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# Developing Community Resilience as a Supporting System in the Care of People with Mental Health Problems in Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

People with mental disorders have complex disabilities which make them need other people's assistance in doing their daily living activities. Community resilience is one of the capacities which is needed to make a healthy environment for mental disorder patients. This study aims to describe how community resilience can be a supporting system in the care of people with mental disorders. A literature review was conducted in order to obtain 98 reference sources. Only 15 articles were eligible to be reviewed. The community resilience's supporting system consists of providing social, physical and economical infrastructures through employment opportunities or financial support and a decent life. Interactions between community members and people with mental disorders become a positive relationship, helping people with mental disorders to carry out their activities and to become independent. It also has an impact on decreasing the symptoms of relapse as well as reducing the level of dependency that cause them to continue to be a burden on their families, communities and global society.

**Keywords:** *community resilience, mental health, supporting system*

## INTRODUCTION

The number of people with mental disorders, which is increasing with the years, is becoming a burden for families, communities and the global health care system. In 2016, the prevalence of psychiatric patients in the United States reached around 44.7 million people who were more than 18 years old. This number indicates that 18.3% of Americans suffer from a type of mental disorder.<sup>1</sup> In Indonesia, the prevalence of severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia, reached around 400,000 people, or as many as 1.7 per 1,000 population. In addition, the prevalence of emotional and mental disorders as indicated by symptoms of depression and anxiety for those aged 15 years old and over reached about 14 million people or 6% population.<sup>2</sup>

The community is one of the support systems that can facilitate the recovery of mental disorders with the opportunity to live independently, to participate in community activities, to interact with others and to attach themselves to their daily environment. The community has an important role in creating positive support and wide opportunities for people with mental disorders for them to be fully involved in every event in the community.<sup>3-5</sup>

Previous studies explain that people with mental disorders also have awareness and the responsibility to deal with reality and to fulfil their actualisation. They understand expectations, goals, and responses to social needs and are able to work independently. They want to be recognised like any other individual who is able to adapt to society, despite experiencing inconsistencies in their way of thinking. If they only live in the hospital, what they see is only a group of people with mental disorders, and they can feel like life has stopped. Thus, support for people with mental disorders is needed, especially from the community around their homes. When they live with healthy individuals, they can plan for a better future.<sup>6,7</sup>

The treatment of mental disorders requires integration between adequate mental health services and

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opportunities for the sufferers to develop themselves. The key points are the provision of information about their conditions, the opportunity to develop themselves, the chance to foster hope of them recovering from their mental disorders and the importance of mental health services' role in the community in providing positive emotional control for people with mental disorders.<sup>8,9</sup>

The existence of positive support from the community can prompt motivation in the patients for them to get up and recover from mental disorders. The forms of support obtained can be varied, such as the existence of positive assessments, being given the opportunity to tell stories, to be listened to by others and to be able to engage in activities that exist in the community.<sup>7,10</sup> recovery oriented experiences are required which recognise the holistic and diverse needs of individuals. Aim: The aim of the study was to examine the experiences of people living with a mental illness who participated in a recovery oriented program called Recovery Camp. The study aimed to examine how the program may have related and contributed to their mental health recovery. Methods: A descriptive phenomenological approach guided the study. Consenting participants (n = 5

The discovery of various factors affecting individuals and community mental health shows that people with mental disorders who live in the community can recover with community support. This study has intended to describe how community resilience can be used as a support system in the care of people with mental disorders.

## **METHOD**

This study was a systematic review which used some of the literature from 98 articles obtained from Science Direct, Google Scholar, Proquest Health, Medical Complete, Proquest Nursing, Allied Health Source, Proquest Psychology Journals and Proquest Science Journals dating from 2008 to 2018. The inclusion criteria used were health or related research articles published in the last 10 years, research articles on topics about the community as a support system in the treatment of mental disorders, and research articles discussing the concept of community resilience.

Based on a literature review of 98 articles obtained from the listed databases, there were 50 articles that fulfilled the inclusion criteria. However, there were only

15 articles that discussed in detail about community resilience and the ability of the community to support the care of people with mental disorders.

## **RESULTS**

Gillard et al. states that the care of mental illness sufferers has two main keys; a positive personal relationship (oneself) and wider social interactions (others).<sup>11</sup> Self-awareness and positive self-acceptance give the individual the ability to reconcile themselves between the outside world and the internal mind. Self-recovery in mental disorders is the concept of balance between internal and external worlds. Table 1 shows the results of a literature review that discusses community resilience and community capacity in supporting the care of people with mental disorders.

## **DISCUSSION**

Conflicts, stress and exposure to hazards can cause crises in the community system. Resilience is the ability of individuals or groups to react and move away from stress or exposure to stressors. Resilience describes the dynamic process of adapting to the crisis situation faced by the people.<sup>12</sup> Resilience can be analogous to the philosophy of a bamboo plant, in which if it is exposed to the wind then it will bend and move, but in the end, it can return to its original position.<sup>13</sup>

Community resilience is the method or ability of a community to show its resilience when facing existing stresses to restore their productivity through daily activities.<sup>13</sup> Resilient communities have become the nearest supporting system for people with mental disorders. Nowadays, resilience is defined as a process rather than a result. Resilience is the capacity of the system to face or recover from disturbances as well as changes that threaten adaptation or development functions. There are two stages in which resilience is considered to be a process, namely: 1) the disturbance or stressor that significantly affects the system and 2) the resilience capacity system that shows an ability to adjust and recover from the occurrence of trauma.<sup>14</sup>

The mechanism of resilience activation occurs throughout three stages, namely liminal suspension, compassionate witnessing and relational redundancy. Liminal suspension means the time of crisis in which individuals mutually reinforce each other in relation to their interpersonal relationships. Compassionate witnessing means how individuals within the

community are bound together and help to fulfil the needs of one another. Relational redundancy means coordination between the sources of the organisation concerned with strengthening resilience. When a critical situation arises, the group of people will gather, interact and perform in a variety of ways that can enable their existing capacity to survive and achieve resilience.<sup>15</sup>

Teo et al. found that the mechanism of resilience activation occurs during an exposure to stressor or crisis events. However, the existence of a stressor can generate resources in the community to strengthen interpersonal relationships, especially helping in the recovery of people with mental disorders in the community.<sup>16</sup>

Cohen et al. explained that community resilience involves local organisations and existing policies applied locally and regionally when strengthening resilience. Effective leadership is a leader who is able to interact with other community members and who can meet the needs desired by all members of the community. Community leaders have an important role in improving community resilience, primarily by focusing on the needs and demands of the local community.<sup>17</sup>

The involvement of a local government is needed in enhancing community resilience, including the development of access to technology that can support sources of social and economic capital. Increasing the productivity of community members through economics supported by local governments can increase resilience.<sup>18</sup>

There are several strategies for the reconstruction and revitalisation of sources of social capital after a crisis, including strengthening social networks and communities, building social organisations, and macro-social policies that can improve people's access to resources and power. In the aspect of social capital, social networks are important aspects that can affect mental well-being.<sup>3,19-21</sup>

Several previous studies have explained that economic resources are the most significant aspect in relation to building resilience. When individuals have suitable jobs and are in line with local needs, this will also increase the adaptive capacity of the community. A resilient community is a community that has the capacity to innovate and provide mutual support to other members of the community, including making a person with a mental disorder able to engage in productive activities in the community.<sup>10</sup>

Community resilience is an important focus of attention which can lead to positive attachments between people with mental and community disorders. Resilient communities are able to provide opportunities for sufferers to live like other individuals, who are able to be independent and work for themselves and others.

## CONCLUSIONS

Community resilience is the capacity that is owned by the community that becomes an appropriate supporting system in the care of people with mental disorders living in the community. The increase in the provision of social, physical and economic infrastructure along with the interaction between community members and mental disorder patients is positive; helping people with mental disorders to carry out their daily activities and to become independent. This will also have an impact on decreasing the symptoms of relapse as well as reducing the level of dependency that will continue to be a burden on families, communities, and global society.

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**Ethical Clearance:** Not required.

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