

Fear of coronavirus: gender differences occur in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to comply with the differences in the level of fear of COVID-19 between men and women in Indonesia. This research method is quantitative. The number of participants in this study was 130 people (59 men and 71 women). The criteria in this study were Indonesians who wanted to participate in this research and complete all of the existing questionnaires. This research uses the Fear of COVID-19 Scale instrument with 7 question items that have been translated into Indonesian. Testing the data using the independent t-test to see differences in the level of fear between genders. The results of this study are that women tend to experience more fear due to COVID-19 than men. Women feel traumatized and stressed by the presence of COVID-19. COVID-19 makes women's mood low and feels hyper-arousal.

Keywords: Fear of covid-19, gender differences, traumatized and stressed

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Introduction

COVID-19 is an epidemic that concerns global health and has the potential to have a very serious impact on public health (Xiang et al., 2020). According to Harper, C. A., Satchell, L. P., Fido, D., & Latzman (2020), the beginning of the COVID-19 disease outbreak occurred in Wuhan, China and COVID-19 have spread throughout the world. The World Health Organization has stated that COVID-19 is an emergency and this outbreak has raised international concerns. One of the ways to avoid COVID-19 is not to keep a distance from other people and diligently wash your hands so you don't get the COVID-19 virus (Everett et al., 2020; Harper, C. A., Satchell, L. P., Fido, D., & Latzman, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020). Besides, people who have symptoms of COVID-19 are advised not to leave the house and isolate themselves independently in the house for 7-14 days. The implementation of this policy has positive consequences as well as negative psychological effects (Saffarinia, 2020). Individuals begin to fear being exposed to the disease, fear of death, disturbing daily activities, financial problems, and other problems (Saffarinia, 2020).

The COVID-19 outbreak is spreading very fast in the world. This causes psychological problems that occur in the World. Psychological problems due to COVID-19 include stress, insomnia, anxiety, fear, and anger. COVID-19 can indeed affect a person's mental health. This is also following the results of research conducted by Qiu et al., (2020), Torales et al., (2020 and Xiang et al., (2020) who found that mental health such as stress, insomnia, anxiety, fear, and anger will arise due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Colizzi et al., (2020) explain that one of the factors central to this problem is an increase of stress and anxiety during a pandemic is a sense of fear will because of their family got COVID-19. Lately, it no warns that fear will be the infection that can affect mental health disorder of a person. Besides that, the fear of infected individuals' COVID-19 will cause a reaction of extreme anxiety on themselves. Experts have pointed out that this extreme fear of COVID-19 occurs especially when near a close relative or friend who has contracted COVID-19. This has the effect that is

Significant from the stress of someone giving rise to fear of a person (Liu, W., Zhang, Q., Chen, J., Xiang, R., Song, H., Shu, S., & Liu, 2020).

Wang et al., (2020) explain that the fear of the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the psychological reactions that often occur. This reaction occurs regularly because of someone's fear of contracting COVID-19. According to (Liu, W., Zhang, Q., Chen, J., Xiang, R., Song, H., Shu, S., & Liu, 2020), this reaction is very understandable because each individual pays attention to their health. Fear is a situation where someone experiences negative emotion and unpleasant because it was triggered by the threat (de Hoog et al., 2008). Fear is an integral part of the survival of a person as a human being. This is because someone recognizes a potential source of danger and tries to avoid the danger that will hit him. This is in line with the statement of Carlton et al., (2020), that someone would try to avoid these dangers because naturally, he was afraid of the danger. Men and women have a fear of the same, but the difference in the level of fear of gender arises when the individual is in a state of a certain (Carlton et al., 2020).

Carlton et al., (2020) explain that the most frightening situation for women or men is when these two genders cannot control the situation that happens to them. The COVID-19 pandemic is an outbreak that cannot be controlled by people. This situation where the right vaccine has not been found certainly raises someone's fear because they cannot control it. Also, according to Carlton et al., (2020), women and men also have the same level of fear regarding social fear and fear of physical threats that they will pass. In a study conducted by Etherton et al., (2014), it is explained that men have a lower average level of fear than women. Men can control their fear than women (Carlton et al., 2020).

Harper, C. A., Satchell, L. P., Fido, D., & Latzman, (2020) explains that this fear can motivate individuals to carry out behaviors in preventing COVID-19. This sense of fear is certainly able to provide positive values for individuals because they are very concerned about health protocols. But on the other hand, fear damages mental and physical health. Likewise with research conducted by Addo et al., (2020) that fear can increase social presence to anticipate COVID-19 and promote COVID-19 personal protective equipment.

Individuals who experience a disaster will experience an inability to think clearly (Sher, 2020). Bertalero et al., (2021) in their research found that the majority of individuals will be unable to think clearly and think rationally when reacting to the COVID-19 outbreak. The COVID-19 outbreak will cause fear and anxiety in a person and will have implications for mental health effects such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In general, the prevention of PTSD in women is higher than that of men. This is evidenced by the prevention of the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan where women are more regulated by the negative mood and changes due to COVID-19 than men Farhood et al., (2018). Cai (2020) in his research states that fewer women die than men who die from COVID-19. Even though the female gender is significantly more psychologically associated with stress, anxiety, and depression (Qiu et al., 2020; Rossi et al., 2020). Beck, A. T., & Steer, (1993) also explains that women with anxiety disorders have an average score that is four points higher than men with anxiety disorders. Women show higher anxiety than men because women tend to have worries about what happens (Bahrami & Yousefi, 2011). Metacognitive thinking about uncontrolled worry is more common in women. Women believe that their worries are not controlled, which makes it easier for women to feel anxious. Carlton et al., (2020) explain that women display more fear and sadness than men who display more anger.

Carlton et al., (2020) explain that women are more likely to be expressive in terms of emotions than men. Women will cry out more easily than men. When women are in a position of fear, they will vent their emotions unconsciously. However, men tend to be able to control their emotions, while women tend to let emotions control them (Carlton et al., 2020). Men tend to rate themselves less emotionally and can regulate their emotions than women.

As far as is known, the link between the fear of COVID-19 and gender in Indonesia has not been explored yet. The aim of this study is for the first time to compare the fear of COVID-19 between genders in Indonesia. We need to study the level of fear between the genders about COVID-19 because the public health community must ensure that health services and social support can meet their unique needs to stop their fear of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Method

This research was conducted by distributing questionnaires in the form of Google form to Indonesians who wish to fill out this questionnaire. The number of participants in this study was 131 people. The criteria in this study were Indonesians who wanted to participate in this research and complete all of the existing questionnaires. This number refers to the rule of thumb which states that the ideal sample size in a study is 5 to 10 times the number of items in the questionnaire (Hair, 2011). The minimum sample of this research is 70 people, but because the number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire exceeds the minimum requirements for the study sample, so all respondents were included.

In this research, Ahorsu et al., (2020) will use the instruments regarding the Fear of Covid -19 scale. Statements on a scale of 7 statement items. In a study conducted by Wibowo (2020), the scale of Fear of COVID-19 is consistent, where the reliability value is 0.82 (Cronbach Alpha = 0.82). Meanwhile, the internal consistency value was 0.82, the test-retest reliability / ICC was 0.72. In this study, the original scale has been translated into the Indonesian language by Wibowo, (2020), so that researchers will use a scale that has been translated into the Indonesian language.

Participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire which chose one of the 5 answers, namely "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither agree nor disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree". This study uses a Likert scale with the lowest score is 1 and the highest is 5. When added together, the lowest score is 7 and the highest is 35. The following questions are distributed which have been translated into Indonesian by Wibowo (2020):

Table 1 <Translated Item FCV-19 with English version to Indonesia Version>

No.	English Version	Indonesian Version
1	I am most afraid of coronavirus-19	<i>Saya merasa sangat takut dengan coronavirus-19.</i>
2	It makes me uncomfortable to think about coronavirus-19.	<i>Berpikir tentang coronavirus-19 membuat perasaan saya tidak nyaman.</i>
3	My hands become clammy when I think about coronavirus-19.	<i>Tangan saya menjadi basah ketika saya berpikir tentang coronavirus-19</i>
4	I am afraid of losing my life because of coronavirus-19.	<i>Saya takut kehilangan nyawa saya karena coronavirus- 19.</i>
5	When watching the news and stories about coronavirus-19 on social media, I become nervous or anxious.	<i>Saat menonton berita dan cerita tentang coronavirus-19 di media sosial, saya menjadi gugup atau cemas.</i>
6	I cannot sleep because I'm worried about getting coronavirus-19.	<i>Saya tidak bisa tidur karena saya khawatir terkena coronavirus-19.</i>
7	My heart races or palpitates when I think about getting coronavirus-19.	<i>Jantung saya berdetak kencang atau berdebar ketika saya berpikir terpapar coronavirus-19.</i>

Some of the steps in this research, among others, the first, is done by distributing questionnaires using Google Forms. Second, testing the validity and reliability to see whether each statement is valid and reliable. Third, descriptive statistics to see the characteristics of the participants. Fourth, using categorization based on the level of fear of men and women. Fifth. The test used the independent t-test to see the differences in the level of fear between the genders.

The number of men in this study was 60 people and women were 71 people. A total of 11 first samples are already married and are not as many as 19 people and one person widower. The sample Job as many as 75 people, 18 people jobless, and as many as 38 students.

Table 2 <The Distribution of Study Participants>

		f	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	45.8
	Women	71	54.2
Age	<10	1	.8
	11 --- 20	9	6.9
	21 ---- 30	118	90.8
	> 40	2	1.5
Marital	married	111	84.7
	single	19	14.5
	Widower	1	.8
Profession	work	75	57.3
	does not work	18	13.7
	college student	38	29.0

Result and Discussion

Researchers also tested the correlation coefficient of 131 respondents using Pearson product-moment correlation analysis with a significant level of 5%. This measure is used to measure the extent to which the questionnaire can measure the object under study (Arikunto, 2010). According to Azwar (2012), items are stated to reach a correlation coefficient of at least r of 0.30 ($p < 0.05$). Based on Table 3, that all statement items from the FCV-19 variable meet the criteria because $r > 0.3$ ($p < 0.05$) so the question items are valid.

Table 3 <Validity Test>

	r	p-value
FC1	.622	.000
FC2	.532	.000
FC3	.522	.000
FC4	.589	.000
FC5	.678	.000
FC6	.462	.000
FC7	.574	.000

A reliability test is a tool for measuring a questionnaire which is an indicator of a variable or constructs. A questionnaire is said to be reliable or reliable if a person's answer to a statement is consistent or stable over time (Ghozali, 2011). Every measuring device should have the ability to give a consistent measurement result. A reliable instrument is an instrument that, if tried repeatedly in the same group, will produce the same data with the assumption that there is no psychological change on the respondent. Based on the results obtained by Cronbach Alpha, it shows that each variable is reliable with the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, the fear COVID-19 variable is very high, namely 0.822. A variable is said to be reliable if it provides a Cronbach Alpha value is more than 0.60 (Ghozali, 2011).

Table 4 <Reliability Test>

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.822	.824	7

The scale data for the *fear of covid* consists of 7 questions with the number of respondents as many as 131 people. *Social relations at work* variable data obtained a minimum value = 7; maximum value = 31; Mean = 20.13; and standard deviation = 4.17. Based on Table 5, 131 respondents have a very low level of fear as many as 8 people (6.1%), 28 people low (21.4%), the medium category is 41 people (31.3%), the high category

is 45 people (34.4 %) and the 9 people (6.9%) were very high. Thus it can be concluded that the majority of respondents in this study have a high fear of COVID-19. When viewed from the gender of men (19 people) and women (26 people), the majority also have a high tendency to fear COVID-19.

Table 5 <Categorization of Indonesian Fear Level>

Categorization	All Samples		Gender	
	f	Percent	Male	Women
Very high	9	6.9	3	6
High	45	34.4	19	26
Moderate	41	31.3	17	24
Low	28	21.4	13	15
Very low	8	6.1	8	0
total	131	100.0	60	71

To compare the level of fear of men and women with the COVID-19 outbreak, researchers used a test instrument, namely the An independent-samples t-test. Table 6 found that on average women are afraid of COVID-19, which amounted to 20.98 compared to men only 19:27.

Table 6 <Description of Fear based on Gender>

Gender	N	Mean	Std Deviation
Men	60	19,1333	5.24474
Woman	71	21.0423	4.15911

In Table 7, The sig value is known. (2- tail) of 0.022 <0.05, so there is a significant difference between the fears of gender

Table 7 <Independent T-test of Fear based on Gender>

Gender	N	F	t	Sig (2 tailed)
Men	60	3,579	-2,323	.022
Woman	71		-2,278	.025

The purpose of this study was to compare the level of fear of men and women about the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of this study explain that women are more afraid of the COVID-19 pandemic. Wang et al., (2020) have researched the effects of COVID-19 that occurred in Wuhan. The research conducted by Wang et al., (2020) was conducted on the general public, nurses experiencing mental health due to the Covid -19 pandemic. It was found that 53.8% of the 1,210 respondents experienced moderate and severe depressive symptoms. Meanwhile, 16.3% reported experiencing severe depression symptoms. Based on this, COVID-19 does have an impact on a person's mental health.

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Liu, W., Zhang, Q., Chen, J., Xiang, R., Song, H., Shu, S., & Liu, (2020) where women are more afraid of COVID-19. Wang et al., (2020) also explained that women will have negative emotions with the presence of COVID-19. Women tend to experience disorders such as stress, anxiety, and depression due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Women who experience this disorder will tend to feel frightened and cannot do their usual activities

Take a closer look at a person's fear of COVID-19 and factors from very different demographics. In this study, it is shown that indeed women show more fear of COVID-19. Overall, Indonesian people, both men, and women, experience fear of COVID-19. This is in line with research conducted by Limcaoco et al., (2020) where the presence of COVID-19 will cause different emotional reactions between men and women. Also, Qiu et al., (2020) and Sakib et al., (2020) also explained that this different reaction exists because women rely more on their emotions than men when they experience the fear of COVID-19. The level of women's fear of this is triggered by stressing a woman. Women here show a deep and high susceptibility and increased would be a risk in the development of mental disorders they experienced after their stress (Tolin & Foa, 2006).

According to Liu, W., Zhang, Q., Chen, J., Xiang, R., Song, H., Shu, S., & Liu, (2020), there is a very large psychological vulnerability in women compared to men during the COVID-19 outbreak. This is supported by research conducted by Rossi et al., (2020) that women tend to feel emotional and fearful when there is a COVID-19 pandemic. In a study conducted by Wang et al., (2020), female individuals have a negative psychological state due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Women experience more fear because of COVID-19. Other symptoms are high depression and high stress. The results of another study, which explored in-depth and looked at the symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress during the COVID-19 outbreak, found that women had higher levels of stress (Liu, W., Zhang, Q., Chen, J., Xiang, R., Song, H., Shu, S., & Liu, 2020). Women have emotional changes and tend to be negative. In addition, there are cognitive changes in women's moods and hyper-passion for COVID-19. The differences found between men and women here can be attributed to the fact that women showed more fear reactivity to COVID-19 and compared to men related to fear and arousal responses to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Another finding occurred in Italy, where there is a great psychological vulnerability that occurs in women in COVID-19 (Rossi et al., 2020). The results of research conducted by Rossi et al., (2020) show that women have a significant psychological impact on the COVID-19 outbreak. The levels of stress, anxiety, insomnia, perceived stress, adjustment disorders, and depression were higher than men. Women have experienced fear more frequently than men during the presence of COVID-19. Rossi et al., (2020) also explained that several factors might occur and this will have long-term implications. The fear that arises because of COVID-19 is like the anticipation of individuals not to transmit the disease to family and close friends.

Moderate fear will also have a positive impact and will be able to motivate him to stay healthy during the COVID-19. For example, the difference found in this study was that men and women also experienced moderate and high levels of fear. Research conducted by Dryhurst et al., (2020) explains that gender is the only predictor from sociodemographic of the level of risk perception that will happen to him. The results of his research indicate that women have a higher risk perception than men. Fear of the covid-19 outbreak can increase risk perceptions of disease and encourage the person to adopt disease prevention behaviors (Ahorsu et al., 2020; Mamun et al., 2020; Sakib et al., 2020).

From some of the previous studies, this research is in line with previous studies. Cases taken from Indonesian citizens are indeed women who experience greater fear than men. However, if it is seen more deeply, men and women have the same level of stiffness, namely high. However, on average, women are more afraid of COVID-19 than men. This study found that men's and women's levels of fear were different. Women tend to experience more fear due to COVID-19 than men. Women feel traumatized and stressed by the presence of COVID-19. COVID-19 makes women's moods low and feels *hyper-arousal*.

Psychological intervention can be carried out to overcome the fear of covid - 19 (Chen et al., 2020). The first thing that needs to be done is to form a psychological medical team that will provide online courses to guide health professionals in dealing with psychological problems they are experiencing. The second thing is the existence of a psychological assistance hotline team. This intervention will provide guidance and supervision to solve psychological problems.

Intervention is to form a psychological intervention team that provides various group activities to relieve stress, fear, and depression. Therefore, it is necessary to have interventions and approaches that will support eliminating feelings of fear of COVID-19 for both women and men. Concern about personal health, fear of carrying infection and transmitting it to family members or other people, isolation, feelings of uncertainty, social stigmatization, excessive workload, and feeling insecure need psychological intervention so that individuals do not experience excessive fear.

Conclusion

This research discusses the difference in the level of fear between men and women in Indonesia during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Based on the results of research conducted, women are more afraid of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this research, it is necessary to do how high or low their fear is. Also, this study can support other research that women have a psychological high enough during their COVID-19. So it is very important to continue to monitor women's psychological reactions during an outbreak. This study is limited to

examining the level of fear in men and women in Indonesia. So this research needs to be done in depth and examine whether there are differences with people who have been vaccinated.

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