitude of altruism that arises must come from oneself because this will affect the performance carried out while being a volunteer. In addition, volunteers must be able to control emotions in dealing with various things, so that the behavior that arises is not due to a moment's desire but has been carefully thought out. Quoting from the Idionline news on June 18, 2020, the Medical Coordinator of the Wisma Atlet Hospital, dr. Tati ...(add last name), said that at the beginning of the recruitment of medical volunteers, the obstacles faced were that it was difficult for volunteers to get permission from their parents or family. Many volunteers who have registered then resigned because they do not get permission from their family members, even though there was compensation provided by the government. There were also volunteers who- after joining for a few days- felt panic and afraid of contracting that they decided to quit. Volunteers who came on a voluntary basis and possess a sincere desire to help and serve at the start of the pandemic were only 5 teams, each team numbering 5-6 people, while the patients queuing to be served were approximately 250 patients (idionline.org, 2020)

Altruism can be defined as an action of sacrifice for the welfare of others regardless of social and material rewards for themselves (Baron and Byrne, 2005). According to Myers (2012), altruism is a desire to help others without considering their own interests. Myers adds that people who are altruistic are people who care and want to help others even if there is no benefit offered or there is no hope of getting something back.

Altruism is a behavior that volunteers can identify with. Volunteer is someone who sincerely- because of the calling of his conscience- give what he or she has (energy, time, property, etc.) to the community as a manifestation of social responsibility without expecting anything in the form of reward (wages), position, power, or interests or career (Melina, 2012).

Covid-19 volunteers are different from other disaster volunteers. Becoming a Covid-19 volunteer has two consequences. The positive side of it is that, apart from being able to help others, they receive acknowledgement for their contribution and, in some cases, financial compensation from the government. On the other hand, these volunteers are easily impacted by negative stigma from



society, exclusion, and unquestionably the risk of the virus infection and even death. The number of deaths of medical volunteers in Indonesia until August 1, 2020, was reported reaching 153 cases (cnnindonesia.com, 2020).

Among several factors influencing altruistic behavior (for example, Nielsen, 2010), emotional maturity is deemed important in the context of Covid-19 pandemic intervention actions, due to various internal and external pressures faced by volunteers. Internally, some of these volunteers are challenged by resistance from family members in relation to their contribution in Covid-19 intervention activities (due to the high risk of contracting the virus). Externally, stigma, which leads to social exclusion tends to yield a feeling of being unappreciated by the community, which can hamper the ability to provide optimum care. In this regard, possessing emotional maturity is regarded as important so that volunteers can maintain positive attitudes regarding their main purpose and also the ability to control his or her emotions so that enabling them to carry out duties properly. Hurlock (2010) describes that emotional maturity is a state of having reached an adult level of emotional development which implies emotional control in social situations. Emotional maturity is also defined as individual's ability to use his/her emotions properly and be able to channel his/her emotions to useful outlets, rather than directing to or eliminating the emotions from him/herself (Davidoff, 1991). Individuals who have emotional maturity are characterized by their ability to control emotions, their use of critical mental functions and the development of self-understanding.

Researchers have identified relationships between emotional maturity and altruistic or prosocial behaviors. Asih (2010) conducted study on prosocial behavior in terms of empathy and emotional maturity. Using high school teachers as her subjects, her research shows a significant relationship between emotional maturity and prosocial behavior. Brar (2017) conducted research on altruistic behavior among adolescents in relation to their emotional maturity. The study found a significant and positive relationship between altruistic behavior and emotional maturity in these adolescents.

This study examines the relationship between altruism and emotional maturity in Covid-19 volunteers. The hypothesis proposed in this study is that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and altruism in Covid-19 volunteers. Importance of this study comes from the fact that a degree of altruism is needed to be able to carry out volunteering work during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, but yet its relationship with emotional maturity was not yet proven in this context. The results of this study are hoped to provide a preliminary overview of how the variables relate to each other so that an understanding can be developed to propose an input in the process of volunteers recruitment and selection.

METHOD

This research is a quantitative non-experimental study using a correlational design. This study utilizes one independent variable and one dependent variable and each of these variables was measured using a questionnaire. The subjects in this study were Covid-19 volunteers who were involved in crisis response intervention during Covid-19 outbreak in East Java, Indonesia. Criteria for the inclusion of subjects for this study was the following: those volunteers who registered on their own accord and involved in providing service during the outbreak, either in hospital settings or other helping framework within the crisis intervention initiatives during the Covid19 pandemic. The total population based on data on the admission of BKD East Java volunteers was as many as 898. Relevant to Arikunto's suggestion (2002) regarding the size of sample, it is concluded that if the number of subjects is large, it should be sufficient to take at least 10-15% from the total population.

The sample in this study was 125, which reflect almost 14% of the population. Purposive sampling technique was employed in this research.

The data collection was conducted by spreading questionnaires to respondents. The instruments used in this study were presented in the form of Likert scales by using four alternative answers, namely: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The Likert scale is appropriate to be used to measure attitudes, opinions and perceptions of a person or group of people about social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2011). Two scales were utilized in this study: the altruism scale and the emotional maturity scale. Results consist of total number of rating given by respondents in each scale. Higher number of total response in altruism scale indicates high altruism and a higher number of total response in emotional maturity scale indicates a higher degree of individual's emotional maturity.

Normality assumption tests were carried out on 50 subjects to observe the validity of the items using the Pearson's product moment technique. The validity test was used to choose valid items to be used in the final instruments.

The proposed hypothesis was statistically tested using Pearson's product moment analysis techniques to test relationship between variables. All statistical calculations in this study were conducted using SPSS version 26 calculations.

RESULT

The data collection process was carried out from 10-23 November 2020 using self-designed Google form. Validity tests of research instruments conducted on 50 respondents showed that the majority of items are valid and reliable. The arrangement of the altruism scale, which originally consisted of 36 items, were modified into 21 items due to some missing items. The item coefficients ranged from 0.324 to 0.719 with a significance level of 5%. Meanwhile, the emotional maturity scale which initially consisted of 42 items were reduced to 28 items because 12 items were found to be invalid. The item coefficients range from 0.314 - 0.633 with a significance level of 5%.

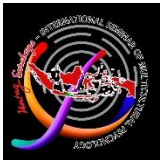
Before testing the hypothesis, a normality assumption test was carried out using the Pearson's product moment analysis. The data is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Normality Test Data

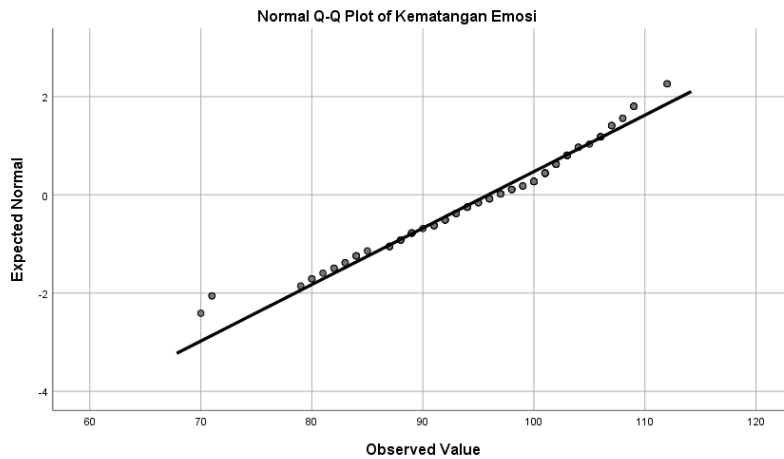
	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Emotional Maturity	.098	125	.005	.968	125	.005
Altruisme	.105	125	.005	.959	125	.005

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

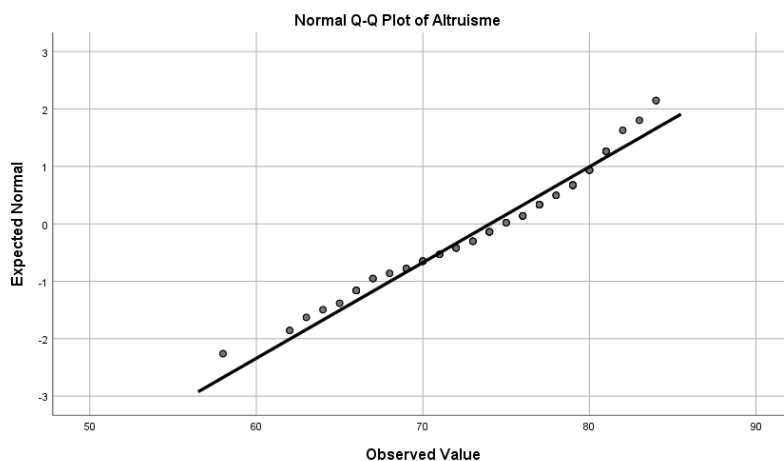
The results of the normality test on the Emotional Maturity scale obtained a significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov value of 0.005. The normality test on the Altruism scale obtained a significance value of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov value of 0.005. A significance number which is greater than or equal to 0.05 indicates that the data is normally distributed. Form Table 1, it is concluded that the two variable data in this study are normally distributed. The conclusion on the normality of the study data can also be seen in the normal Q-Q Plot graphs below (Graph 1 and Graph 2, respectively).



Graph 1. Emotional Maturity Data Normality Graph



Graph 2. Altruism Data Normality Graph



The normal Q-Q Plot graphs show that the data from emotional maturity and altruism variables clustered around the test line that points to the upper right and none of them are located far from the data distribution, indicating a normally distributed data.

To test the hypothesis, relationship between the two variables - Altruism and Emotional Maturity- was explored using the Pearson’s product moment analysis with the use of SPSS-26 calculation. The output of the analysis is summarized in Tabel 2.

Table 2. Product Moment Analysis Results

		Correlations	
		Emotional maturity	Altruism
Emotional maturity	Pearson’s Correlation	1	.530**

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	125	125
Altruism	Pearson's Correlation	.530**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	125	125

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

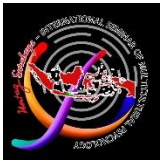
The results of the study showed the probability number of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), which means that there is a significant relationship between emotional maturity and altruistic behavior in Covid-19 volunteers. Meanwhile, the value of $(r) = 0.530$, is in the interval $0.40 - 0.599$, which shows that the level of the relationship between the two variables is moderate and in positive direction: the higher the emotional maturity, the higher its altruism of Covid-19 volunteers. Thus, the proposed hypothesis in this study is accepted.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to determine the relationship between emotional maturity and altruism in Covid-19 volunteers. The results of the analysis using the Pearson's product moment indicate that the proposed hypothesis is acceptable, that is, emotional maturity can significantly predict altruism. The result of the correlation analysis shows a correlation coefficient of $.530^{**}$, which means that the correlation or relationship between emotional maturity and altruism in the research subjects is considered moderate.

Altruism is defined by Aronson, Wilson, & Akert (in Taufik, 2012) as a form of help given in a pure, sincere manner, without expecting any kind of return (benefit) from others and does not provide any benefit to him. Altruism is influenced by many factors including emotional maturity. Myers (2012) states that several factors that influence altruism are: a) internal factors which include mood, ability to control emotions, achievement of rewards, and empathy; b) external factors such as gender, similarity in characteristics, closeness of relationships, attractiveness between the helpers and those who are helped, the number of other observations, time pressure, environmental conditions and antibodies, and, c) personal factors that consider the nature of the helper, this includes personality traits, gender and subject religiosity (religious belief).

Individuals who have a better level of emotional maturity usually experience at a calming state towards themselves, rarely suffer illnesses, possess skills at focusing attention, have better capability of communicating with others, and for a better job (Gottman, 2001). High emotional maturity enables individuals to know and respond to their own feelings appropriately, to read and to deal with other people's feelings effectively. An individual who has emotional maturity means that the individual is better able to control his/her emotions, understands his/her emotion, and can think first before taking action. Meanwhile, when in a negative mood, individuals who have less degree of emotional maturity tend to be reluctant to commit in the action of altruism. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Sears (in Haryati 2013) which states that a warm positive feeling atmosphere increases the willingness to take prosocial action. It also means that an emotionally mature individual can control his/her negative mood, so that he/she can still show helpful behavior to people in need. In



other words, altruistic actions taken by individuals who have mature emotions are not influenced by the mood that is being felt.

Considering the positive correlation between emotional maturity and altruism as described in the relevant literature and also as found in this research in the context of Covid-19 volunteers in East Java, Indonesia, it is conceivably important to understand the characteristics of local volunteers, especially in terms of their emotional maturity, to ascertain that they can provide needed services effectively. Results of this study can direct actions to map emotional maturity characteristics and plan development actions aiming at increasing stress and emotional management skills of the volunteers. Where applicable, knowledge on the relationship between emotional maturity and altruism can also be advantageous in the screening and selection process of invited volunteers.

This study is not without weaknesses. The limitation of this study lies in the fact that, firstly, it does not explore the possible connection in terms of demographics data of respondents, such as socio-economic status and origin of the subject within East Java area, which might provide interesting results and further explanation on the relationship between emotional maturity and altruism. Secondly, other factors that influence altruism were not included in this study, such as some relevant individual's personal characteristics (for example, level of empathy). It is hoped that future research will explore other factors determining altruistic behavior.

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This research was conducted according to the applicable research ethics issued by the Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia. Subjects in this study were given information to ascertain awareness of their rights. For the purpose of ethical concern, informed consent forms were sent to potential research participants and the signed forms were retained by the researchers.

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