

DEFENSE MECHANISM AMONG INDONESIAN MOSLEMS COMMUNITY IN THE COVID-19 ERA

Muhammad Irfan Dzihni

Correspondence: irfandz@student.ub.ac.id
Medical Student Faculty of Medicine Brawijaya University, Malang, Indonesia

REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Introduction – COVID-19 has been a stressor to the general population, include the religious community. The coping mechanism came into many forms. The one mechanism among Indonesian moslems community seems to be disbenefecial, which sign is a denial of COVID-19 protocol and religious explanation. Here, we conclude the reaction according the theory of psychodynamics.

Methods – Researcher review 9 journals and 3 books around the topics defense mechanisms, Indonesian islamic disobeying community, and rationalization.

Results – The behaviour the moslem community present can be divided as obeying the rules and the opposite. propitiously, the majority of the communtiy tend to implement the regulation ruled. The rule-disobeying manners come into many forms, as appeared the anti-science community labelling the credence to science as a disbelief of god (syirk). Some came as an anti-vaccine community.

Discuss – The use of disavowal may protect individuals from their awareness relating to their behaviours, but not effectively hide them from others. Rationalization is the most prevalent defenses in all personality disorders examined (schizotypal, borderline, antisocial, and narcissistic).

Conclusion – Among Indonesians that are moslems in the era of pandemics, there are populations using rationalization to cope with the problems correlate to COVID-19 protocols. They tend to normalize the behaviour utilizing religious topics, such as the trust of faith than science. Rationalization is a disavol of hierarchy of defense mechanisms. It can benefit physiologically relating to their rule-violating behaviour, but amidst pandemics, this is nonprovable to self-biological health and social environment.

Keywords: psychodynamic, defense mechanism, moslem, Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 has been a burden to half of the world's population. It arose from a wildlife-trafficking market at Wuhan, a province within China. Sudden After the first emerged case from within China, it became a global epidemic problem in 2020. It has been causing about 111 million of population worldwide, and 2,5 million of widespread death (2021).¹ The shortfall was at any aspect of life, including those are of biological and psychosocial problems.

The psychological burdens that has been derived fashioned the coping strategies were a necessity. The strategies, come into many form. It can be a distraction (watching, social media, music), denial/blame (the use of defense mechanism), and acceptance/redefinition.² A distinct form of some came from the known religious community, to which christian,

moslem, buddhism, hinduism, jews included. The stressor originate from any of the following: the protocolar regulation regulators made, including the use of face mask, social distancing, and washing hands; the fears and anxieties regarding the virus, and any economical and social problem originating from the epidemics. Amidst the social distancing is any congregation to be postponed until the undesignated of time, including religious activities, such as daily and weekly pray and annual hajj for moslems, christian's weekly worship, puja for Hindu, etc.¹

This paper focus on the sort of mechanisms appear among moslems overlooking the crisis in Indonesia. Indonesia is a moslem greatest religious country.³ A decree impacting the religion is a decision for the population. An interference of the religion is an obstruction into the nation. However, some of the religion's leader appear to present the less adaptive of mechanisms, as can be perceived from their language or

behaviour. The behaviour then got amplified regularly by the presence social or mass media. It then got imitated by group had some shared opinion about the pandemics.³

The discussion mainly emphasize the behaviour as the mechanism of which the islamic community in Indonesia demonstrate according to Freudian psychodynamics theory..

METHOD

The researcher searches for the sources under the topics within limitation the general behaviour among Indonesian moslems community, emphasizes on the negative, and review it according the psychodynamics theory, and review the possible outcome from such a defense mechanism.

RESULT

The behaviour the moslem community present can be divided as obeying the rules and the opposite. propitiously, the majority of the communitiy tend to implement the regulation ruled. The rule-disobeying manners come into many forms, as appeared the anti-science community labelling the credence to science as a disbelief of god (syirk). Some came as an anti-vaccine community.³

Ignorance by some group about the emergency of pandemic made the condition felt worsened. Indonesian moslem community was divide into pro and contra condition. A group, named "Jama'ah Tabligh" held a conference in Gowa, South Sulawesi (19 - 22th of March 2020), in the middle of pandemics. The conference attendance is 8,223 in numbers. They gathered, shaken hands, and hugged one another. The conference held right after the former in Sri Petaling, Malaysia, that was a source of huge infection in the meanwhile.³ In a smaller scale, some groups resist the rules distancing *shaf* (the line within pray), some regarding the handshake after the daily pray, and the regulation concerning burial of death bodies, from the bathe of the corpse, the burial, until the assembly in the span interval (Tahlil, gathering praying the soul). Some statement of disobey came from the religious leader. UAS (Ustadz Abdu As-Shamad) said in an oration "the ummah is helped with sort of force. It has come. The Corona is one", the equivalent statement came from Ustadz Abdullah Gymnastiar and Ustadz Yahya Waloni, islamic orators.⁴

The rule-obeying community comes in many forms equivalently, and massive in population. Two biggest Indonesian moslem organisation, NU and Muhammadiyah, canceled the gathering planned. NU (Nahdhatul Ulama) delayed "Musyawarah Nasional Alim Ulama (Munas)" and "Konferensi Besar (Konbes)" that was projected to be in Pondok Pesantren Al-Anwar, Rembang where Muhammadiyah change the plan "Muktamar" gathering to later time. The majority obey the *fatwa* (leader's order) settled as a the God's order.³

DISCUSS

Islam's Perspective on Pandemics

To obtain some information regarding the healthy and less healthy behaviour showed by moslems, it is obligated to know some of the religion's details related to the pandemics. Some of the moslem scholars has suggested the interdependence of faith and science. Where the first put

forward the divine entity to be the origin of any limb beneath and focus on values, the latter seems more materialistic, putting forward materials as the root of other materials (causality).³ The encounter is when god, as the divine entity, has told moslems to believe in science.

Islam, however, has some study of jurisprudence. The study called "fiqh" or the islamic jurisprudence. The study has some principles of construction in other branch of science, named "ushl al-fiqh" or principles of islamic law.⁵ Ibn Hajr al-Asqallani (1372-1449) was a classic islamic scholar and polymath devising a book called (badz al Ma'un fi fadhl at Tha'un) or the book of pandemics, of which it can be realized that the islamic study of pandemics has existed hitherto. Inside, the scholar advice not to get close to the infected and even instructed "not to enter the area of outbreak nor to get out of it". Further, Ibn Hajr in separate creation state the concept of "tahrir al-halal", that can implies to a violation in religion.⁶

The Stress, Stressor, Coping Strategy, and Defense Mechanism

Stress is the force the human do restoring the bodily state towards equilibrium.⁷ It comprises of physiological, social and phsycological elements. The stressor is the one withholds the equilibrium. The psychological stressor can come from frustration (the stressor blocks the way towards a goal), conflict (the baffled condition choosing between two or more choises), psychological pressure (internal or external), and crisis (sudden huge stressor).⁷ The psychological coping can be adaptive or maladaptive. It divided into which is emotion focussed, and which is problem focused. The aspect of coping, according to Selye (1965)⁸, is the following: alarm reaction stage or the first stage, resistance, and exhaustion.

Defense mechanism is an unconscious psychological processes protecting individual from stressor. Somoe of the mechanisms major to Freud is repression, projection, rationalization, regression, intellectualisation, reaction formation, displacement, sublimation, introjection, denial, undoing, acting out, dissociation, and isolation. The paper will emphasize the rationalization, to which some moslems demonstrate.^{9,10}

The Defense Mechanism Attributed to Moslems' Behaviour

In 1908 Ernest Jones introduced how someone make sense his irrational acts on others that the two seems pausable. Rationalization funtions to distinct the individual from the motives that can be difficult to acknowledge by substituting more socially acceptable reasons for one's actions (Perry 1990)¹¹. It differs from lying that lying is a concious act wherever rationalization is an unconcious one.

It has some similarity to that of intellectualization that is an excessive thinking forcing emotions uncomfortable.¹⁰ Intellectualization differs in the fact of explanation wherever rationalization is the use of excuses to cover up his actual motives. Perry (1990) stated principles that can identify rationalization:¹¹

1. Overelaborations to describe someone's behaviour or avoidance of personal responsibility by referencing external plausible reasons;
2. The explanations possess a "conning" quality;
3. The faults described without apparent anxiety or shame;

4. There is denial that the act considered wrong.

Maramis (2014) said the signs to which someone could be considered rationalizing:⁷

1. Providing false explanation to justify his act or believe;
2. Can not bear altered or changed situation;
3. Become confused or angry whenever is disbelieved.

The following example demonstrate how someone use rationalization as a defense mechanism: where someone refusing to be involved in a sport game, the reason were "i was ill" or "I will have an exam tomorrow" opposite to the fact that he's in fear of loss, or a corruptor said that he's in need for money to live his family where he's in a sufficient of money.⁷

As was stated before, the behaviour some Indonesian moslems show described previously doesn't fit with the fact that the islamic jurisprudence shows conflicting statement. Those are also consistent to the four signs, according to Perry:

1. Some leaders constantly elaborate reasons according their avoidance in publicly.
2. The reason seems irrational hence opposing the islamic believe and jurisprudence of pandemics, showing a "conning" quality.
3. The faults described without apparent anxiety or shame;
4. There is denial that the act considered wrong.

Jones (1908) also include these kind of behaviours as religious rationalization. One must pay attention that it is not

the religion, religiosity, but religious person, the one doctrinated by what he sees as coming from religion.¹²

Is It Beneficial Psychologically?

Kaplan said that the rationalization can be considered as neurotic defense. The function is to alleviate affects distressing and common in normal person as well as neurotics. It also can have adaptive or socially acceptable aspects.⁹ Perry (2014) states that there are different level of defenses, including: psychotic (0), action (1), major image-distorting (2), disavowal and autistic-fantasy (3), minor image-distorting (4), neurotic (5b), hysterical (5a), obsessional (6), and high adaptive (7) defenses. It includes in the level of disavowal along with neurotic projection and denial.¹⁰

The use of disavowal may protect individuals from their awareness relating to their behaviours, but not effectively hide them from others. The study from Perry (1989) state that it is related with poor social and global functioning. It is therefore does not have benefit towards health. It is also related to dysthymia and individual panic disorder. Another study revealed that rationalization is the most prevalent defenses in all personality disorders examined (schizotypal, borderline, antisocial, and narcissistic). It is also correlates with hypochondriasis. However, in the age of pandemics, such a person may experience much bigger disadvantages regarding the mechanisms, especially health disadvantage. The disadvantages focusly are on their social environment, for such a person could act as a chain link of infection.¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Among Indonesians that are moslems in the era of pandemics, there are populations using rationalization to cope with the problems correlate to COVID-19 protocols. They tend to normalize the negatively disobeying behaviour utilizing religious topics, such as the trust of faith than science. Rationalization is a disavowal of hierarchy of defense mechanisms. It can benefit physiologically relating to their rule-violating behaviour, but amidst pandemics, this is nonprovable to self-biological health and social environment.

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