Development A Psychological First Aid Model

Based on Crisis Emergency Theory on

Psychological Readiness Facing Covid-19

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has become a health crisis in the world that causes psychological distress to crisis conditions. This study aimed to develop a psychological first aid model based on crisis emergency theory on psychological readiness to face COVID-19.

Methods: Explanatory survey research with a cross sectional approach. The population in this study were all people on the island of Java with a sample size of 1218 respondents and was taken by means of convenience sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire from each sub-variable, then the data were analyzed using partial least squares. The instrument was composed of modified questionnaires that have been tested and declared valid and reliable.

Results: There is a significant influence of individual internal factors on the crisis mental health emergency (t = 2.829), and psychological readiness (t = 2.679). Psychological factors affect the crisis mental health emergencies (t = 6.533) and psychological readiness (t = 2.261). External factors affect the crisis mental health emergencies (t = 2.190) and psychological readiness (t = 2.681). Crisis mental health emergencies affect psychological first aid (t = 3,748) and psychological first aid affects psychological readiness (t = 10,742).

Conclusions: The development of psychological first aid modifies the knowledge and attitudes of individuals, controls the level of stress and anxiety that occurs, coping mechanisms, social support, environment and supporting facilities.

Keywords: COVID-19; crisis mental health; psychological readiness; psychological first aid

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has become a global health crisis due to the rapid (Hafeez et al., 2020; Amsalem, Dixon and Neria, 2021). The spread of the disease undiscovered treatment for COVID-19 triggers fear, global panic and negative stigma that leads to psychological distress (Abbas and Zhiqiang, 2020; Castellano-Tejedor, Torres-Serrano and Cencerrado, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic, which is an international health emergency, shows the number of cases continues to grow, causing many countries to have to face the second wave of COVID-19 (Salyer et al., 2021; Yousfi et al., 2021). The increase in the number of cases in Indonesia has made the National Disaster Management Agency define COVID-19 as a national disaster crisis since March 2020, so that handling can be carried out in a compact manner by all levels of society (Nursalam et al., 2020). However, the amount of information that is spread from the media that has not been confirmed has made the public more restless, anxious and afraid (Kang et al., 2020). Based on the results of research conducted on people in China, it shows that the psychological impact of fear of COVID-19 is more dangerous than the disease (Fardin, 2020; Huang, Xu and Liu, 2020). The population in China showed 53.8% experienced severe psychological effects, 16.5% severe depressive symptoms, 28.8% severe anxiety symptoms, and 8.1% severe stress levels (Qiu et al., 2020). It was confirmed that the beginning of the pandemic in Indonesia created a negative stigma that was so visible, many people rejected the bodies of COVID-19 patients, because for them COVID-19 is a very dangerous disease and those with a risk of transmitting it must be kept away from the community (Susilo et al., 2020).

Several case reports that often appear in the information media regarding the refusal and discrimination of patients and individuals who are in close contact with COVID-19 such as health workers are a matter of concern (Dye *et al.*, 2020; Saleem *et al.*, 2020). The media coverage of the community's rejection is very high, so that the rejection becomes a trending

topic in the news. Negative stigma was also obtained by several health workers who had died due to COVID-19, the community refused the nurse's corpse so that it had to be buried in another location (Bhanot *et al.*, 2021). The medical team also felt the same way who had been expelled by the boarding house owner or refused to return to their respective homes. This makes the patient, family and close contact individuals become negatively stigmatized and experience mass discrimination (Dwinantoaji and Sumarni, 2020; Richard, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has turned into a case that makes many people nervous to the point of causing mass paranoia (Manderson and Levine, 2020). Based on the results of the discussion, psychologist experts said that the public's reaction to the spread of COVID-19 could also be in the form of excessive protection for themselves and their families (Liu *et al.*, 2020), As a result, it causes obsessive compulsive symptoms, namely mental disorders that cause sufferers to feel compelled to perform an action repeatedly. If not done, the individual will continue to be filled with anxiety or fear (Kang *et al.*, 2020). The circulation of a lot of negative stigma makes people view patients and close contact cases as individuals who must be shunned, because they can transmit disease (Almuttaqi, 2020). Isolation and rejection have an impact on psychological conditions in the form of feelings of depression, stress, anxiety when diagnosed positive for COVID-19 (Torales *et al.*, 2020). Meanwhile, many health workers complain of burnout due to fatigue, lack of personal protective equipment and the risk of being infected at any time. This also has a psychological impact on health workers (Jiang *et al.*, 2020).

Early handling and prevention on psychology is important to pay attention to in handling COVID-19 (WHO, 2020). Psychological first aid is important to be used as an intervention for affected victims who have the potential to experience anxiety, depression and trauma in crisis situations (Dieltjens *et al.*, 2014; Shultz and Forbes, 2014). PFA has been applied to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in several countries and has shown an effectiveness rate of up to 95% (Forbes *et al.*, 2011; Fox *et al.*, 2012; Everly *et al.*, 2014). PFA can improve the capacity

of disaster victims in determining coping mechanisms and controlling emotions of disaster victims, so that disaster victims' responses are more adaptive (Williams and Drury, 2009; Everly Jr and Lating, 2022). PFA has had a positive impact on preventing the emergence of PTSD after a disaster occurred, but PFA has never been applied to disasters caused by disease pandemics. The purpose of this study is to develop a psychological first aid model based on crisis emergency theory on psychological readiness in the community with COVID-19 infection.

METHODS

Study Design

Explanatory research with a cross sectional approach (Baskerville and Pries-Heje, 2010) to determine the influence of individual factors, psychological factors, external factors, mental health emergency crisis, psychological first aid based on crisis emergencies theory on psychological readiness. Research on model development was carried out on communities on the island of Java who were affected by COVID-19 infection during June – August 2020.

Participants and Recruitment Procedure

The sample included 1216 respondents from all communities affected by COVID-19 infection on the island of Java, especially in areas with the highest number. Based on the respondent selection criteria, the main criteria in this study were people on the island of Java facing the COVID-19 pandemic, aged 20-55 years, willingness to take part in the study, being literate, having internet access and having the ability to access the electronic form. The following exclusion criteria were applied: immigrant people, experiencing mental disorders, being unwilling or unable to continue contributing to the study. The sampling technique in this study uses non-probability sampling, namely convenience sampling.

Patient recruitment was conducted between July - August 2020, the researcher via online informed the respondents about the purpose of the study and asked them whether they were willing to be contacted by the research and willing to fill the questionnaire. The eligible participants were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation, and online informed consent was obtained from them. After that, online questionnaires were sent to them via WhatsApp and they were asked to fill out the questionnaire. Filling out the questionnaire was given the opportunity for 2 weeks, the nurse who did not return the questionnaire would be confirmed by the researcher, if not willing to continue, the researcher did not force it. The research data was collected by giving initials without writing names, and the researchers also strictly maintained the confidentiality of the respondents.

Instruments

Data were collected using online questionnaires form. Socio-demographic form developed by the researchers was used to assess the patient' sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, religion, marital status and educational level), knowledge and attitude measure using a modify questionnaire from Mohammed Dauda Goni (Dauda Goni *et al.*, 2019). The outcome measures of psychological factors (level of stress, anxiety, coping mechanisms, problems encountered) were developed by the researchers from depression anxiety stress score (Osman *et al.*, 2012). This questionnaire consists of 21 items with a rating using a 4-point Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly disagree), on unfavorable questions, the assessment is reversed. Coping Mechanism were measured using The brief 28-item COPE Inventory (Matsumoto *et al.*, 2020) which consists of 10 questions. The problems encountered were measured using a Questionnaire on problem face (Dereli Iman, 2013) with 8 questions. Social support was measured using The Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason *et al.*, 1983) with 8 questions. Collaboration between health workers with 8 questions was measured using the Perception of Interprofessional Collaboration Model Questionnaire

(PINCOM-Q) (Strype *et al.*, 2014). The environmental situation was measured using an environmental questionnaire and the availability of information using the Questionnaires can provide valuable information, while the questionnaire for infrastructure and the availability of health services was modified from the Healthcare resource use questionnaire. For the psychological first aid variable, the researcher used the Maslow Assessment of Needs Scales (MANS) (Taormina and Gao, 2013), Counseling Assessment Self-Healing Questionnaire, The Life-Expectancy Scale, and Self-Report Measures of Intrinsic Motivation questionnaires. The questionnaire also uses a 4-point Likert scale.

Measurement of the Mental Health Crisis During the COVID-19 Pandemic was measured using a mental health questionnaire that had been developed by researchers. Question items consist of 9 questions with a Likert scale of 4 points, 0 points never, 1 point Every day (1-7 days), 2 points More often (7-12 days) and 4 points Almost every day (13-14 days). The result of the interpretation assessment is a score of 0-4: No referral is required at this time. 5-9: Clients may benefit from using natural support or mental health services. 10-19: Clients should seek professional mental health services. 20-27: Clients should immediately access health crisis services.

The outcome measures Psychological readiness questionnaire was developed by the researchers from the Social Psychological Survey of COVID-19 (Dong *et al.*, 2020). This questionnaire consists of 27 items with a rating using a 4-point Likert scale starting from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree) and 4 (strongly disagree), on unfavorable questions, the assessment is reversed. The result of score interpretation shows that <56 has a low psychological condition, 56-65 has a moderate psychological condition and >65 indicates a high psychological condition. While the social stigma is said to experience social stigma if the score obtained is <24. All questionnaires have been tested for validity first with 100 respondents, all questions show valid results, the calculated r value is between 0.772 to 0.985

(r table value = 0.1638). While the questionnaire shows reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value between 0.875 to 0.995

Data Analysis

This study analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis. Compliance test for normal distribution was applied using Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Descriptive value such as means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentage was analyzed with frequent distribution. Inferential analysis uses Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis to test the outer, inner model and good of fit of the newly formed model.

Ethical Clearance

This research has obtained ethical feasibility from the Ethics Commission of the Faculty of Nursing, Airlangaa University with certificate number 2038-KEPK by observing the ethical principles of beneficence, anonymity, and confidentiality and respecting human dignity.

RESULTS

This research was conducted on communities on the island of Java, the rate of spread of COVID-19 infection in Java was the highest in Indonesia, with East Java Province in first place, DKI Jakarta in second and West Java in third. The island which has a large population makes Java Island still a red zone in the spread of COVID-19. The demographic characteristics of the respondents showed that most of them were in their late teens (44.7%), more than 60% were women, and the Javanese were the majority of the population (73.5%). The most dominant religion is Islam (93.5%), 66.7% indicated unmarried. More than 50% of respondents have a bachelor's degree, with the most dominant occupation being health workers (53.4%) and the majority's income is still below the Regional Minimum Wage (53.5%) (Table 1).

Antecendent variables, namely internal factors, indicate the knowledge and attitudes of respondents in the good category (more than 70%). A total of 46.2% showed a mild to very

severe stress response, 55.8% experienced anxiety with low-moderate coping abilities (25.6%) and the ability to deal with moderate problems (71.8%). On external factors, social support is high only 14.6%, collaboration of health workers is moderate (77.6%). The availability of information, health facilities, environmental situation, and infrastructure is more than 60% in the moderate category (Table 2).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Respondent Characteristics	n	%
Age		
Latest teens (17 – 25 years)	544	44,7
Early Adulthood (26 – 35 years)	315	25,9
Late Adulthood (36 – 45 years)	224	18,4
Early Elderly (46 – 55 years)	135	11,1
Gender		
Male	377	31,0
Female	841	69,0
Marital Status		
Single	813	66,7
Married	389	31,9
Widow/ Widower	16	1,3
Ethnics		
Javanese	895	73,5
Sundanese	172	14,1
Cirebon	10	0,8
Betawi	74	6,1

Respondent Characteristics	n	%
Osing	2	0,2
Madura	57	4,7
Boyam	8	0,7
Religion		
Moslem	1139	93,5
Buddhist	15	1,2
Hindu	16	1,3
Christian	19	1,6
Confucianism	29	2,4
Job		
Health workers	650	53.4
Lecturer	83	6,8
Freelancer	18	1,5
Teacher	24	2,0
Housewives	58	4,8
Farmer	6	0,5
Civil Servant	71	5,8
Secretary	8	0,7
Privat sector employee	180	14,8
Entrepreneur	76	6,2
Do not working	44	3,6
Educational Background		
Basic education	259	21.3

Respondent Characteristics	n	%
Diploma	136	11,2
Bachelor	698	57,3
Master	103	8,5
Doctor	22	1,8
Income		
< Minimum Regional Income	566	46,5
≥ Minimum Regional Income	652	53,5

Table 2. Internal, Psychological and External Factors among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

	Indikator	N	%	
Internal Factors	Age			
	Latest teens (17 – 25 years)	544	44,7	
	Early Adulthood (26 – 35 years)	315	25,9	
	Late Adulthood (36 – 45 years)	224	18,4	
	Early Elderly (46 – 55 years)	135	11,1	
	Gender			
	Male	377	31,0	
	Female	841	69,0	
	Educational Background			
	Basic education	259	21.3	
	Diploma	136	11,2	
	Bachelor	698	57,3	
	Master	103	8,5	

	Indikator	N	0/0
	Doctor	22	1,8
	Knowledge		
	Less	76	6,2
	Moderate	275	22,6
	Good	867	71,2
	Attitude		
	Less	73	6,0
	Moderate	276	22,7
	Good	869	71,3
Psychological	Stress level		
factors			
	Very severe	143	11,7
	Severe	128	10,5
	Moderate	189	15,5
	Mild	103	8,5
	Normal	655	53,8
	Anxiety level		
	Very severe	288	23,6
	Severe	144	11,8
	Moderate	131	10,8
	Mild	117	9,6
	Normal	538	44,2
	Coping Mechanism		
	Less	32	2,6

	Indikator	N	%
	Moderate	280	23,0
	High	906	74,4
	Problem facing		
	Less	150	12,3
	Moderate	874	71,8
	Good	194	15,9
External Factors	Social Support		
	Less	217	17,8
	Moderate	823	67,6
	High	178	14,6
	Healthcare collaboration		
	Less	148	12,2
	Moderate	945	77,6
	Good	125	10,3
	Environmental situation		
	Less	166	13,6
	Moderate	815	66,9
	Good	237	19,5
	Information availability		
	Less	141	11,6
	Moderate	883	72,5
	Good	194	15,9
	Infrastructure		
	Less	123	10,1

Indikator	N	%
Moderate	1000	82,1
Good	95	7,8
Healthcare availability		
Less	192	15,8
Moderate	853	70,0
Good	173	14,2

The mental health crisis condition of the Indonesian people during the pandemic was 10.1% experienced fear, 8.2% experienced panic, 9.8% experienced denial, 9.9% experienced depression and 12.2-46.9% had a high risk of mental health crisis (Table 3). Respondents' ability in psychological first aid is shown from 26.2% good, 23.8% unable to interpret life, 55.4% have low motivation and 44.4% need counseling (Table 4). The psychological readiness shown by the community is mostly sufficient with the ability, knowledge, commitment and willingness of more than 78% sufficient (Table 5).

Table 3. Crisis Mental Health Emergency among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

Crisis Mental Health Emergency	N	%
Afraid		
No Disturbance	933	76,6
The risk of experiencing fear	148	12,2
Experiencing Fear	123	10,1
Panic		
No Disturbance	777	63,8
Risk of Panic	341	28,0

Crisis Mental Health Emergency	N	%
Experiencing Panic	100	8,2
Denial		
No Rejection	669	54,9
High Risk Reject	430	35,3
Experiencing Denial	119	9,8
Depression		
Not Experiencing Depression	535	43,9
High Risk of Depression	562	46,1
Experiencing Depression	121	9,9

Table 4. Psychological first aid among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

Psychological First Aid	N	%	
Fulfillment of Basic Needs			-
Less	169	13,9	
Moderate	730	59,9	
Good	319	26,2	
Counseling Needs			
Need Counseling	541	44,4	
Do not Need Counseling	677	55,6	
Meaning in Life			
Less	290	23,8	
Moderate	821	67,4	
Good	107	8,8	

Psychological First Aid	N	%
Motivation		
Less	675	55,4
Moderate	482	39,6
Good	61	5,0

Table 5. Psychological Readiness among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

Psychological Readiness	N	0/0
Knowledge		
Less	155	12,7
Moderate	997	81,9
Good	66	5,4
Ability		
Less	209	17,2
Moderate	1009	82,8
Good	0	0,0
Confidence		
Less	155	12,7
Moderate	952	78,2
Good	111	9,1
Commitment		
Less	155	12,7
Moderate	952	78,2
Good	111	9,1

Psychological Readiness	N	0/0	
Willing			
Less	155	12,7	
Moderate	952	78,2	
Good	111	9,1	

Construct Validity, Discriminant Validity and Reliability Test

The construct validity analysis shows that the outer loading value of all indicators is valid (λ 0.5 and the value of T statistic 1.96) in forming and measuring latent variables and shows a good measurement model (outer model). Based on the measurement of cross loading (discriminant validity) the overall indicator of the dimensions on the variables is greater than the cross loading on the other dimensions. The indicator is also said to be reliable (composite reliability = 0.912-0.996; cronbach's alpha = 0.875-0.995).

Inner Model Evaluation

Evaluation of the structural model or inner model is a step to evaluate the goodness of fit seen from the coefficient of determination (R-square). The total R-square value is 0.596 or 59.5%, indicating that the diversity of the first psychological treatment variables on psychological readiness can be explained by individual internal factors, psychological factors, external factors and overall crisis mental health emergencies of 59.6%, and 40, 4% contribution of other variables.

Table 6. Hypotesis Test among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

Influence	Original	T 64-4:-4:	P	Significancy
	Sample	T Statistics	Values	
Influence of Individual Internal Factors	0.200	2.020	0.006	Significant
on Mental Health Emergency Crisis	0,398	2,829	0,006	
The Influence of Individual Internal	0.207	2,679	0,008	Significant
Factors on Psychological Readiness	0,307			
Influence of Psychological Factors on	0,536	6,533	0,000	Significant
Mental Health Emergency Crisis				
The Influence of Psychological Factors	0,351	2,261	0,021	Significant
on Psychological Readiness				
The Influence of External Factors on	0.226	2,190	0,027	Significant
the Crisis Mental Health Emergency	0,326			
The Effect of External Factors on	0.205	2,681	0,016	Significant
Psychological Readiness	0,385			
Effect of Crisis Mental Health				Significant
Emergency on First Psychological	0,447	3,748	0,008	
Treatment				
The Effect of First Psychological	0.751	10.742	0.000	Significant
Treatment on Psychological Readiness	0,751	10,742	0.000	

The results of hypothesis testing show that all the measurement results of variables are significant in shaping the development of the model. psychological first aid in influencing psychological readiness showed the most dominant results (P = 0.000; T Statistics = 10.742) and psychological factors were the highest factors affecting mental health emergency crisis (P = 0.000; T Statistics = 6.533) (Table 6; Figure 1). So it is known that the strongest path analysis

is the influence of psychological factors on a mental health emergency crisis, then on psychological first aid and psychological readiness.

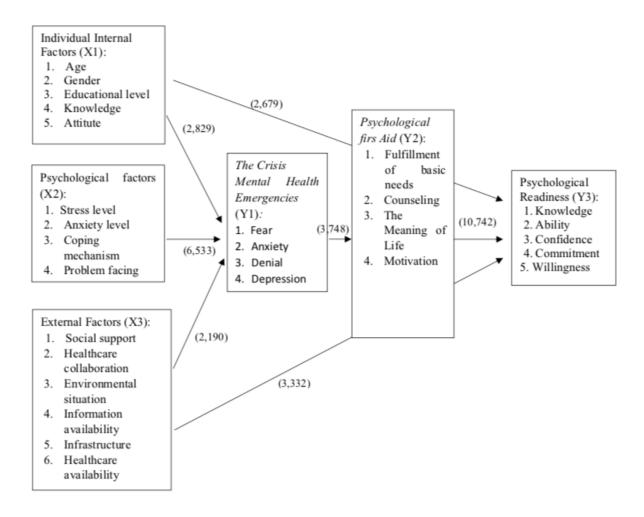


Figure 1. Inner Model Evaluation Research among People in COVID-19 Pandemic

DISCUSSION

Based on the overall hypothesis testing, the best path in model development is the path of individual psychological factors to the psychological readiness of the community in dealing with COVID-19 infection through the path of crisis mental health emergencies and psychological first aid and then to psychological readiness. The first psychological treatment model for the community with COVID-19 infection which consists of meeting basic needs, counseling, meaning in life and motivation.

The improvement of the first psychological treatment can be done by modifying the existing factors both internally from the individual which includes the development of behavior based on age, the ability of each gender to solve problems, education level, knowledge and individual attitudes. Modification of psychological factors in the problems faced, coping mechanisms, levels of anxiety and stress experienced by individuals. Meanwhile, external factors must pay attention to social support, collaboration between health workers, the environment, facilities and infrastructure. It is also necessary to pay attention to the condition of the mental health crisis in the individual to improve psychological first aid, so it is important to control feelings of fear, panic, depression and rejection.

The difference between these results and the main theory used, namely the concept of the Emergencies theory model by Brennaman and Psychological first aid by the National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (NC-PTSD) lies in the path of intervention given, which was initially only a nursing intervention and then combined with psychological first aid, through this pathway can help provide individual psychological treatment in changing behavior towards being more constructive. Psychological problem solving based on the Emergencies theory model shows that individuals with mental health crises will seek psychological help with positive or negative consequences. In the development of the model, psychological first aid was added, with psychological treatment supported by the fulfillment of basic needs, providing counseling, meaning in life and motivation to form psychological readiness in the COVID-19 infection community.

The application of psychological first aid must pay attention to the background and several factors originating from the individual's internal, psychological and environmental factors. The COVID-19 pandemic is at risk of causing psychological problems, psychological problems that can lead to psychological crises make crisis intervention necessary (Abbas *et al.*, 2021). Crisis intervention is an attempt to help clients who experience psychological anxiety

to return to their adjustment function stage and prevent or reduce the negative impression of psychological trauma (Al Eid and Arnout, 2020; Rocha *et al.*, 2021). PFA aims to provide assistance so that people feel safe, connected to the environment and a source of physical, psychological and social assistance needed; and redeveloping the feeling of being able to control one's own life.

The importance of the existence of PFA in being an intervention for the psychological readiness of the community with COVID-19 infection has three main principles, namely reducing the risk of mental disorders, increasing the self-healing process and growing hope (Abbas *et al.*, 2021). Based on the results of research that has been applied to PFA in overcoming the psychological impact of natural disasters, not a few victims of natural disasters feel hopeless and depressed, for example what was experienced by the victims of the Yogyakarta Earthquake in 2006. They lost their homes, families, possessions and various other things. they have, many of the victims do not know what to do. So that the application of PFA was carried out as an intervention and succeeded in reducing the risk of being affected by disasters on the psychological aspect (Maullasari and Fiana, 2020; Abbas *et al.*, 2021).

Based on the guidelines from WHO, disasters that have an impact on the health sector must be given psychological intervention to reduce the impact on the victims (Francis and Petrus, 2021). WHO recommends that the basic elements of PFA are Looking for basic need, listening, comforting, connecting, protecting and Instilling hope. PFA must pay attention to these conditions in order to be able to meet the psychological needs of the community (Saptandari *et al.*, 2022). Providing security, comfort and support, as well as providing practical assistance including food, water, shelter, information and medical assistance (Maldonato *et al.*, 2020). PFA implementers need to listen well to individuals in order to understand their particular situation and special needs, and to identify the best way to assist in the selection of alternative problem solving (BAYAGELDİ, 2021). After a crisis event, people often

experience high levels of powerlessness, isolation and vulnerability. In the case of a confirmed positive patient, it is necessary to connect people with other family members, loved ones, friends and local community members after the patient is declared cured, so as not to create stigma and can strengthen community support (Abate *et al.*, 2021; Blake *et al.*, 2021). It is also important to empower the community, empowerment is aimed at increasing community participation in assisting health workers and the government in breaking the chain of spreading COVID-19 infections (Sulaiman *et al.*, 2020).

The limitation in this study is the instrument used to measure the form of a questionnaire without any observation of psychological conditions. In the condition of the community in which the research was conducted, it was found that there were some who needed psychological treatment, so that immediate psychological intervention was needed, but the researcher only developed the model, further research was needed in the application of the intervention.

CONCLUSIONS

The best path in the development of the model is the path of individual psychological factors to psychological readiness through the path of crisis mental health emergencies and psychological first aid and then to psychological readiness. Psychological first aid on psychological readiness can be explained by the variables of individual internal factors, psychological factors, external factors and overall crisis mental health emergencies of 59.6.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that in research activities and in the preparation of research manuscripts to scientific publications there is no conflict of interest with any party, so that the articles written can be published in full by all authors involved in the research manuscript.

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