

Experiences of Indonesian Adolescents Losing Parents Due to COVID-19: a Phenomenological Study

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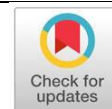
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Abstract

Background: Adolescents losing their parents is the worst event they experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Adolescents raise a traumatic response after a loss occurs.

Objective: This study aims to explore the description of the condition of adolescents in dealing with the loss of parents due to COVID-19.

Methods: Qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach. The number of participants is 12 people with the criteria of youth aged 10-19 years consisting of men and women who have lost their parents due to COVID-19. Interview data were processed using the Colaizzi technique.

Results: Four themes through the theme analysis, namely adolescents are not ready to face sudden loss, adolescents experience suffering due to the loss of parents, adolescents find it difficult to go through the loss process, and changes occur in adolescents due to the loss of parents.

Conclusion: The findings of this study show that the sudden loss of parents due to COVID-19 harms adolescent mental health. As a result, mental health nurses in the community need to detect adolescents early for signs of stress and anxiety due to the loss of parents and take steps to strengthen adolescents' self-defense after loss.

Keywords: adolescent; COVID-19; lost parents; grieving; phenomenology

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is a primary concern for the entire planet. WHO classifies COVID-19 as a global epidemic that has killed millions of people. The high number of adult COVID-19 cases impacts adolescents' lives. 38% of adolescents in Wuhan, China, were found to have anxiety symptoms, according to research (Xie et al., 2020). Another study found that 31% of participants were concerned, and 13.5% were annoyed by COVID-19-related alterations (Mitra et al., 2021). In addition to the trauma of losing the closest relative to COVID-19, the burden of COVID-19 on adolescents' mental health is considerable and requires treatment.

Data on adolescents who have lost their parents due to COVID-19, studied by Unwin et al. (2022), show an increase of 90% in the period since wave 1 of COVID-19. Indonesia, as of September 30, 2021, as reported by the *Ministry of Women and Children*

Empowerment and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), recorded the most deaths in DKI Jakarta (67.6%) and West Java (67.2%) (Satuan Gugus Tugas Penanganan COVID-19, 2021). Losing parents in adolescents due to COVID-19 is positively related to anxiety (Caycho-Rodriguez et al., 2021).

Adolescents' anxiety that occurs after losing their parents after COVID-19 is reinforced by qualitative research which shows that they feel personality changes since the loss occurred, spend a lot of time at home, and some even think of going with the deceased (Wijayanti & Suatin, 2020). Anxiety conditions arise as a result of the loss and grieving process after losing a parent. Losing a parent for more than six months delays grief, making adolescents unable to process their grief (Arnout et al., 2020). As many as 39.3% of adolescents show symptoms of anxiety due to grieving after losing their parents to COVID-19 (Breen et al., 2021).

Adolescents may use ineffective coping mechanisms like blaming God, pretending their parents are still alive, feeling emotionally distressed because they cannot accompany the deceased or attend funerals, isolating themselves from their environment, or even engaging in behaviors they have never engaged in before like smoking and drinking alcohol (Asgari et al., 2022). As a result, it takes on the role of nurses in the juvenile environment of the community. Nurses provide care and treatment in the hospital setting and endeavor to promote health and fight disease in the neighborhood.

The purpose of this study is to serve as basic data for nurses to collect various factors that play a role in the mental health of adolescents who have lost their parents. The data that has been collected strengthens the role of nurses as promoters, creating advanced prevention strategies to prevent more severe mental health events such as depression by establishing a model of coping mechanisms for coping with the loss of parents.

METHOD

The framework approach to qualitative data analysis uses a theme-based approach. The collected data is reduced through summary and synthesis while maintaining links to the original data. Using this framework, the authors examine the experiences of adolescents after experiencing the loss of a parent due to COVID-19. This study used a phenomenological approach using thematic analysis of directed and depth interviews. Twelve participants recruit through information from the COVID-19 task force in the DKI Jakarta area. Participant inclusion criteria are adolescents aged 10-19 years who have lost a parent due to COVID-19, not limited to the length of death or the loss of one or both parents. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, and snowball sampling who lost their parents due to COVID-19.

The Research Ethics Committee of the University of Indonesia approved this study with a certificate of passing research ethics review number KET-153/UN2.F12.D1.2.1/PPM.00.02/2022. Data was collected between April 2022-August 2022. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for easy analysis. Participants met the eligibility criteria after being explained to participate in this study. The inclusion criteria were adolescents aged

between 10-19 years, who had lost their biological parents due to COVID-19.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews because the information submitted by the participants was private and confidential (Morrison et al., 2004). The in-depth interviews were structured in a number of structured questions, namely: (1) Can you tell me about the incident when you lost your father/mother, you can start with your father/mother getting sick with COVID-19? (2) What was the first thing you did when you heard the sad news? (3) what do you think is meant by death? (4) How would you describe the feeling of loss at this time? (5) What changes do you feel when your father/mother is gone? (6) What things can help your younger sibling get over the feeling of sadness? (7) How will younger siblings live life in the future without parents? Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with each participant, allotting 30-45 minutes for each meeting. The sampling process allows saturation to be achieved. After validating and clarifying the twelve participants it was sufficient to conclude that no new information or themes might emerge from further data analysis.

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Creswell, 2013). Verbatim is done every time the writer finishes conducting interviews with participants. The writer re-reads the participant's sentence and writes it in word-for-word transcript form according to what the participant said. The author identifies key phrases or sentences that describe the experience of loss. Important sentences are formulated into general themes. These themes are formulated into a list of initial codes which are then sorted into categories grouped according to a broader theme. Next, the authors validated the findings with the participants and engaged them to provide comments.

RESULT

Participants characteristic

Nine adolescents lost their biological fathers, two adolescents whom their mothers left, and one adolescent who lost both parents due to COVID-19. They interviewed about their understanding of the meaning of loss, the impact of loss, and the obstacles to going through the grieving period.

Table 1. Description of participant

Characteristic	Participant											
	P01	P02	P03	P04	P05	P06	P07	P08	P09	P10	P11	P12
Age of adolescent	19	19	19	19	13	12	12	12	14	10	13	15
Sex	M	F	M	F	F	M	M	F	M	F	M	M
Loss amount	Father	both	Father	Father	Father	Mother	Father	Father	Father	Father	Mother	father
Time since death	1 month	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year	8 months	1 year	1 year	1.5 years	4 months	7 months

Theme

The first theme was labeled "not ready for sudden loss." The second theme is "experiencing the suffering of losing a parent." The third theme is "the difficulty of going through the loss process." The fourth is "Changes due to losing parents." The four main themes were then divided into 11 sub-themes.

In table 3, each theme is broken down into sub-themes and described with direct participant quotes. These themes are discussed with selected quotes to illustrate adolescents' experiences when dealing with their parents' deaths due to COVID-19 adolescents deal with the loss of their parents.

Table 2. Theme analysis

Major Theme	Sub-themes
Response to sudden loss of parents due to COVID-19	Emotional outbursts, helplessness, inability to channel emotions
Experiencing the suffering of losing a parent	Increased burden: with additional roles in the family, there is no future
Difficulty going through the loss process	Low support from the relationships, changes in funeral rituals, relationship with the deceased
Changes due to the loss of parents	New negative habits, traumatized by death, avoiding situations that evoke memories of parents.

Theme 1: Adolescent responses to the sudden loss of parents due to COVID-19

Theme 1, "Response to the Sudden Loss of a Parent Due to COVID-19," contains adolescents' responses when facing the loss of a parent. These responses include emotional outbursts, helplessness, and the inability to channel emotions. Emotional explosions occur immediately upon hearing the sad news, in hospitals, at home, and during funerals.

Subtheme 1: Emotional outburst

Adolescents are consciously aware of their deep sorrow for the loss of their parents and lose emotional control to express their grief. Adolescence stated that they experienced a flood of emotions that they had never experienced before when they first heard the sad news. Even though they had experienced loss in the past, when one of their parents died in the hospital due to COVID-19, they did not think that their parents would not survive COVID-19. The death of their parents was beyond their expectations when they entered the

hospital in good condition and were declared dead after a few days. They believe that such loss and grief transcend other issues as the biggest obstacle they have faced up to that point in their journey of loss. Another emotional outburst is a surprised response, feeling unprepared, with the following expressions:

- "I'm hysterical... I want to let it all out... I'm shocked, I'm shocked... who doesn't cry..." (P01, P05, P09)*
- "Just cry until you lie on the floor.. there are many friends there.. go straight to the ICU.. uh, not the ICU but the isolation room.. The hospital was difficult at that time.. between fatmawati hospital and puri hospital .. ICU didn't get it.."(P07 , P12)*
- "..I cried so hard when I found out dad wasn't there that I passed out..." (P02,P05)*
- "...previously my mother passed away...so when my father died I was shocked...not ready...(P12, P03)*
- "..some days I just cry, sometimes screaming alone in my room, remembering my father's funeral, but I can't get close".. (P04,P09,P011)*

Subtheme 2: Helplessness

Emotions ran high again a few days after the loss followed by a feeling of helplessness, with the keywords broken, empty, and not knowing what to do, as expressed in the following statement:

"...I lost twice in a row... it's like it's broken... it's broken..." (P11, P06)

"..I didn't expect Papa to die..then I suddenly felt empty..as if there was a space..." (P04,P05)

"I'm spoiled, huh?"

"..I want mom to be beside me, teach me to study, joke with me..it's hard to do without mom" (P06,P13)

Subtheme 3: Unable to express emotions

Adolescents sometimes get big demands from the environment, where they must show their maturity, even though channeling emotions at that time is necessary. Adults don't know that adolescents who are silent when the grieving process is still going on have hidden emotions. If these emotions do not come out or are not expressed by adolescents, then the process of accepting loss is still incomplete for them.

"..I'm not going to show you because you don't want Mom to be sad.. just keep it to yourself.." (P01, P10)

"..No one helps me.. I just cry a lot.. alone in my room, I don't want my sister and mother to know I'm sad, I feel sorry for them.." (P02, P08)

"..Want to cry but can't, so mom won't cry, I'm sorry if mom is sad.." (P04)

".. I'm despondent, but I'm told by my grandmother, father... boys can't cry, so I just hold on.. never tell anyone else.." (P08, P09,P12)

"..I have friends to play with, but when I'm sad, I never tell my friends... I'm embarrassed to cry so much..." (P11, P05)

Theme 2: Experiencing the suffering of losing a parent

Theme 2, "Experiencing the suffering of losing parents," includes the added burden of adolescents, namely their additional role in the family and an unclear future.

Subtheme 1: Increased load

Reducing one family member's workload is a separate task for the family. The eldest child entering adolescence directly acts as a substitute for the head of the family without being asked.

Adolescent boys consider it their responsibility to replace the father's role in the family regarding the economy, educating younger siblings, and overcoming other family problems. For adolescent girls, they help their mothers more with the family economy:

"..All the burdens are on me, I am the head of the family...and the biggest problem is the cost. What about my younger siblings? I don't know how to guide them.." (P01, P03)

"I'm sure I'm confused about becoming the head of the family...especially when I have to teach my younger siblings...I don't have that experience...not to mention if there's a problem, it's usually the father who solves it"(P03, P04)

"..I go to school while working to help my mother sell cakes..I bring the cakes to school, I'm sorry for my mother..I'm confused about being left by my father.." (P012)

"Finances are still safe so far... God willing, if there is luck... I will still prioritize younger siblings... that is my responsibility, the important thing is younger siblings..." (P01, P13)

Subtheme 2: There is no future

The closeness of adolescents to the deceased is a strength that they must be strong in facing loss. The deceased became a role model for their children, both boys and girls. For girls, a father figure is the giver of their future direction, while for boys a figure who is wise in solving problems. Meanwhile, the mother figure has been seen as a companion in finding a way out and a learning companion since childhood.

"..if you want to go anywhere now it's up to you...if you have a father, you have to do this...so this...directed...now it's up to you.. my brother told me to join the police, uncle told me to enter tourism...uncle there is a lecturer.. I don't want to be like this.." (P04, P10)

"..someone has to push me..if there is a father I will be directed... mmm..maybe later sis (participant cries)." (P01,P05)

"..usually mom accompanies me to study, now I don't anymore.. I don't know what school I'll be doing later (participant tells a story while crying, head down)." (P06,P10)

"Fathers are busy at work, no one can help them study like mom (participant cries) confused about

studying, especially long distances like this, father brought his cellphone..."(P11, P04)

"..I lost 2 times in a row.. it's like it's broken.. it's broken.." (P02)

Theme 3: Difficulty going through the loss process

Theme 3: "difficulty going through the loss process" includes lack of support from relatives, changes in funeral rituals, and relationships with the deceased. Social support from relatives comes in the form of being present when the loss occurs, but during the COVID-19 pandemic, this was difficult to do.

Subtheme 1: Lack of family support

In Indonesia, the "gotong royong" culture is very strong, especially when people face death. They will gather at the funeral home and pray for those who have died together. This condition could not occur when COVID-19 hit the world in 2020–2022. The grieving family went through their grief without visits from other people due to the restrictions (self-isolation) that were in effect at that time. Religious ceremonies are also carried out virtually; social movements are very limited. Incidents of loss cause deep sorrow for adolescents who need the support of other relatives. Expressions of a lack of support from relatives are reflected in adolescents' utterances of loneliness and hope that the deceased will return

"..When I'm under pressure, I like or don't want to face sadness.." (P08)

"..I can't talk to anyone..in prayer, I want my father to get well, I want my father to have a long life.. I miss my father.. I want to meet him" (P05, P08)

"..I couldn't do anything then... dad couldn't visit the hospital, everyone at home couldn't go out either.. I was confused, mom was confused and could only cry..until dad died I couldn't see.." (P05, P012)

Subtheme 2: Funeral ritual changes

The grieving process for losing a parent has been made more difficult by changes to funeral customs that do not align with Indonesian culture.

"I'm sorry Papa was alone when he buried, we didn't accompany him... it was hard for us..." (P01, P08)

"Once I lost a relative... it's been a long time... but now it's even worse, it's quiet... no one is entertaining... no family comes to read prayers for the deceased"(P02,P06, P10)

Subtheme 3: Relationship with the deceased

The close relationship with the deceased affects a person's grieving process, especially if the loss occurs suddenly or unexpectedly because of the short distance between illness and death. Hence, adolescents are not ready to face loss. Adolescents have difficulty getting rid of grief because absence at the funeral is one of the contributing factors.

"..I'm still confused about myself... I'm sincere or not if daddy isn't there.. I'm confused about expressing it... what do I want, what am I looking for.." (P09,P12, P15)

"..I feel that daddy is still in the hospital..in my mind that I won't be sad huh...I feel daddy is still in the hospital..how is it...because I didn't see his funeral" (P01, P03, P12)

"If there's a problem... I like to think... there's certainly a papa... papa is handling it... then I immediately think, try it if there's still papah..." (P03, P04, P10)

"..I want dad to come back..I want to go on trips together, so I can drive with dad if I go to school. If it's my dad's birthday, he likes to give me money..I want...but dad is gone, it's hard for me to forget, dad is close really with me.."(P05)

Theme 4: Changes due to the loss of parents

Theme 4: Changes due to the loss of parents due to COVID-19 significantly impact adolescents. Changes include new negative habits, trauma with something that smells of death, and avoiding situations that evoke parents' memories.

Subtheme 1: New negative habits

New habits that emerge after unpleasant events occur are one of the coping mechanisms that emerge to reinforce oneself. However, if new habits emerge in a negative direction, this needs to be addressed further.

"...I can't if I was under pressure before when mom and dad were still around, I can still face problems... now it's so hard to control myself..." (P02)

"...I'm more afraid now... afraid to start something like that..." (P07,P11)

"..I've done something negative..it ran to drink and cigarettes.." (P04, P09, P12)

"..I feel quieter since losing my dad... when my mom wasn't okay... but when daddy wasn't around I

found it hard to talk to new people... I didn't want to start a conversation..." (P03, P05)

Subtheme 2: Traumatized by something that smells of death

Trauma can occur when a new adolescent experiences the loss of someone closest to her/him, so subconsciously he/she wants to avoid situations that make the memory of the deceased repeat itself.

".. when you see an ambulance with the sound of sirens, you get goosebumps. Remember the deceased.." (P08)

"... how did I become like this... a neighbor died, and his coffin was passing by, I couldn't... I felt like my legs were going to fall, I must have gone inside... traumatized..." (P04, P05)

" In the months after my father's death, I can't see the news on TV about people who have died. The atmosphere became tense.." (P01, P03)

Subtheme 3: Avoiding situations that evoke memories of deceased parents.

Adolescents generally have fond memories with their parents. Adolescents show the use of coping mechanisms to avoid situations with memories of their parents to protect themselves from the feeling of loss due to closeness to the deceased.

"...I just close the photos of my dad, I don't want to see daddy's clothes, it hurts my heart to be torn to pieces..." (P01, P04,P09)

"..I usually like to go to the mall and look at clothes.. but now I don't want to do that (P10, P05)

"..Papa loves his bicycle. Right before he got sick, he often played with me.. the locals brought together papah in the bicycle community.. so I rarely ride bicycles since daddy got sick.. now since daddy wasn't around, I'm so lazy I don't want to I'm on a bike..it just doesn't feel good.." (P01, P05,P13)

DISCUSSION

Adolescent responses to the loss of a parent

Adolescence is a transitional period into adulthood which has become a confusing phase for adolescents. If during this developmental period the adolescent experiences a crisis such as the sudden loss of a parent, the role of the adolescent becomes shattered. The age difference of 10-19 years is intended to see differences in responses in dealing with grief over loss. The loss of a father or mother or

both in an adolescent's life is also seen in this study to see differences in adolescent responses and obtain variations in data at age levels.

Adolescent responses differ at age level. Pre-adolescents 10-12 years old in participants P10, P06, P07, P08, and P11 on average on days 1-4 have not shown high emotional turmoil. They don't know how to express loss appropriately. Abstract thinking is not fully defined at this age. They see death as something that can come back, so they have specific questions to ask others about death. The bargaining process was very visible in participants P10 and P06 who often said "I want my father back". Another response is not wanting to show sadness in front of friends because of embarrassment. P11, P07, and P08 think that they are required not to cry in public. Research conducted by (Siddaway et al., 2015) that this age includes a difficult transition period because this age cannot understand loss and does not think that it can happen to anyone they know. The demand for the presence of an important person in their life to meet their needs, especially for a sense of comfort, and security, and the need for protection exacerbates the grieving situation that pre-adolescents must go through.

Adolescents aged 13-16 years namely P5, P11, and P12 have understood the concept of loss because they have been able to assess it abstractly. Loss is seen as a process that occurs in all human beings (Corr & Balk, 2010). Adolescents at this age are in the junior high school stage, which means that their social abilities are wider and their responsibilities are increasing. However, adolescents do not suddenly escape the feeling of losing the most important person in their life. P5 responded to the loss with great grief. The bodies of adolescents who have started puberty require them to be more accepting of loss and help their living parents not to experience prolonged grief (Reighard, 2016). Repressed emotions show a response to crying alone, being afraid to start something, and losing someone who can guide him in learning.

Participants P01, P02, P03, and P04 were 19 years old when they learned that their parents had died and showed shock responses such as emotional outbursts and feelings of helplessness. Emotional outbursts indicate hysteria, loud crying, fainting, and shock. Extreme sadness, anger, denial of reality, and disbelief occurred to almost all participants aged 19 years. Research conducted by Shear (2012)

according that signs of distress such as depression, tend to blame themselves for a moment that is considered important but they don't do it to the deceased, so they want to always remember the figure of the deceased as a good role model.

Feelings of helplessness are shown by feeling broken, empty, and not knowing what to do. The shock response experienced by adolescents is normal, especially if you have to lose the closest person in a short time. Conditions That Have Never Occurred in Today's Youth The symptoms of COVID-19 that appear are not severe; therefore, the adolescent and his family did not expect a sudden loss. It was more regrettable that they could not meet one last time or attend the funeral.

The grieving process experienced by adolescents is more or less the same as that of adults, but according to the growth and development of adolescent emotions, it still fluctuates. Emotional outbursts that affect endocrine hormones send hormones into the bloodstream (Kozier et al., 2018). The body adapts to the emergence of stressors. However, if the production of this hormone is still high, it is feared that adolescents will experience fatigue because they do not know how to get through the grieving period (Romeo, 2013). Adolescent self-defense that appears subconsciously can be maladaptive, and adolescents will likely fall into a depressive phase if they do not get the right support (Orgilés et al., 2021).

Adolescent self-defense results from the ability to cope with mechanisms for adapting to challenging life experiences. The American Psychological Association (2017) explains that self-defense has the flexibility to survive difficulties and get back up and grow even though life experiences difficulties such as losing parents as adolescents. A research study (Pillay, 2022) states that adolescent self-defense during the COVID-19 era results from the ability to resolve events that stress them out through coping mechanisms.

Adolescents frequently use coping mechanisms to deal with sadness by isolating themselves from their surroundings. Previously enjoyable habits are now limited because feelings of dependence on the deceased constrain them. The closeness factor of

the relationship with the deceased during their lifetime influenced them through the grieving period (Garcia,2010). In this condition, adolescents need support from their group and closest family (Orgilés et al., 2021). One aspect that needs to be considered is the role of teachers in schools for students who experience loss. The school must understand that being loud or silent reflects the most profound emotions that must be overcome immediately.

The loss experienced by adolescents should not be allowed to drag on because a prolonged grieving process can cause stress and even depression so that adolescents cannot continue their developmental tasks, incredibly emotional and social development (Alvis et al., 2022), where adolescents must achieve emotional independence in completing conflicts within themselves and can solve the problem without help from parents who are usually role models (Khadijah et al., 2023).

Feelings of emptiness after learning that both parents died can be prolonged, according to the experiences experienced by adolescents. Sudden loss feels like an empty room, empty of not knowing what to do and a loss of grip, which has always helped adolescents deal with difficult times. Adolescents must overcome everything alone, a condition no individual feels ready for. This condition is similar to research conducted by Wijayanti and Suatin (2020), where adolescents feel deep sadness over the loss of role models in the family.

According to Kubler Ross (Burnier, 2017), the stages of grieving are passed through by adolescents; it is just that these phases do not always appear in the loss process. Anger often appears as an initial response to loss. Emotional explosions and hysterical screams were not seen in all participants; this could be because the relationship with the deceased was perfect. They were sincere about their parents' departure due to illness and disasters experienced in all parts of the world. The phrase that appeared most frequently was depression. Participants showed symptoms of not leaving the house, not wanting to eat, much sadness, fear of starting, much silence, loneliness, and an additional burden of not following their developmental tasks.

Efforts to overcome the loss of parents due to the Covid-19 disaster

Adolescents coping with loss mostly come from family and peers. It happened to all participants. With this condition of loss, adolescents are closer to their families. The theory of growth and development (Stikkelbroek et al., 2016) states that adolescents are closer to their peer group. However, in contrast to when they lose their parents, participants show a more intense closeness to siblings and parents who are still alive.

Adolescent boys in their late adolescents show great sympathy and try to protect their families from sadness by ignoring their feelings. This participant acts as if he is a substitute for his parents as the head of the family. However, the exciting thing is that young boys carry out this sympathetic behavior in the late adolescent phase and young women in the early adolescent phase. An adolescent who acts as an older brother who protects his younger sibling and does not want to make his mother sad by not showing a loss in front of many people.

The focus should be on behavior when adolescents engage in harmful activities such as drinking alcohol and smoking, new habits they have never done before. The emergence of positive and negative new habits can undoubtedly use for further research. Adaptive or maladaptive coping mechanisms that adolescents will take to resolve the loss. This adaptation process follows Roy's behavioral theory (Moghadam et al., 2019), which shows that coping decisions are influenced by adolescent confidence in solving problems. Efforts are needed to reduce maladaptive coping and strengthen adaptive coping.

Barriers/difficulties faced by adolescents after losing parents

All participants acknowledged having a close relationship with the deceased as a difficulty in getting through this grieving period. The death of a parent or adolescent is emotionally binding and can cause extreme psychological reactions. If not handled properly, it can cause emotional turmoil that continues into adulthood (Xu et al., 2018). A prolonged feeling of grief is caused by the appearance of the memory of the deceased in every particular situation, place, and moment with the deceased. The feeling of longing and dependence

that have not been separated from the deceased makes it difficult for adolescents to face the grieving period. Although some admit that they sincerely accept it, the loss process must be reviewed again after more than six months of experiencing losses.

A study by (Ellis et al., 2013) found that losing a parent before age 18 impacted adult life. Lack of appropriate social support for surviving children and parents and failure to provide transparent and honest information is related to the meaning of loss by adolescents. Barriers to going through the grieving phase negatively impact adulthood regarding trust, relationships, self-esteem, feelings of loneliness and isolation, self-esteem, and the ability to express feelings.

Another difficulty expressed by the participants was that due to the loss of a family's source of income, adolescents must think hard to help their parents who are still alive and the survival of their siblings. A research study by (Guzzo & Gobbi, 2021) found that adolescents with chronically ill parents experience a loss process and experience depressive anxiety disorder caused by a less conducive environment and an unstable economy. Another study of adolescents in Indonesia found that the economic impact of COVID-19 triggered adolescents to marry early (Rahiem, 2021). Early marriage solves economic problems after one or both parents die from COVID-19. Efforts to overcome economic problems have an impact on increasing the burden on adolescents to replace the role of parents lost due to COVID-19. The impact of the increased role of adolescents on adolescent mental health after the loss of parents needs to address. It is crucial to detect post-behind adolescent mental health early and provide mental counseling at the school health Unit in dealing with symptoms of stress and anxiety (Arfianto et al., 2023).

Support in going through the loss of a parent

Adolescents need the support of the nuclear family and society to get through the loss phase. Support can be in the form of material, social support, and moral support. Material needs can be in the form of money to meet the needs of everyday life. Adolescents who have just entered college at the age of 19 are put in a confusing position about whether they will continue to study or have to help the family economy. This additional burden felt heavy because it needs to follow adolescents'

growth and development (Mai et.al., 2021). Adolescents need a place to tell stories to be able to express their feelings. Moral support allows venting feelings and can come from friends, closest relatives, or parents/guardians.

CONCLUSION

Exploring the experiences of 12 adolescents with the loss of their parents due to COVID-19 resulted in four main themes and eleven sub-themes which have been validated correctly and convincingly. The main theme is emotional outbursts, helplessness, and inability to channel emotions after losing parents, which are the most common responses in adolescents to the sudden loss of parents due to COVID-19. The additional burden on adolescents as the head of the family, helping the family's economy and guiding siblings cause adolescents not to think about their future.

Lack of support from relatives when COVID-19 occurs, and changes in funeral rituals make it difficult for adolescents to accept this loss. Limited social contact when COVID-19 occurs causes adolescents to feel they do not have support when needed. The closer the relationship between adolescents and the deceased makes them slower to accept the meaning of losing their parents.

Nursing Implication

This research adds to the knowledge of psychiatric nursing regarding the process of loss and grieving in adolescents who suddenly lose their parents due to COVID-19. The research theme has implications for psychiatric nurses in the community, teachers, and parents/guardians who deal with adolescents with stress and anxiety due to the loss of parents due to COVID-19. Recommendations for Psychiatric nurses in the community must be able to identify early on the mental health of adolescents who have lost their parents due to COVID-19. The efforts of psychiatric nurses in the community are to provide counseling during the grieving process and to train them to improve coping skills to deal with stress and anxiety so that self-defense against stress can form. The results of the study have several limitations. Another variable that can be explored further is how family and environmental support can improve coping mechanisms for adolescents with loss

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