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Understanding Reference Information of Self Isolation Survivors for Coping COVID19

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to comprehend the information-seeking behaviours of COVID19 patients who were self-isolating or self-quarantine. This study used a qualitative approach where data were collected using interview technique. The findings imply that COVID19 survivors favour information accessed from official government sources. The COVID19 symptoms, as well as the health protocols and precautions to follow during self-isolation, were fully understood by the survivors. The study also showed that participants double-checked their information using various platforms. The study emphasizes how crucial it is for the relevant authorities to provide thorough and accurate information on how to handle COVID19.

Keywords: Mis-information; Self Isolation; Information Understanding; Covid-19 Survivors.

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1.0 Introduction

The spread of the corona virus, often known as COVID19, shook the entire world at the end of 2019. The virus, which originated in Wuhan, China, has nearly spread throughout the entire world, including Indonesia. Similar to how quickly the virus spread, numerous pieces of information have also been disseminated online, particularly through social networking sites. Although some of the information being spread is factual, the bulk is incorrect or fake and the veracity of it cannot be verified. Kominfo (2022) noted that there were 5,829 misinformation or disinformation regarding COVID19 on circulating in social media in Indonesian. One of the myths or false information that is spread is that COVID19 patients can be treated right away with turmeric, ginger, or garlic; that hot water baths or showers would kill the COVID19 virus; and that fasting without food or liquids can weaken the COVID19 virus.

This phenomenon of spreading misinformation or disinformation is indeed something unusual, so much so that there is literature that calls the situation an infodemic. Nasir et al. (2020) stated that misinformation or disinformation can cause mental stress or anxiety to the user especially when the user is a COVID19 patient who is going through the recovery treatment process in self-quarantine or self-isolation. People who are self-quarantining or self-isolating are in fact very dependent on accurate information because they must manage themselves with the assistance of family members without direct supervision by health experts. False or inaccurate information will not only harm the individuals involved, but also their family members (Sari, Sholihah and 'Atiqoh, 2020). Researchers' review of the literature

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revealed a dearth of studies focusing on COVID19's information behavior. It is unclear how COVID19 patients who are engaging in self-quarantine or self-isolation get and utilize information in order to survive. Due to this knowledge gap, a study was conducted to (i) understand how COVID19 survivors seek and use information during self-quarantine or self-isolation; (ii) determine the impact of using the information obtained; and (iii) identify the challenges encountered when looking for information during self-quarantine or self-isolation.

2.0 Review of literature

2.1 Defining Misinformation

There are various definitions for "misinformation". Wardle & Derakhshan (2020) noted that misinformation is false information that is spread unintentionally (without knowledge of whether the information is true or false) and without any intent to cause harm to anyone, whereas disinformation is false information that is intentionally spread to cause harm. Earlier, Scheufele and Krause (2019) define misinformation as inaccurate information, which is usually the result of an accident. Barua et al. (2020) explained misinformation covers both misinformation and dis-information, which relates to inaccurate information shared unconsciously by believing that the information is true, and inaccurate information shared consciously.

2.2 The Impact of Misinformation

A person's actions or conduct are frequently linked to their intentions. Spreading false information or disinformation is frequently done with ill intent, i.e., to profit oneself at the expense of others. The transmission of false information or distortion is not just restricted to individuals; it may also affect particular groups or even an organization at large. Competitors will occasionally use disinformation or circulating false information to undermine their rivals in the business sector. In order to boost sales of their goods or services, some parties are also involved in distributing false information.

When the world is dealing with the COVID19 epidemic, for instance, many companies that sell dietary supplement products are very active in promoting their products by offering a variety of promotions as if their products are highly effective in raising the level of immunity to combat the infection of COVID19. Many consumers are impacted by the deception and misinformation being conveyed, which leads to them spending thousands of dollars on such products. Unfortunately, they had a negative effect that was detrimental to their health rather than a noticeable good benefit after utilizing the products. Situations like this demonstrate how spreading false information has a detrimental effect on society, the economy, and even health.

2.3 COVID19 Survivor Self Isolation Concept

Isolation is the process of separating a patient with an infectious disease from a healthy individual while they are receiving care and treatment at a medical facility (Farooq, Laato & Islam, 2020). According to this definition, isolation or quarantine must take place in institutions like hospitals, clinics, or other places governed by health authorities. However, because there are so many patients during the pandemic phase, isolation or quarantine in locations like the ones mentioned above is practically difficult. Tens of thousands of people per day were infected during the height of COVID19's outbreak in Indonesia. Due of this circumstance, the Indonesian government has issued a decree requiring all infected individuals who have not yet reached a fatal threshold to practice self isolation or self quarantine in their individual houses.

At the same time, guidelines or protocols for self-management during self-isolation or self-quarantine at home have been released by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia. This manual's main goal is to speed the recovery of COVID19 patients while also limiting the virus's ability to infect the general population. Among the guidelines are: (1) always wear a mask;(2) stay at home if you have the flu, a cold, or a cough; (3) use social media or health telemedicine tools, and stay off the roads; (4) use separate rooms while at home and maintain a one-meter space from other family members; (5) regularly check your body temperature; (6) don't share eating or bathing utensils; (7) practice healthy and clean living; (8) eat nutritious food; (9) wash hands with soap and running water and practise coughing and sneezing etiquette; (10) always be outside and take a 15 to 30 minute morning sunbath; and (11) call the medical facility right away if the pain persists and requires further treatment, such as shortness of breath and a high fever.

3.0 Methodology

The correct choice of methodology is crucial in determining the research produce a trustworthy result. With reference to the guidelines of Noordin & Masrek (2016), the study, the study chose a qualitative approach. Twelve (12) COVID19 survivors participated in the study. They were identified using purposive sampling based on the researcher's personal contacts. Each participant received a consent letter; upon their agreement, interviews were undertaken. One interview was conducted with each participant, lasting one to two hours each. During the interviews, participants were asked free-form questions. Using a smartphone, the researcher recorded the interview sessions. Additionally, the researcher used pens and a notebook to record the data. The researcher highlights the key themes raised during the interview at the conclusion of the conversation. The participants were requested to verify these highlights or main points to ensure that the findings of this study achieve the required trustworthiness. This is in line with the suggestion of Nowell et al. (2017) on how to increase trustworthiness when dealing with quantitative data analysis. After completing every interview, the researcher proceeded with data analysis. The data for this study were analyzed using thematic analysis. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is a highly

adaptable method that can be tailored to the needs of several studies, offering a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data. Fig. 1 showcases the steps taken for analyzing the research data.

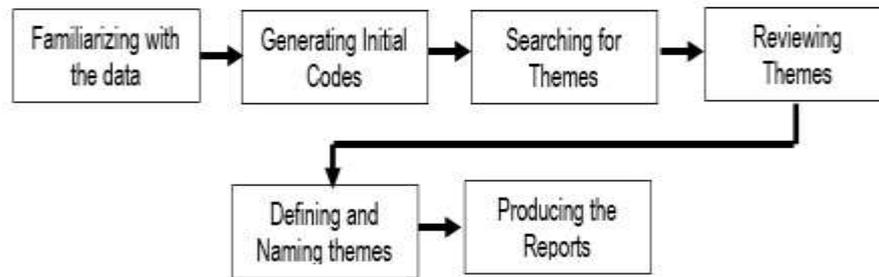


Fig. 1: The Steps in Data Analysis
(Source: Authors)

4.0 Results and discussion

4.1 Profiles of the Informants

Table 1 showcases the profiles of the informants who willingly participated in the study. Out of 12 informants, seven were females while the remaining seven were male. Their ages ranges between 21 and 36 years old. In terms of academic qualification, all of the informants informed that they have completed a bachelor's degree. Except for one, all other informants were either employed or running their own business. These informants mainly centered around Kota Surabaya.

Table 1. Informants Profiles

No	Informant	Gender	Age	Academic Qualification	Designation	Religion	Locality
1	AA	Female	25	Bachelor's Degree	Secretary	Islam	Kota Surabaya
2	BB	Female	36	Bachelor's Degree	Secretary	Cristian	Jakarta
3	CC	Male	25	Bachelor's Degree	School Teacher	Islam	Kabupaten Bojonegoro
4	DD	Female	24	Bachelor's Degree	Personal Assistant	Islam	Kabupaten Sidoarjo
5	EE	Male	24	Bachelor's Degree	Librarian	Islam	Kota Surabaya
6	FF	Female	25	Bachelor's Degree	Customer Service Officer	Islam	Kota Surabaya
7	GG	Female	23	Bachelor's Degree	Unemployed	Islam	Tangerang Selatan
8	HH	Male	24	Bachelor's Degree	Content Moderator	Islam	Kota Surabaya
9	II	Female	21	Bachelor's Degree	Student (Postgraduate)	Islam	Kota Surabaya
10	JJ	Female	24	Bachelor's Degree	Surveyor	Islam	Kabupaten Sidoarjo
11	KK	Male	21	Bachelor's Degree	Librarian	Islam	Kota Surabaya
12	LL	Male	24	Bachelor's Degree	Businessman	Islam	Kabupaten Madiun

4.2 Sources of Information Seeking

The COVID19 survivors self-isolate for more than 10 days on average, and they do so at home. The internet, which is utilised to get information about COVID19 prevention, is one of the information and communication technologies that are required during solitude. The informants claimed that during a pandemic, information on prevention, treatment, and the most recent updates is frequently accessed. Survivors prefer to access information regarding the handling of COVID19 from a variety of sources, including Halodoc and other health-related apps, social media, and official accounts of the health office. The most readily available source of information for the general public regarding COVID19 is social media, including *WhatsApp*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *YouTube*, and others. Each person can access information in a variety of forms, including text, infographics, posters, and videos, in addition to one specific form. This is what Informant P1 reveals: "Access to social media is usually on *Twitter* and *Instagram*, but usually from *Instagram* it's only for uploading reviews; for more detailed ones, I usually go to the official website."

The study's informants also said they preferred information from official government sources because they are more trustworthy and authentic. As a result, information from the Indonesian Ministry of Health is preferred over that from other sources, particularly those found

on social media. They acknowledged that they also read news on social media, but they expressed doubts about the veracity and quality of the information. They added that they were bewildered by some of the information they found on social media because it was contradictory. They did observe, though, that some of the information from the sources is raising their hopes for a speedier recovery. The informants estimated that they spent between one and two hours searching the material, depending on how frequently or intentionally they did it. They frequently spent more time on social media, where the information was occasionally presented in enticing and rewarding ways.

4.3 Application of the Information Obtained

The informants claimed that after they became aware of the COVID19 disease's risk, they made every effort to follow the government's instructions and protocols to the letter. Concern over the necessity of adhering to all these rules has grown in response to news on the death rate in Indonesia and other regions of the world. While they are so worried about their personal safety, they are equally anxious about the safety of their partners, family, parents, and other close relatives. Several informants acknowledged that it was exceedingly difficult to follow certain protocols, including avoiding locking oneself away in a room. Their small home and large family make it difficult for them to isolate themselves. When they stepped outside for morning sunbathing, several of the neighbours became annoyed. Sometimes, the neighbor's response made it impossible for them to follow this protocol. Most informants stated that they had fully observed healthy lifestyle practises including washing hands with soap or liquid hand sanitizer.

Prior to contracting COVID19, none of the informants who took part in the study had received any immunizations. They did, however, express their preparedness and willingness to receive immunizations when the time is right. When asked if the vaccine would be more beneficial than harmful, the majority of the informants said they thought the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages. The majority of respondents claimed that their family members who had already had the immunisation did not suffer from any substantial health problems afterward.

Several informants claimed they tried to adapt or integrate information they learned from other sources, particularly social media, in the hopes that their illness or suffering would be lessened. For instance, they learned how honey and black cumin could be used to treat the COVID19 condition. They went on to say that their willingness to eat honey and black cumin was more motivated by their religious conviction. Even if the promises and testimonies offered appeared very attractive, they chose not to attempt other suggestions like drinking ginger, turmeric, or garlic. None of the informants tried taking a hot bath like numerous social media outlets advised. Further questioning on why they did not follow these recommendations, they responded saying that were not convinced with the recommendation after double-checking or verifying the information from other sources. The platforms that they referred to verify these information were government websites, religious teachers and local medical practitioners.

4.4 Impact After Utilizing Information

The effect of using information obtained through official government channels is indeed very positive. Almost all the informants informed that they managed to fully recover because of their obedience to the guidelines given. This positive effect is not only on themselves, but even on their immediate family members. This is because some family members survived the infection even though they were in the same house. Several informants said that this self quarantine or self isolation has really prevented COVID19 from getting worse.

There was also an informant who stated that following the guidelines given by the government did not really help him to recover quickly. He also stated that although he had followed almost all the suggested protocols, the time for him to fully recover was too long. At the same time, almost all of his family members were also infected which may have been caused by him. There is also an informant who stated that alternative supplements such as honey and black cumin suggested from social media sources have also helped him to recover faster. He also suggested that the authorities concerned should provide such information because it proved to have a positive effect on him in addition to the relatively low cost to implement.

Some informants also stated that because the amount of information obtained was too much, either from official government sources or from social media sources, it caused them to be overwhelmed. Sometimes they seem to be faced with information overload. Due of that, sometimes they feel lazy to continue to get information related to COVID19 because they are worried that they will become too excited.

4.5 Challenges in Seeking Information

The majority of respondents concur that the official website or portal is the most trustworthy source of information. The majority of the informants did mention the challenges they had in gathering this data, though. One of them is the steep price at which Internet data must be purchased. Others claimed that the gadget they were using could not completely display the data they had accessed. Some informants also mentioned that they depend on others to acquire information from government websites for them because they are less knowledgeable about how to do it themselves. Information from sources other than social media is unsought. In contrast to information from government sources, which must be sought out, verified, and comprehended, information received through *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *Telegram* or *WhatsApp* conversations is continuous and easy to understand.

Government information sources displayed on the official website are sometimes not updated promptly. Information obtained from mass media such as television and radio is sometimes not in line with the information displayed on the government's official website. Another challenge is the guidance provided by the government is an approach for an "ideal" family, which means having a comfortable home with several rooms and having strong economic capabilities for buying mobile data, buying a face mask or liquid sanitizer. For families that do not meet these "ideal" characteristics, they will not be able to implement what the government recommends.

Another obstacle stated by some informants is related to emotional and mental health. Lack of information is provided on how COVID19 patients can overcome the emotional and mental problems they face. Almost all informants stated that they were faced with a situation of despair or give-up when infected with COVID19. Some also stated that they and their family members were also affected by depression when infected with COVID19. Information related to how to overcome this anxiety is not provided sufficiently.

5.0 Conclusion

This research has explored how COVID19 survivors have searched and used information while in the self-quarantine or self-isolation phase. Our study is almost comparable to that of Yasir (2022). Our findings have shown that many sources have been used to obtain information. Sources of information from the government are the most reliable sources. Other sources of information, although easier, are less reliable. Many benefits have been obtained by COVID19 survivors when practicing the protocol or guidance provided by the government. Although government sources are more consulted, they are more difficult to obtain than information from social media sources. Therefore, it is recommended that the authorities concerned be more proactive by providing resources that are easily accessible to all levels of citizens.

As with other studies, there are some limitations in this study that can be improved if the next study is conducted. Among them is related to the limited number of informants which does not allow the research findings for generalizations. Therefore, the next study can be carried out as a survey that involves many respondents to enable generalization of the findings. Next, this study does not consider the informant's background and level of information literacy. This factor is important to look at once because it has a role in information behavior. Therefore this variable should also be evaluated in the next study.

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