

An Exploration of Individuals' Basic Assumptions towards Self-Resilience after the Covid-19 Pandemic in Aceh Province

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Abstract

This study aims to look at the basic assumptions of individuals towards self-resilience after trauma due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this study uses an e-research research method by distributing CBI questionnaires from google form through social media in order to obtain relevant information from various random respondents. While the data analysis technique was carried out by frequency distribution analysis to get the average percentage value of the research results. After analysing the percentage, it was found that the basic assumptions of individuals towards self-resilience after the COVID-19 pandemic with an average percentage of 7.73% VU, 7.720 NS, 18.33 NQR, 34.22% AP, and 32.43% VS. So the results of this study indicate that positive post-traumatic changes towards individual resilience due to the COVID-19 Pandemic occur very realistic changes, where individual resilience can be categorised as very transformational, where individual changes and mental development are much better than the pre-trauma situation before the COVID-19 Pandemic occurred.

INTRODUCTION

Basic beliefs or assumptive world is a series of assumptions about the world and a person's self that are strongly believed in self-defence efforts and are useful as a reference in recognising, anticipating, making plans or acting in their world (Cann et al. 2010; Janoff-Bulman, 1989). These assumptions serve as a foundation in anticipating the future, directing an individual's attention and memory to relevant matters, as well as being a reference in interpreting new information (Janoff-Bulman, 1989). The main beliefs in a person's assumptive world, according to Schwartzberg & Janoff-Bulman, (1991) include the assumption that: (1) the world is safe and good, (2) the world is meaningful, and (3) the individual is a valuable self.

When an individual experiences a traumatic event, basic beliefs about himself, others, relationships with others and his world, the individual's assumptions only function and rely on past events (Janoff-Bulman, & Timko, 1987; Janoff-Bulman, 1989; Kauffman, 2013). Major changes in an individual's foundational beliefs are indicators of trauma, which is a prerequisite for posttraumatic growth (Kauffman, 2013). The weakening of basic beliefs is thus important in bringing individuals into a paradigm that

encourages individuals to rebuild new basic beliefs that are more appropriate to their post-traumatic circumstances (Cann et al. 2010).

Zukerman and Korn (2014) argue that the newly built basic beliefs will affect the individual's interpretation of the post-traumatic situation, which allows posttraumatic growth to occur. Positive changes after trauma by Zoellner and Maercker (2014) are called posttraumatic growth (PTG). The positive post-traumatic change in question is a transformational change, not just about the ability to survive or recover back to the pre-traumatic (Cann et al., 2010; Zukerman & Korn, 2014). Posttraumatic growth is a change in perception regarding the occurrence of a much better development in the individual, which exceeds the pre-trauma state (Rossi, Weekers, & Hutsebaut, 2021; Kim et al., 2022).

Posttraumatic growth is believed to be the result of an individual's inner struggle with the trauma and post-traumatic circumstances they experience. The process of inner struggle involves cognitive abilities to think abstractly and make judgements about the individual's self and environment. Such post-traumatic cognitive abilities in the process of individual development as in research (Aldwin & Sutton, 1986; Cryder et al., 2006) which states that the achievement of thinking skills can encourage future behavioural changes in assessing the impact of previous experiences. Blok and Kremen (1996), and Pengukir (1998) explained that cognitive ability is the ability of individual self-defence mentality to rise in facing and overcoming risky and stressful situations through the defence of competencies possessed and positive and flexible adaptation to changes from stressful experiences called resilience.

When confronted with negative information about oneself, for example, an individual may blame the situation i.e. usually prioritising self-preservation (Campbell & Sedikides, 1999; Behrendt, 2016). Strategically downplay the centrality of threatened aspects of the self (Richardson, 2002) or emphasise different elements of the self (Tesser, 1988). Does growth only occur when self-protection mechanisms fail, or can growth occur in the context of self-protection and self-enhancement? So specifically, the researcher aims to find out how the Exploration of Individual Basic Assumptions Towards Self-Resilience After the COVID-19 Pandemic in Aceh Province. So this exploration is based on thoughts regarding individual basic beliefs in the spiritual dimension, human characteristics, individual relationships with others, the meaning of life and individual strengths and weaknesses after the COVID-19 Pandemic.

METHODS

In this study, researchers used a research method through an e-research approach by utilising online media to distribute Core Belief Inventory (CBI) questionnaire. This CBI questionnaire was made with Google forms that have been packaged in the form of statements, then distributed online to respondents.

So, respondents were asked to fill out the CBI questionnaire to assess the extent to which each statement corresponded to their circumstances or experiences as instructed, up to the stage of returning it. Conformity to the participant's or respondent's personal circumstances is rated on a 4-point scale: 0 means Strongly Unsuitable, 1 Unsuitable, 2 Less Suitable, 3 Suitable, 4 Strongly Suitable.

The CBI questionnaire has been developed by Cann et al. (2010) which consists of 9 items in the form of statements, and the statements have been tested for internal reliability with a fairly good value, namely ($\alpha = 0.82$). This CBI is designed to measure changes or shocks that occur in basic beliefs after a person experiences a traumatic event. While the data analysis technique is carried out by frequency distribution analysis to get the average percentage value of the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on research conducted on Individual Basic Assumptions on Self Resilience After the COVID-19 Pandemic conducted by researchers on 63 respondents using the CBI questionnaire. The following is the CBI questionnaire distributed by researchers in this study: (1) Because of the events of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I seriously examined the extent to which I believe that the things that happen to people are

fair; (2) Because of the events of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I am seriously examining the extent to which I believe things that happen to people can be controlled; (2) Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic event, I seriously examined my assumptions about why other people think and behave the way they do; (3) Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I seriously examined my beliefs about my relationships with others; (4) Due to the events of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I seriously examined my beliefs about my own abilities, strengths, and weaknesses; (5) Due to the events of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I am seriously examining my beliefs about my expectations for my future; (6) Due to the events of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I seriously examined my beliefs about the meaning of my life; (7) Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, I seriously examined my spirituality or religious beliefs; (8) Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic event, I seriously examined my beliefs about my value or self-worth as a person.

Table 1 <Respondents' responses are on a five-point scale (0 to 4)>

0	1	2	3	4
Very Unsuitable	Not Suitable	Not Quite Right	As Per	Very Suitable

Based on the scale above, the interval or score range is as follows:

Table 2. Interval

Categories	Score	Code
VU	0-20	0
NS	21-40	1
NQR	41-60	2
AP	61-80	3
VS	81-100	4

The following is a recapitulation of the percentage value of research results based on e-research from google form that researchers get from respondents:

Table 2 <Percentage of Respondents' Answers>

Respondents	Questions	Percentage				
		VU %	NS %	NQR %	AP %	VS %
	Scala	0	1	2	3	4
	1	20,3	6,3	31,7	30,2	11,1
	2	7,9	7,9	25,4	39,7	19
	3	4,8	9,5	25,4	34,9	25,4
	4	3,2	7,9	19	39,7	30,2
63	5	9,5	4,8	12,7	41,3	31,7
	6	3,2	6,3	11,1	33,3	46
	7	4,8	6,3	12,7	31,7	44,4
	8	11,1	6,3	9,5	27	46
	9	4,8	9,5	17,5	30,2	38,1
Total Scale %		7,73	7,720	18,33	34,22	32,43

Based on the data tabulation above, after analysing the percentage, it is found that the basic assumptions of individuals on self-resilience after the COVID-19 pandemic with an average percentage of 7.73% of VU, 7.720 of NS, 18.33 of NQR, 34.22% of AP, and 32.43 of VS. Thus, the level of presentation of individual self-resilience after the COVID-19 Pandemic has increased on average. In the opinion of Grotberg (1997; 2003) which defines resilience as a person's ability to survive after trauma, overcome it, and become strong.

Others describe resilience as positive adaptation in the face of adversity. It is a process that explains how some individuals achieve good outcomes following traumatic events despite being placed in

high-risk situations ([Grotberg, 2003](#)). According to Ryff & Singer ([2008](#)), resilience as a person's ability to maintain good mental and emotional health (posttraumatic growth) when faced with adversity and life challenges.

In addition, Ryff and Singer ([2008](#)) argue that resilience is people who are more resilient in six factors namely autonomy, self-acceptance, positive relationships, life goals, personal growth, and environmental exploration tend to be better at dealing with life pressures and challenges and have better physical and mental well-being. Smith et al. ([2008](#)) argue that resilience can be defined as the ability to recover from post-traumatic stress, the ability to adapt to stressful or difficult circumstances.

The Importance of Self-Resilience Exploration Protection

The importance of protective factors to increase resilience in individuals as research by Garmezy, Masten, and Tellegen ([1984](#)) hypothesised that there are several protective factors that can be applied through three different models such as compensation, challenge, and immunisation. In the compensation model, stressors and protective factors can be adaptively combined in the prediction of outcomes, and severe stress can be neutralised by personal qualities or sources of support. In the challenge model, stress has the potential to increase competence (providing stress levels are not excessive), and the relationship between stress and competence may therefore be curvilinear. In the immunity model, there is a conditional relationship between stressors and protective factors. Such factors moderate the impact of stress on the quality of adaptation but may not have detectable effects in the absence of the stressor. While compensatory, challenge, and immune models of stress resistance are not mutually exclusive. They may operate simultaneously or successively in the adaptive repertoire of resilient individuals, depending on their stage of development ([Cassen & Kingdon, 2007](#)).

Self-resilience refers to a person's ability to face, adapt to, and recover from challenges, stress, or failure in life. It involves the ability to remain strong and resilient in the face of difficult situations, as well as having the ability to recover and grow from negative experiences ([Veraart, 2023](#)).

Protective factors to enhance resilience in individuals ([Bejan-Mureşan & Cinpeanu, 2019](#)) such as emotional resilience which is the ability to manage negative emotions, such as stress, anxiety, or disappointment, in a constructive way. This involves developing skills in identifying emotions, self-regulating, and seeking support when necessary ([Werner, 2005](#)). An optimistic attitude and belief that individuals can overcome obstacles and difficulties. It involves focusing on solutions rather than problems, seeing failure as an opportunity to learn, and looking for the good side in every situation. In addition, belief in one's own ability or self-confidence to overcome challenges and achieve goals. It involves developing skills, achieving small desires gradually, and having a positive view of oneself ([Garmezy, Masten & Tellegen, 1984](#)).

The existence of positive and supportive social support relationships or networks with people around us, such as family, friends, or community ([Singer, 2009](#); [Tunç Aksan, Gündüz, & Yildiz, 2022](#)) i.e. having people who can be relied upon to provide support, listen, and help can help increase resilience ([Heylighen, Beigi & Busseniers, 2022](#)). In addition, good physical health by maintaining a balanced diet, exercise, adequate sleep, and stress management. Good physical resilience can help us face challenges better and recover faster from stress ([Rossi, Weekers & Hutsebaut, 2021](#); [Kim et al., 2022](#)).

Likewise, Pidgeon et al. ([2014](#)) defined resilience as the ability to respond well to post-traumatic problems, the ability to succeed in the face of adversity, and the ability to have more hope in difficult circumstances. Such as the ability of individuals to overcome life challenges and maintain good health and energy ([Janoff-Bulman, 1989](#)), so that they can continue to live in a healthy manner. Psychologically, it can be defined as the ability to cope and find meaning in events such as severe stress that a person experiences, which is then responded to with good intellectual functioning and social support ([Richardson, 2002](#)). Thus, self-defence skills are needed from circumstances that affect everyone's life,

because human life is always coloured by difficulties or unpleasant situations (Hodgson et al. 2016; Richards & Dixon, 2020).

Taku et al. (2015) defined that Post Traumatic Growth (PTG) is psychological growth as a result of personal struggle and self-defence due to trauma, hypothesised to occur when very stressful life events, such as natural disasters, pandemics, or mental stress due to events experienced that force people to re-examine their self-assumptions. Janoff-Bulman (1989) explained that individuals live life principally based on basic beliefs about themselves, others, their world and beliefs about things that are under or beyond their control.

Traumatic experiences (Regel & Joseph 2017) can destroy these basic beliefs and make individuals lose their grip. Often attempts to adapt to trauma, which confront individuals with circumstances that are very different from their basic beliefs, will trigger rumination, both intrusive and deliberate rumination (Calhoun et al. 1991; DePrince & Freyd, 2013; Greenblatt- Kimron, 2021). It is thought that the greater the change in an individual's underlying beliefs, due to trauma, the stronger the rumination process (Greenblatt-Kimron, 2021). The process of rumination, or continuous repetitive thinking, about the trauma and its impact on the individual's self and life is central to PTG (Regel & Joseph, 2017).

Similar positive post-traumatic developments within the concept of PTG have been found in research (Oltjenbruns, 1991a; 1991b) among adolescents who experienced the death of a parent. The positive impacts they experienced included: (1) a greater appreciation of life, (2) greater concern for loved ones, (3) stronger emotional bonds with others, (4) a stronger emotional quality of self, (5) greater empathy for others, (6) improved communication skills, and (7) better problem-solving skills.

The research suggests new opportunities for behaviour change as encompassed in the PTG concept (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2014). As the PTG model proposed, Calhoun and Tedeschi (2014) suggested the role of traumatic experiences is like the force of an earthquake that shakes an individual's basic beliefs. It is this shock that changes basic beliefs that then initiates PTG (Zoellner & Maercker, 2014). This is in line with Janoff-Bulman's (1992) view that at its core, trauma is a reflection of shattered or broken basic beliefs (Zukerman & Korn, 2014). Taku et al. (2015) suggested that future research should investigate which aspects of trauma can trigger or suppress the re-examination of one's core beliefs, as these are likely to be key determinants of posttraumatic growth, and should look at change longitudinally.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study indicate that positive post-traumatic changes or Posttraumatic Growth towards post-traumatic individual resilience due to COVID-19 occur very realistic changes, where individual resilience can be categorised as very transformational, where individual changes and mental development are much better than the pre-trauma state before COVID-19.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

All authors have contributed substantially to the conception, development, and completion of this research, so all authors agree to the publication of this article.

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