



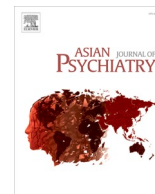
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journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/ajp**'Herd stupidity' as a result of 'irrational beliefs': The mental health issues in the COVID-19 outbreak**

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ABSTRACT

Hopefully, this writing is an input to us all, particularly Indonesia, in order to stop the 'herd stupidity' phenomena soon by reducing 'irrational beliefs'. If we all conduct ourselves with discipline, all of these problems will definitely be handled appropriately.

The current state of affairs in Indonesia is deteriorating, as seen by the rising number of COVID-19 instances on a daily basis, particularly in the capital city of Jakarta (Satuan Tugas Penanganan COVID-19, 2021). Pandu Riono, an epidemiologist from the University of Indonesia's Faculty of Public Health, said that Indonesia is now experiencing 'herd stupidity' (Martiana, 2021). This state is shown by the government's and society's disregard of the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as widespread ignorance, which has rendered COVID-19 in Indonesia relentless to nowadays. Furthermore, that is because during the last Eid al-Fitr many Indonesian people were 'mudik' and also the Indonesian government was not strongly committed to implementation of policy, such as the prohibition of 'mudik' (Martiana, 2021). The term 'udik', meaning 'village' or 'little town' is used as the phrases. The meaning of 'mudik' therefore returns from a large metropolis to a smaller town or hamlet (Rahmadiana et al., 2021). This phenomenon of return causes so many crowds that COVID-19 may be transmitted on a wide scale. Furthermore, the growing frequency of COVID-19 cases in Jakarta after residents returned to this capital city following 'mudik'.

Due to this, the 'positivity rate' of COVID-19 is presently 51.62% in Indonesia (Candra, 2021; Situmorang, 2021a). Each person in two who have been tested by PCR for COVID-19 during the past 24-hour has therefore been tested positive. It is far from projected to be less than 5% of the WHO's expected 'positivity rate' (WHO, 2021). The majority of persons living in Indonesia with COVID-19 are people with a delta-varian coronavirus (CNBC Indonesia, 2021). WHO said this variation is the quickest and most vulnerable strain ever, the highest contagious strain, and would 'recovery' most vulnerable individuals in low COVID-19 locations. This naturally affects mental health for persons without COVID-19 infections (CNBC Indonesia, 2021). In addition, along with the number of vaccinated patients, there are even COVID-19 infections (Dwianto, 2021). This has resulted in mental health problems experienced by Indonesians, such as anxiety, stress, depression, and the fear of death (Situmorang, 2020).

If examined more deeply, the satirical term 'herd stupidity' contrasts with the word 'herd immunity' which is one means of putting an end to COVID-19. When studied further, one of the explanations is that there is an interplay between culture and both personal sentiments (powerlessness) and information intake (conspiracy theories) during times of crisis

(Alexander and Smith, 2020). Most Indonesians have such conditions and are bored thus they have cabin fever (Situmorang, 2021b) and as before the outbreak, they want to do anything. Furthermore, the phenomenon of 'herd stupidity' can be explained simply by a well-known psychotherapy theory, namely Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). The paradigm of REBT recognizes 'herd stupidity' as a result of 'irrational beliefs'. 'Irrational beliefs' are defined as dogmatic, inflexible, and absolutistic; they are illogical, anti-empirical, and disruptive of one's goals (DiGiuseppe et al., 2013). Based on the 11 'irrational beliefs' explained by REBT (Ellis, 1994), there are 4 'irrational beliefs' that can explain further about the phenomenon of 'herd stupidity': 1) "I must worry about anything fearful or risky"; 2) "I must control events and people, because they control how I feel"; 3) "I must depend upon others else my life or self will fall apart"; 4) "I must avoid responsibilities and problems in order to be comfortable or content".

The majority of Indonesians are currently experiencing the first 'irrational beliefs', when in fact COVID-19 will not be a deadly virus if we can maintain health protocols and obey government regulations. It is proven in other countries at this time, the transmission of COVID-19 can be significantly suppressed. Furthermore, because of this excessive fear, in the end the majority of Indonesians felt that they had to control this situation in a way that they believed in. This is very much related to the second 'irrational beliefs'. In addition, the phenomenon of 'mudik' that occurs is the impact of the third 'irrational beliefs', because quite a lot of people are doing the same thing, even though they already know that in large crowds it can result in contracting COVID-19 faster. Then this is also very related to the fourth 'irrational beliefs', where people who do the 'mudik' avoid personal responsibility to keep COVID-19 from spreading further.

On the basis of the aforementioned phenomena, I recommend to all Indonesians that their mental health is maintained with many entertaining activities, in order to be able to dispute those 'irrational beliefs'. I propose that we do fun activities to preserve our mental health, notably listen to music, sing/play music, view videos of music (Situmorang, 2021c), and dance with the family in our homes (Situmorang, 2021d). Please contact a mental health clinician/practitioner who is always available to assist you if you need further counseling or psychotherapy support. Furthermore, the healthy body always starts with a healthy

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mentality, according to Herbert and Cohen (1993). Preserve mental health to maintain immunity, because if not, it may make your life more miserable and will have an even greater influence on your health psychologically because your immunity ultimately drops (Ramezani et al., 2020). In addition, this article is actually clear evidence of the bitter lessons of COVID-19 that have been described previously (Tandon, 2021).

Hopefully, this writing is an input to us all, particularly Indonesia, in order to stop the 'herd stupidity' phenomena soon by reducing 'irrational beliefs'. If we all conduct ourselves with discipline, all of these problems will definitely be handled appropriately.

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