

Understanding Distrust of the Public Sector Leading to Covid-19 Dissidence in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 has drastic social, economic, and health impacts worldwide. However, mixed attitudes and behaviors of individuals towards Covid-19 ranging from the most responsible to the least bothering ones, have been evident over the last two years. Based on these mixed responses, the current study examines the impact of citizens' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics on their threat perceptions and resultant COVID-19 dissidence. Quantitative research methodology with the survey technique was applied to collect data from 537 citizens of Jakarta, Indonesia. SmartPLS 3.0 software was used to assess the structural equation modeling and perform the regression analysis for examining the hypothesized relationships. The results revealed a significant impact of citizens' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust on official statistics in creating the COVID-19 dissidence. Likewise, the results showed the mediatory role of threat perceptions in transmitting the citizens' attitude and distrust in government in COVID-19 dissidence. Furthermore, the current study is a valuable addition to the existing body of literature by highlighting the factors that created the rebellious attitudes and behaviors among the citizens of Jakarta, Indonesia, during the crucial times of COVID-19. Keywords: Attitudes to Self-Isolation; Distrust in the Official Statistics; COVID-19 Dissidence; Threat Perceptions; Jakarta

ABSTRAK

COVID-19 memiliki dampak sosial, ekonomi, dan kesehatan yang drastis di seluruh dunia. Namun, sikap dan perilaku beragam individu terhadap Covid-19 mulai dari yang paling bertanggung jawab hingga yang paling tidak mengganggu, telah terlihat selama dua tahun terakhir. Berdasarkan tanggapan yang beragam ini, penelitian saat ini meneliti dampak sikap warga terhadap isolasi diri dan ketidakpercayaan pada statistik resmi pada persepsi ancaman mereka dan pembangkangan COVID-19 yang dihasilkan. Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif dengan teknik survei digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data dari 537 warga Jakarta, Indonesia. Perangkat lunak SmartPLS 3.0 digunakan untuk menilai pemodelan persamaan struktural dan melakukan analisis regresi untuk menguji hubungan yang dihipotesiskan. Hasilnya mengungkapkan dampak signifikan dari sikap warga terhadap isolasi diri dan ketidakpercayaan pada statistik resmi dalam menciptakan pembangkangan COVID-19. Demikian pula, hasil penelitian menunjukkan peran mediasi persepsi ancaman dalam menularkan sikap dan ketidakpercayaan warga terhadap pemerintah dalam pembangkangan COVID-19. Selain itu, penelitian ini menyoroti faktor-faktor yang menciptakan sikap dan perilaku memberontak di antara warga Jakarta, Indonesia, selama masa kritis COVID-19.

Kata kunci: Sikap Isolasi Diri; Ketidakpercayaan pada Statistik Resmi; Dissidence COVID-19; Persepsi Ancaman; Jakarta

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HOW TO CITE:

Zulmasyhur, Z. (2022). Understanding Distrust of the Public Sector Leading to Covid-19 Dissidence in Developing Nations. *Jurnal Studi Pemerintahan*, 13(2), 244-262

ARTICLE HISTORY:

Received:
February 25, 2022
Revised:
March 25, 2022
Accepted:
May 17, 2022

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic put the nations and governments in an unprecedented situation all over the globe ([Rieger & Wang, 2021](#)). Trust in government has been considered a crucial factor for the public's compliance with socio-demographic policies that became the basis of their behavioral responses ([Pagliaro et al., 2021](#)). Hence, the relationship between the preventive behaviors of the citizens during COVID-19 and trust in government is crucial to understand ([Hartanto et al., 2021b](#)). This sudden change resulted in the behavioral shifts of the individuals. Moreover, governments have to implement stringent and smart lockdowns in various parts of the world for individuals' safety and health security. This further led to erratic behaviors among the individuals ([Acuff et al., 2021](#)). At the same time, the main concern of the current study is the individuals who showed COVID-19 dissidence based on their attitudes and distrust level in government statistics. Hence the current study aims to examine the extent to which the attitudes of individuals to self-isolation made them show COVID-19 dissidence.

In addition, the current study aims to examine the impact of citizens' distrust in official statistics regarding COVID-19, which were continuously communicated with the citizens by the government officials using various digital and traditional media channels. Those who did not trust such news were rebellious for the government's measures to control the spread of the virus ([Jennings et al., 2021](#)). Previously research shows that trust is the foundation of a governance system ([Hartanto & Siregar, 2021](#); [Mansoor, 2021b](#)). When citizens do not trust government official websites and data, they do not follow the government's instructions ([Hutasoit et al., 2021](#)). Research also shows that governments that are not transparent and responsive in their deci-

sion-making process do not win the citizens' trust ([Hartanto et al., 2021b](#)). At the same time, the distrust level during COVID-19 cannot only be linked with governments transparency and responsiveness ([Jennings et al., 2021](#)). However, it can be linked with the lack of communication between government officials and the citizens.

Several researchers during COVID-19 reported an enhanced level of trust among citizens for their governments ([Pagliaro et al., 2021](#)). However, there are certain exceptions where citizens are denied to follow the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) formulated by the government ([Siegrist, Luchsinger, & Bearth, 2021](#)). This issue is more evident among emerging economies where the economic system got disturbed due to stringent and smart lockdowns ([Hutasoit et al., 2021](#)). In most emerging economies, many people live below the poverty line and strive hard for their living expenses. Indonesia is among such nations; therefore, mixed responses were seen from the citizens based on their economic needs ([Sarnoto & Hayatina, 2021](#)). Thus, many of the citizens did not take COVID-19 and the threat associated with COVID-19 seriously ([Arifah & Marzuki, 2021](#)). Therefore, they showed the COVID-19 dissidence behaviors. Thus, the current study aims to examine the role of individuals' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics in creating threat perceptions and COVID-19 dissidence among them. It also aims to examine the mediatory role of threat perceptions between the association of individuals' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in government officials with their COVID-19 dissidence. Hence, the current study will answer the following questions.

- To what extent do individuals' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics create COVID-19 dissidence among them?
- To what extent do individuals' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics develop threat perceptions among them?
- Do threat perceptions mediate the association of individuals'

attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in government officials with their COVID-19 dissidence?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT ATTITUDES TO SELF-ISOLATION, DISTRUST ON OFFICIAL STATISTICS, AND COVID-19 DISSIDENCE

Dissidence press presents an individual's protest against any official policy or laws and regulations linked with specific phenomena ([Viana & da Silva, 2021](#)). Besides, the COVID-19 dissidence reflects that individuals denied following the SOPs devised by the government to control the spread of the virus and provide health security to the public ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). As the individuals' attitudes shape their behaviors, research shows that fear of self-isolation makes individuals take certain decisions that are not in the interest or for the welfare of the majority ([Blake et al., 2021](#)). The same happened during COVID-19. Individuals' attitudes to self-isolation led them to be rebellious towards the measures taken by the government to curb the spread of the virus to minimize the damage caused by COVID-19 ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). Moreover, various scholars have reported trust as the foundation of any organization or nation ([Han et al., 2021](#)). Besides, for the smooth functioning of the government entities, the public's trust has been considered the backbone of the governance system ([Goldfinch, Taplin, & Gauld, 2021](#)). Whereas during COVID-19, citizens perceive that most of the statistics shared on government websites and on various digital and traditional media channels are to create a fear among the citizens to keep them locked into their homes ([Fukasawa et al., 2021](#)). These negative perceptions among the citizens created rebellious behavior of not following the government regulations and instructions during COVID-19 ([Williams et al., 2021](#)). Hence, based on the above arguments and literature support, it is hypothesized that;

H1: Citizens' attitude to self-isolation has a significant impact on their COVID-19 dissidence

H2: Citizens distrust in official statistics has a significant impact on their COVID-19 dissidence

ATTITUDES TO SELF-ISOLATION, DISTRUST ON OFFICIAL STATISTICS, THREAT PERCEPTIONS, AND COVID-19 DISSIDENCE

The unconscious or conscious estimations regarding dangerous things are considered threat perceptions ([Anestis & Bryan, 2021](#)). simultaneously threat perceptions during COVID-19 can be linked with the fear of being infected with the virus ([Heiss et al., 2021](#)). Several scholars link threat perceptions with individual behaviors in various contexts ([Chan et al., 2018](#); [Makhanova & Shepherd, 2020](#)). Besides, individuals' attitudes to self-isolation let them not believe in the actual drastic impacts of COVID-19 ([Jennings et al., 2021](#)). Hence, the fear of being isolated overcomes the threat perceptions of being infected among the individuals ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). Therefore, it can be asserted that the individuals who had a stubborn attitude to self-isolation and made their minds not to keep social distance perceived no threat of being infected. Likewise, the individuals who did not trust official statistics related to the lethal impacts of COVID-19 could not anticipate the threats linked with the deadly virus. Therefore, they depicted rebellious behaviors by not following the government orders. Hence, based on the literature support and the above arguments, it is postulated that;

H3: Citizens' attitude to self-isolation has a significant impact on their Threat perceptions

H4: Citizens' distrust in official statistics has a significant impact on their threat perceptions

H5: Citizens' threat perceptions have a significant impact on their COVID-19 dissidence

MEDIATORY ROLE OF THREAT PERCEPTIONS

Along with direct associations of citizens' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics with COVID-19 dissidence,

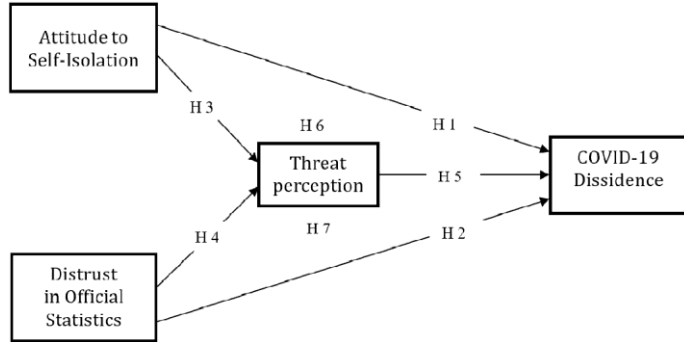
the current study also presented the mediatory role of threat perceptions in transmitting the citizens' attitudes and distrust in government to their rebellious behaviors of not following SOPs. Previously the direct impact of individuals' attitudes on their behaviors had been studied in the context of health sciences ([Öztürk et al., 2009](#)), crises ([Sobeck et al., 2020](#)) as well as COVID-19 ([Garfin et al., 2021](#)). Research also linked the citizens' trust with their behaviors in following governments' orders and country rules and regulations ([Arshad & Khurram, 2020](#)). Likewise, threat perceptions are linked with individual behavior, i.e., in the case of higher perceptions of threats linked with certain phenomena, individuals tend to behave consciously to avoid the critical circumstances in their lives vice versa ([Bradley et al., 2020](#)). Whereas, adding to the existing body of literature, the current study proposes the intermediatory role of threat perceptions by asserting that individuals whose fear of being self-isolated overcome their perceptions of being infected and show COVID-19 dissidence. Likewise, the individuals who did not trust the official statistics regarding the disastrous and deadly impacts of the virus on individual lives, could not perceive the threat of being infected with the virus with a higher intensity. As a result they depict the COVID-19 dissidence. Thus, based on the above arguments it is postulated that;

H1: Citizens' threat perceptions significantly mediate the association of their attitudes to self-isolation with COVID-19 dissidence

H2: Citizens threat perceptions significantly mediate the association of their distrust in official statistics with COVID-19 dissidence

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the study



RESEARCH METHODS

The current study examines the impact of citizens' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics on their threat perceptions and resultant COVID-19 dissidence. Moreover, the current study has been conducted among the citizens of Jakarta, one of the biggest cities in Indonesia. As per the statistics of 2020 total population of Jakarta is about 10.5 million. Besides, research shows the mixed response of the citizens towards COVID-19 (Aldila et al., 2021). Many individuals showed a negative attitude towards following the SOPs regarding lockdowns imposed by the government for citizens' safety and health security (Bella et al., 2021). Hence the current study aims to examine the COVID-19 dissidence level among the citizens of Jakarta.

A quantitative research technique using survey methodology was employed to collect data from the respondents. The quantitative research methodology helps to understand and attain a greater knowledge of the social world (Hair et al., 2010). Besides observing the influence of the events and situations on individual behaviors, mostly researchers apply quantitative methodology as it produces objective data which can be communicated through statistics and numbers (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Moreover, for the collection of the data, the city was divided among lower ad-

ministrative units. Researchers visited the most populated areas or public places of the administrative units. Researchers' communicated with the individuals visiting such places and asked some general questions about their English proficiency and knowledge about the subject matter. They further requested the individuals to participate in the survey and briefed them about the survey. They also ensured the respondents about the anonymity of their responses. Those who agreed to participate in the survey and qualified initial screening questions were handed over the questionnaire consisting of demographic characteristics of the respondents and items related to the study constructs.

For instance, Attitude self-isolation was measured with three items adapted from ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). Distrust in official statistics was measured with five items adapted from ([Jennings et al., 2021](#)). Threat perceptions were measured with two items adapted from ([Jennings et al., 2021](#)). Finally, COVID-19 dissidence was measured with three items adapted from ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). the whole data collection procedure started on March 2021, and until November 2021, the authors were able to collect 578 responses. These responses were further scrutinized for missing values and unengaged responses. Hence, the remaining 537 questionnaires were included in the final analysis. The respondents' demographic characteristics revealed that most respondents were male (71.2%) and married (68.4%). The average age of the respondents was 39.5 years. About half of the respondents were graduates (48.9%). Simultaneously, 27.6% and 22.5% were under graduates and post graduates respectively.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

ASSESSING THE MEASUREMENT MODEL

“The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)” analysis has been performed in SmartPLS 3.0 software. The simulation analysis showed that the participants' education significantly impacted their COVID-19 dissidence. Therefore, we control the participants' education in the further analysis. In addition, the mea-

asures’ “Cronbach’s α ” and “composite reliability (CR)” were examined (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015; Mansoor & Wijaksana, 2021). As shown in Table 1, the range of CR and CA was in acceptable criteria mentioned by scholars, i.e., > 0.70 (Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, 2017). Moreover, the “factor loadings” of all the study items were above 0.70, and the AVE “Average variance Extracted” of latent constructs were above 0.50 (Dalle et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2010). Thus, all the measures’ convergent validity was also established (Mansoor, 2021a; Sarstedt et al., 2017).

Table 1. Reliability and Validity Results

Variables/ items	Factor Loadings				AVE	CR	Cron- bach's α
	1	2	3	4			
Covid-19 Dissidence					0.614	0.827	0.814
CD1	0.767						
CD2	0.787						
CD3	0.796						
Attitude to Self-isolation					0.646	0.846	0.822
ASI1		0.802					
ASI2		0.797					
ASI3		0.813					
Distrust in Official Statistics					0.623	0.892	0.834
DOS1			0.826				
DOS2			0.760				
DOS3			0.802				
DOS4			0.769				
DOS5			0.788				
Threat Perceptions					0.655	0.791	0.797
TP1				0.827			
TP2				0.791			

“Note: CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted.”

DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

The “Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio” was used to assess the discriminant validity of the constructs (Henseler et al., 2015; Mansoor, Fatima, & Ahmed, 2020). As presented in Table 2, the values of the HTMT ratio are more than 0.90, reflecting that all the variables are distinct from each other.

Table 2. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

Constructs	Mean	STD.	1	2	3	4
Covid-19 Dissidence	4.05	0.72	0.783			
Attitude to Self-isolation	3.97	0.80	0.546	0.803		
Distrust in Official Statistics	3.87	0.93	0.602	0.477	0.789	
Threat Perceptions	3.96	0.83	0.514	0.498	0.564	0.809

“Note: The square roots of AVEs of the constructs are shown in bold in diagonal.”

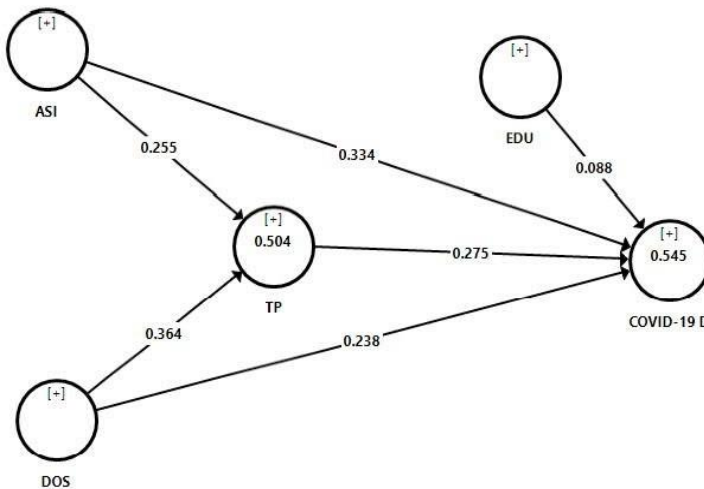


Figure 2. Full Measurement Model

ASSESSING THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

Direct hypothesis

As shown in Table 3 results revealed that, citizens attitude to self-isolation ($\beta = 0.334^{***}$, $t = 6.954$) and distrust in official statistics ($\beta = 0.238^{**}$, $t = 4.260$) had a positive significant impact on the COVID-19 dissidence. Likewise, results showed that citizens attitude to self-isolation ($\beta = 0.255^{**}$, $t = 4.886$) and distrust in official statistics ($\beta = 0.364^{***}$, $t = 7.104$) also had a posi-

tive impact on their threat perceptions. simultaneously results also showed the significant impact of threat perceptions on citizens' COVID-19 dissidence ($\beta = 0.275^{***}$, $t = 5.656$). Hence, hypotheses H 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are supported by the study results. Moreover, Figure 2 presents the impact size of the exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs. Whereas Figure 3 shows the t-statistics of the hypothesized links presenting all values above 1.96, reflecting the significant influence of independent variables on mediatory and dependent variables.

MODERATING HYPOTHESES

Results also revealed the significant positive indirect impact of citizens attitude towards self-isolation ($\beta = 0.316^{***}$, $t = 6.705$) and distrust on official statistics ($\beta = 0.288^{***}$, $t = 5.934$) on their COVID-19 dissidence via threat perceptions as a mediator. This further reflects that hypotheses H 6 and 7 of the study are also supported by the results, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

	Hypotheses	Std. Beta	t-Value	p-values	Supported
H1	ASI → CD	0.334	6.954	0.000	Yes
H2	DOS → CD	0.238	4.260	0.003	Yes
H3	ASI → TP	0.255	4.886	0.001	Yes
H4	DOS → TP	0.364	7.104	0.000	Yes
H5	TP → CD	0.275	5.656	0.000	Yes
H6	ASI → TP → CD	0.316	6.705	0.000	Yes
H7	DOS → TP → CD	0.288	5.934	0.000	Yes

Where: CD= Covid-19 Dissidence; ASI = Attitude to Self-isolation; DOS= Distrust in Official Statistics; TP = Threat Perceptions.

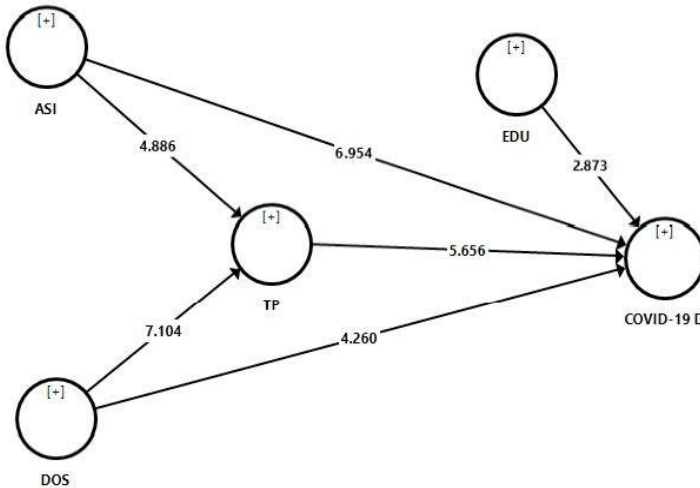


Figure 3. Full Structural Model

DISCUSSION FINDINGS

The current study aims to examine the impact of individuals' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics on their COVID-19 dissidence. The study also examines the mediatory role of threat perceptions in transmitting citizens' attitudes and distrust in official statistics in creating dissidence among them during COVID-19. The current study is also conducted in Jakarta, one of the largest cities in Indonesia, where people showed mixed attitudes and behaviors after the advent of COVID-19 (Aldila et al., 2021). Hence it would be a valuable addition to the existing body of literature by exploring the factors that impacted the citizens to rebel against the government measures and the consequences associated with their behaviors.

Results showed that individuals' attitudes to self-isolation positively impacted their COVID-19 dissidence. It further showed that the individuals who feared self-isolation and thought it unnecessary to keep themselves at a distance from others depicted rebellious behavior towards COVID-19. It further reflects that they did not follow the government measures and SOPs that were in favor of their security and health safety (Rieger & Wang,

[2021](#)). Many nations had to face drastic consequences of this dissidence behavior ([Bella et al., 2021](#)). Likewise, in Indonesia, the government controlled the virus spread by involving various religious scholars ([Hartanto, Agussani, & Dalle, 2021a](#)). However, some citizens showed rigidity in adapting the government measures and following the government SOPs ([Wirawan et al., 2021](#)).

Results also showed the positive impact of citizens' distrust in official statistics in creating COVID-19 dissidence among them. This further resulted in an enhanced number of cases in various regions of the world and Indonesia. Results also revealed the significance of trust in government and official statements ([Huber & Wicki, 2021](#)). The individuals who believe in their governments' transparency, responsiveness, and accountability trust in them and hence try to follow all the rules and regulations imposed by the government ([Mansoor, 2021a](#)). In contrast, the distrust level among the citizens leads them towards a rebellious attitude, which further results in chaos in the country ([Natalya et al., 2021](#)). The same happened during COVID-19 when based on various reasons, citizens were unable to believe the government officials statistics related to the number of infected cases and deaths happening all over the globe and in the country, and as a result, they had to face the drastic consequences

Moreover, results also showed the positive impact of citizens' attitudes to self-isolation and distrust in government officials on their level of threat perceptions. This further showed that the individuals who feared being self-isolated and did not trust the government statistics felt less threat of being infected while in close contact with others. This lower level of threat further made them rebellious towards government measures taken to grab the spread of the virus. Hence, it can further be stated that threat perceptions act as a bridge between the citizens' attitudes and trust level in the government, leading to their COVID-19 dissidence. These results can further be related to the previous studies, which asserted the significance of threat levels in determin-

ing the cautious behaviors of individuals in various circumstances ([Anestis & Bryan, 2021](#); [Chan et al., 2018](#); [Simon, Houghton, & Aquino, 2000](#)). At the same time, the current study is incremental in applying the mediatory role of threat perception in the critical scenarios of COVID-19. It further uniquely presented that how the citizens fear of being self-isolated overcome their threat of being infected, and they did not care for the precautionary measures during CCOVID-19.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current study adds to the existing body of literature by presenting a comprehensive framework while combining the citizens' attitudes and their distrust level on the government decisions and statistics leading them toward the COVID-19 dissidence behavior via an underlying mechanism of threat perceptions. Previously citizens' attitudes and their emotions were linked with the trust level in the government based on the timely response of the government officials during the COVID-19 utilizing social and traditional media channels ([Hartanto et al., 2021b](#); [Huber & Wicki, 2021](#); [Mansoor, 2021a](#)). At the same time, considering the social identity theory, the current study is unique in focusing on the individuals who did not believe in the government statistics regarding the lethal nature of the COVID-19 that took millions of lives all around the globe.

Also, the current study uniquely presented how the low levels of threat perceptions lead individuals not to follow the government measures which are taken for the safety of the masses. Likewise, the current study highlighted that distrust in official statistics leads the deteriorating behaviors among the citizens. Hence it highlighted the significance of the trust level among the citizens in their government officials to develop an environment of sustainability and harmony. This can further be related to the studies that reflected the significance of trust level for effective governance over time ([Arshad & Khurram, 2020](#); [Jennings et al., 2021](#)).

The current study is also valuable for the practitioners, government bodies, and academicians by highlighting the factors that demotivate individuals to behave decently during COVID-19 and follow the government's instructions. Keeping in view the individuals' sensitivity towards self-isolation government needs to create awareness among the citizens, i.e., via various examples and creating themes on social media highlighting the safety and security of their loved ones to make them more responsible for their behaviors. Likewise, along with highlighting the bad consequences of COVID-19 government should focus on highlighting the brighter side of following the SOPs in the form of happy and healthy families.

Finally, keeping the significance of the trust level of citizens on their governments, it is the core responsibility of the government officials to take the citizens into confidence and transparently and responsibly presents the reasons for certain measures taken for the best interest of the citizens. In addition, the governments should be transparent in decision making and transmitting the same to the public, where citizens should be aware of all the activities taken at the higher levels. Moreover, there should be an interactive environment between citizens and government where government officials should continuously interact with the citizens to know about their feedback regarding various decisions taken at the government level. This two-way interaction level can further strengthen the relationship between citizens and governments and can bridge the gap of distrust.

LIMITATIONS AND THE FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although the current study highlights the distrust and attitudinal factors that created the dissidence level during the COVID-19 among the citizens based on the low perceptions of the threat of being infected among them, the current study has some limitations that can bring valuable insights if addressed in the future. The current study only highlighted the factors that created

low perceptions of threats among the citizen, and as a result, they felt rebellious towards the government majors. In contrast, future studies can highlight the positive factors that help individuals mitigate the feelings of being dissident towards government decisions and following the SOPs. Moreover, in the future, researchers can also assess the contingent impact of respondents' gender and education level in examining the impact of their attitudes on their behaviors during COVID-19. Finally, the authors visited various lower administrative units of Jakarta to communicate with the citizens and get their responses for the data collection. This limits the sample geographically. In the future, authors can visit social networking sites and recruit individuals based on their intensity of Internet users to report their responses for more generalizable results based on a vast study population.

CONCLUSION

Considering an important issue of the inception of COVID-19 and its deadly impact on individuals' health, social, demographic, economic life, he aims to examine the role played by the citizens' attitude to self-isolation and distrust in official statistics in developing threat perceptions and decadence linked with the COVID-19 among the individuals of Jakarta Indonesia. Keeping the significance of quantitative research survey methodology in assessing the impact of various social and societal variables on individual behaviors, the current study utilized the survey methodology to collect data from 537 respondents by visiting various local administrative units in Jakarta, Indonesia. The structural equation modeling analysis was performed in the smart PLS3 software to check the hypothesized relationships. We found that Indonesian citizens' attitudes, self-isolation, and distrust of official statistics created a varied level of COVID-19 dissidence. In addition, results revealed that this impact of citizens' distrust in official statistics and their attitudes of self-isolation and creating COVID-19 decedents was mediated by this threat perceptions of being infected with the COVID-19. Hence, the current study

significantly adds to the body of literature by presenting the factors that influence the varying behaviors of the individuals in response to the COVID-19 and the extent to which they want to deviate from the government rules and regulations and rebel to follow the SOP's adopted for their health benefits. The government agencies and policymakers can further utilize these results to address the citizens' concerns to create a level of trust among them for the sustainability and prosperity of the country. Moreover, utilizing the study results, the government officials should try to bridge the communication gap with the citizens so that they feel connected with government officials and trust the news available on their websites, particularly during disastrous situations.

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