

Psychological Impact of Trauma on Adolescents in Conflict Zones: A Study of Lahad Datu, Sabah

Mohd Arsad Johanis¹, Amirul Ridzuan Abu Bakar², Zahra Abdrisak Mohamed³, Mohd Kasturi Nor Abd Aziz⁴

¹Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia.

²Faculty of Chemical Engineering & Technology, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia

³Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia.

⁴Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia.

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ABSTRACT

In countries such as Malaysia and the Philippines, border invasions have become a frequent occurrence, resulting in trauma among the population, including adolescents. A study conducted in crisis areas in Lahad Datu, Sabah, aimed to investigate the primary causes of trauma among adolescents. In-depth interviews during counseling sessions were carried out to identify three main causes of trauma: developmental/maturational factors, unexpected situations, and social/accidental causes. Six adolescents with the highest levels of trauma compared to others were selected as participants for this study. Thematic analysis and content analysis methods were used to analyze the data obtained. Addressing this issue is crucial as it has a direct impact on human capital. The study found that additional measures are needed to address trauma among adolescents and help them cope with traumatic events, ultimately strengthening the nation's human capital. The study also suggests the implementation of various approaches to resolve the issue of adolescent trauma in crisis areas. Through these efforts, the country can prevent the loss of human capital and improve human capital efficiency. Furthermore, it is hoped that other approaches will also be introduced to assist adolescents in overcoming traumatic situations in the country.

Keywords: Trauma, Psychology, Adolescent, Counseling.

INTRODUCTION

Trauma is defined as a psychological condition characterized by feelings of anger, discomfort, and tension within the individual (Spytska, L. 2023). It may manifest as cognitive and emotional disturbances in response to events that exceed one's expectations, such as accidents or natural disasters. Mauldin, L. (2023) suggest that trauma often arises from critical moments filled with crisis, wherein the individual undergoes overwhelming circumstances. Furthermore, individuals may experience trauma indirectly, particularly when someone close to them suffers traumatic experiences. This phenomenon highlights the complex, relational nature of trauma, extending beyond personal experiences. Yuan, K., et al. (2021) assert that all incidents capable of inflicting physical and emotional harm are significant contributors to trauma. Such events include, but are not limited to, war crises, natural disasters, sexual assault, and various forms of abuse (Yuan, K., et al. 2021). Rodriguez (2014) underscores the pervasive impact of crises such as warfare or unanticipated natural disasters, which frequently precipitate trauma through both physical injury and emotional upheaval. In response to trauma, individuals are often predisposed to psychological disorders, as suggested by Yuan, K., et al. (2021), which can manifest as

heightened sensitivity, intrusive thoughts, and disturbing hallucinations. The duration of trauma's effects can extend from months to years, significantly altering an individual's psychological well-being (Yuan, K., et al., 2021). In addition to psychological symptoms, trauma victims may experience a range of physical manifestations, including eating disorders, sleep disturbances, sexual dysfunction, fatigue, and unexplained pain (Barrington & Jane, 2013). Moreover, trauma may trigger symptoms of depression, spontaneous crying, hopelessness, anxiety, panic, and pervasive fear, all of which can severely disrupt daily functioning (Yuan, K., et al., 2021).

The consequences of trauma and crises are not insurmountable; however, intervention strategies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) have demonstrated efficacy in addressing trauma symptoms across cognitive, emotional, and physiological domains (Wills, 2008). CBT has garnered recognition for its structured approach to helping individuals identify and reframe negative thought patterns and behaviors, thereby alleviating the distressing effects of trauma. This study explores the psychological impact of trauma on adolescents in Lahad Datu, Sabah, who have indirectly experienced the consequences of a violent intrusion by a group of invaders. These individuals, claiming ancestral rights to the land in Lahad Datu, entered the region with the intention of reclaiming the area. The prolonged historical context of this conflict, coupled with its legal implications within Malaysian jurisprudence, exacerbated the crisis, leading to casualties on both the invader and Malaysian police sides. This conflict has left the local population, particularly the youth, with lingering feelings of anxiety and trauma. The present research specifically examines the indirect trauma experienced by adolescents in Lahad Datu as a result of this crisis.

A comprehensive literature review will be conducted, evaluating various theoretical frameworks on trauma, with a particular emphasis on its psychological impact on adolescents. Additionally, the literature will explore the role of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) in trauma recovery and its effectiveness in addressing the multifaceted needs of affected individuals. The study will be grounded in the Cognitive Behavioral Theory (CBT) framework, which posits that trauma responses are intricately linked to maladaptive cognitive processes, emotional responses, and physiological states. CBT's holistic approach seeks to alleviate trauma symptoms by addressing negative cognitive distortions, emotional dysregulation, and physiological arousal. The research will address the following questions: What are the psychological effects of trauma on adolescents in Lahad Datu, Sabah, following the crisis involving the invaders? How does Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) alleviate the trauma symptoms experienced by these adolescents? What coping mechanisms do adolescents in Lahad Datu employ in response to trauma? The objective of this study is to assess the psychological impact of trauma on adolescents, evaluate the role of CBT in managing trauma-related symptoms, and understand the coping strategies employed by adolescents affected by the crisis.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to advance understanding of the psychological ramifications of trauma on adolescents, especially in conflict zones. By identifying the specific trauma responses in this population, the research aims to inform the development of targeted interventions, including CBT, which can be tailored to meet the unique needs of traumatized youth. Additionally, the findings will provide critical insights to mental health professionals and policymakers seeking to implement effective trauma interventions in regions affected by conflict. Key terms central to this study include trauma, defined as a psychological reaction to events that overwhelm an individual's coping capacity, resulting in cognitive, emotional, and physiological disturbances; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), a structured therapeutic approach focused on identifying and modifying negative thought patterns and behaviors to alleviate psychological distress; crisis, referring to an event or series of events that disrupt normal functioning, potentially leading to trauma; psychological effects, encompassing the mental and emotional consequences of trauma, including anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and youth, referring to individuals, typically between the ages of 13 and 18, who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of trauma.

This study's scope is confined to exploring the psychological effects of trauma on adolescents in Lahad Datu, Sabah, resulting from the crisis involving the land invasion. The focus will be solely on the emotional and cognitive responses of youth, excluding the wider population or other age groups. While CBT will be explored as a potential intervention, the study will not engage in an exhaustive clinical trial of CBT but will examine its applicability in mitigating trauma symptoms within this specific demographic.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, utilizing in-depth counseling sessions to explore the psychological impacts of trauma on adolescents affected by the recent invasion of the Sulu army in Lahad Datu, Sabah. The research approval was obtained from Sabah department of Education (JP (SB)/700/07/03/Jld.45). A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants from Kencana Village National High School, located in Felda Sahabat 16 Lahad Datu. The school was selected due to its proximity to the conflict zone and the potential psychological effects on its students. The participants were recruited through a combination of voluntary participation and referrals from school counselors, ensuring that those selected had experienced significant emotional and psychological distress linked to the crisis.

Participant Selection Criteria

A total of six participants, consisting of three male and three female students, were chosen for the study. The selection process was guided by a set of inclusion criteria, focusing on students who had been directly or indirectly affected by the trauma resulting from the invasion. Participants were identified through a referral process initiated by the school's counseling staff, who were informed of the study and its objectives. Students expressing interest in the study, or who were referred by the school counselors due to signs of trauma, were initially screened for eligibility.

The screening process was based on the Trauma Symptom Inventory-2A (TSI-2A), a standardized tool designed to assess trauma symptoms and their severity. The TSI-2A measures psychological distress across various domains, including emotional and cognitive symptoms, intrusive experiences, and physical manifestations of trauma. The tool was administered to all students to determine the level of trauma experienced. Only those who scored above a predetermined threshold, indicating moderate to severe trauma symptoms, were selected as participants. The inclusion criteria also required participants to be adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18, enrolled in the Kencana Village National High School, and willing to participate in the study.

Data Collection Process

The primary data collection method involved semi-structured counseling sessions, which were designed to allow participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences related to the trauma they had experienced. Each session was conducted individually, ensuring confidentiality and privacy for the participants. Counseling was provided by a trained and licensed counselor, who followed a structured protocol to facilitate the sessions while remaining flexible enough to address the individual needs of the participants. The sessions were designed to create a safe environment where participants could openly discuss their experiences, triggers, and coping mechanisms.

The data obtained through the counseling sessions were supplemented by the results of the TSI-2A, which provided a quantitative measure of the trauma symptoms experienced by the participants. The combination of qualitative interviews and quantitative measurements allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the psychological impact of trauma on the adolescents. Sessions were recorded with participant consent, and the data were transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis to identify key themes and patterns from the counseling sessions. This approach was chosen for its flexibility and ability to provide rich, detailed insights into participants' emotional and psychological experiences. The TSI-2A scores were analyzed alongside the qualitative data, offering a holistic view of each participant's trauma symptoms and coping mechanisms. The analysis was iterative, with continuous comparisons between individual cases to identify both commonalities and differences in how participants responded to trauma.

The TSI-2A results were used to validate the qualitative findings, enabling a deeper understanding of the trauma

symptoms experienced by the adolescents. The data were categorized into key themes such as emotional distress, cognitive impact, physical manifestations, and coping strategies. These findings informed the development of therapeutic interventions and provided recommendations for future trauma-related research in similar contexts.

Additionally, participants received psychological support throughout and after the study. A follow-up counseling session was arranged to ensure no adverse psychological effects resulted from their participation. Any distress during the sessions was immediately addressed by the trained counselor, who provided necessary interventions or referrals for additional support. The research team strictly adhered to counseling guidelines to ensure the well-being and safety of all participants.

THEMATIC FINDINGS

Our findings are discussed based on the thematic analysis of the trauma symptoms identified through the Trauma Symptom Inventory-2A (TSI-2A) tool. The study explores how trauma manifests across three distinct domains: Developmental/Maturational, Unexpected Situations, and Social/Coincidence. Each domain highlights different aspects of the adolescents' experiences, offering a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of trauma. By examining these themes, we aim to provide valuable insights into the psychological impacts of trauma on adolescents and inform appropriate intervention strategies.

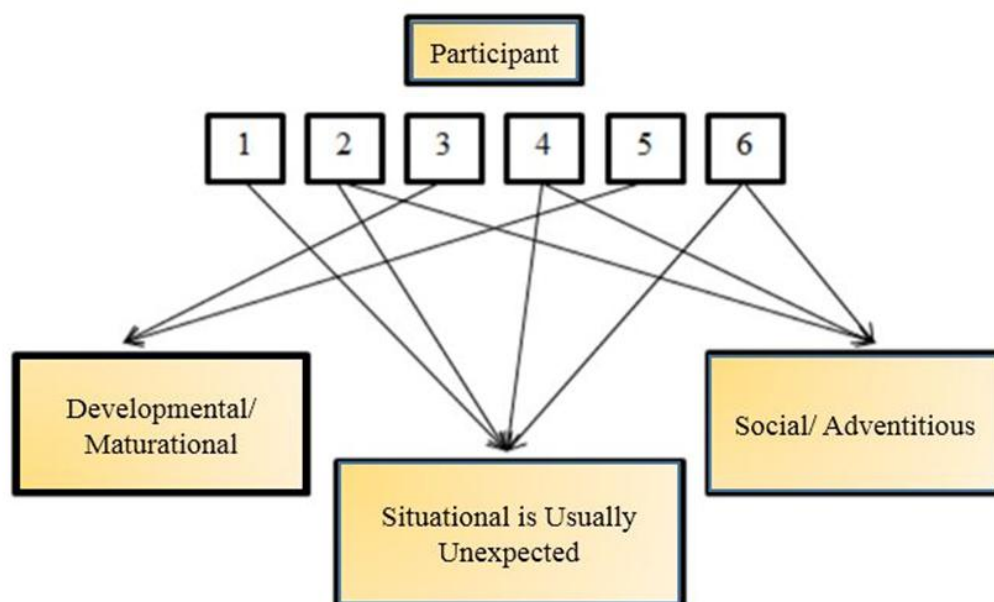


Figure 1: Types of Trauma

Theme 1. Developmental Maturational

The Developmental Maturational domain of the Trauma Symptom Inventory-2A (TSI-2A) refers to trauma symptoms that arise from an individual's normal developmental processes, such as the challenges faced during adolescence. This domain specifically highlights how trauma can disrupt or distort the expected trajectory of an individual's psychological and emotional development. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable in this regard, as they are in the midst of developing their identity, autonomy, and coping mechanisms. Trauma experienced during this period can significantly hinder the natural progression of these developmental milestones, potentially leading to emotional dysregulation, distorted self-perception, and difficulty in establishing healthy relationships.

In the context of this study, adolescents who were exposed to the trauma resulting from the Sulu army invasion in Lahad Datu exhibited clear signs of delayed emotional processing and difficulty in navigating the transition to adulthood. Many participants reported feelings of confusion and heightened emotional sensitivity, which are typical responses when trauma intersects with developmental challenges. The experience of trauma interfered with the development of healthy coping mechanisms, leading to an exaggerated sense of vulnerability and self-doubt. These emotional responses are consistent with the developmental challenges identified in the TSI-2A,

where trauma often causes adolescents to feel "stuck" in earlier stages of emotional maturity. This can lead to an inability to regulate emotions properly, manifesting as anxiety, depression, and irritability, which were commonly observed in the participants of this study.

Furthermore, the TSI-2A's focus on the developmental and maturational aspects of trauma suggests that trauma impacts adolescents in ways that extend beyond the immediate emotional and psychological symptoms. It has the potential to cause lasting effects on the individual's ability to form healthy peer relationships and navigate social roles. For instance, participants in this study exhibited difficulties in trusting others, which is a key developmental task during adolescence. They also reported feelings of isolation and alienation, often perceiving themselves as different from their peers due to the trauma they had experienced. This highlights the importance of considering the maturational stage when assessing the effects of trauma, as the developmental stage directly influences the nature and intensity of trauma symptoms. The symptoms observed in this domain suggest that interventions should focus not only on the trauma itself but also on supporting the adolescents in reestablishing a stable and coherent sense of self.

"Maturity"

Participant 3 (Prolonged disappointment and sadness)

For this first type of crisis, Participant 3 has experienced trauma due to the crisis he has experienced since he was in elementary school. For he also does not want his condition to be like that, which is to have the characteristics of a woman. He stated that this happened naturally without him intending it that way. As a result, he received many more curses, mockery, insults, and criticism since he was in elementary school until today. Curses, ridicule, and insults with various other titles seem to have been forgotten for him. Still, deep in his heart, he feels sad about this, and this situation has caused him not to have many friends and support from family members is also very far away. His own family also behaves the same as his friends at school, causing him to experience prolonged frustration and sadness and leading to a feeling of trauma to face people. The following is a statement issued by Participant 3 throughout the counseling session.

"It's tough. I'll summarize it as well. When I was little, I wasn't very small when I was in the first grade at the age of seven, right after kindergarten. I started there when I had a little gentleness in me".

"No, soft character. It is natural, not artificial. So other people know me like that, so no one wants to be close to me. I just feel insulted. This is me.

"It's like no one wants to be friends like that and like to make fun. I think some people are ostracized too. I am disappointed and sad about this situation.

Participant 3: Session 1

Participant 5 (Prolonged disappointment and sadness)

Next, Participant 5 faced trauma due to being involved with issues involving her heart and feelings. About three years ago, she had been in a relationship with a man in the same class. However, the relationship did not last long when it was known to the family members, including her parents. This has caused him to strongly oppose all his family members, especially his parents and sister. He was asked to sever the relationship and was instructed to focus entirely on his studies. This has caused various conflicts to happen to her with her ex-boyfriend. He feels much stressed, which leads to trauma when he has too much suspicion. The following is a statement from Participant 5 regarding this issue throughout the counseling session.

"People, people around me, especially my friends. There is no support, bro".

The family members are also the same because one of my siblings is naughty, so it's not untrustworthy, but I am the most violent of the sisters, so my parents send me to this school. There is hope.....

"After I broke up, he peddled my story, bro. I feel very humiliated and disappointed".

(Participant 5: Session 1)**Theme 2. Unexpected Situations (Situational Is Usually Unexpected)**

The domain of Unexpected Situations, as defined in the TSI-2A, encompasses trauma that arises from sudden and unforeseen events that overwhelm an individual's ability to cope. Such events, by their nature, are typically outside the realm of the person's usual experience or expectation. The trauma resulting from these situations often leads to a disorienting experience of shock, confusion, and helplessness, as the individual is confronted with a reality that was not anticipated. In this study, the invasion of the Sulu army in Lahad Datu represents a classic example of an unexpected situation. The violence and loss of life experienced in the area were traumatic precisely because they occurred without warning and disrupted the sense of security and predictability that the residents, including the adolescent participants, had once taken for granted.

In the context of this study, participants described feeling overwhelmed and caught off guard by the crisis. Many reported being unable to understand why such a violent and disruptive event had occurred in their community, leading to feelings of helplessness and confusion. This reaction is typical of the Unexpected Situations domain, where individuals struggle to process the traumatic event because it falls outside their previous experience or expectation. The adolescents in this study were particularly affected by the sudden nature of the invasion, which caused emotional numbing and dissociation in some participants. These reactions are consistent with TSI-2A findings that individuals exposed to unexpected traumatic events often experience dissociation as a protective mechanism, distancing themselves from the overwhelming emotional impact of the situation.

Moreover, the consequences of these unexpected situations extend beyond the immediate trauma. The lasting effects of experiencing a sudden and violent disruption can manifest in heightened anxiety and post-traumatic stress symptoms. In this study, participants displayed symptoms of hypervigilance and intrusive thoughts, particularly when reminded of the traumatic event. The unexpected nature of the invasion led to a pervasive sense of insecurity, as participants struggled to make sense of the event and regain a sense of control over their environment. This sense of helplessness and loss of control is characteristic of the Unexpected Situations domain, which suggests that trauma from unexpected events can lead to chronic feelings of anxiety and fear. Interventions for trauma caused by such events should, therefore, focus on restoring a sense of safety and predictability in the affected individual's environment and helping them process the trauma in a structured way.

*Unforeseen Situations***Participant 1 (Argument between parents)**

For this second type of crisis, Participant 1 experienced a trauma problem that resulted from an argument between his mother and father. This argument has been going on for the past few years. The situation worsened when the participant heard that his father would divorce his mother having reached retirement age. Participant 1 became very worried because, day by day, the period for his father's retirement was getting closer, and he was distraught if the statements his father had made would be carried out. This caused a feeling of trauma in Participant 1. The following is a statement issued by Participant 1 throughout the counseling session.

"Sometimes these parents are like... they are strong and fight".

"If that's the case, I'm more disturbed and repeatedly remember the fight between my father and mother. Once, they had a big fight that involved a divorce that almost happened. It was stressful at that time. "

(Participant 1: Session 1)

"How do you want to tell a story? I remember the last two years when I was in the fifth grade. That time fight until they want to separate and don't want to stay in the same house. This FELDA will reach the age of 55 and run out of pension, so if the pension runs out, that raises the issue of not wanting to sit in the same house. So I'm afraid.

"My father said that, so he means that when he reaches age 55, he wants to separate. Disturbing emotions, right

bro".

Participant 1: Session 2

Participant 2 (Argument between father and brother)

As for Participant 2, he experienced trauma as a result of an argument between his father and his stepbrother. This dispute worsens daily when his brother sells items in Participant 2's house and aims to buy drugs. Even though he has been advised several times, his brother is still stubborn, and now his brother is braver when he has forced their father to sell the land and the house they are currently occupying. As a result, Participant 2 witnessed the fight between the two members of his family and forced the intervention of the police, but his brother managed to escape. But what concerns Participant 2 is that his brother's return will undoubtedly cause more problems. What he has gone through has caused a feeling of trauma in him. The following is a statement issued by Participant 2 throughout the counseling session.

"Aaaaa ...the day of the first incident he wanted, my father wanted to kick him out of the house because of him. He smoked all the things he wanted to sell, so he wanted to sell them near my house. I'm terrified, bro. What else about this killing makes me think twice and sometimes feel dizzy".

"The problem is, he smokes too much syabu (drug), so he, my father, is a settler, wants to take him and change my father's name, the settler, to his name until he almost wants to kill my father."

Participant 2: Session 1

Participant 4 (Financial problems)

For this second type of crisis, Participant 4 also experienced trauma from the financial crisis that hit his family members. The situation is very urgent when the participant and his siblings are growing up, and each of them needs quite a lot of expenses every time at the beginning of the year. This caused the participant to feel very sorry his parents and he, as one of the oldest children after his brother, also felt the hardships of life borne by their parents. So since junior high school, he has been petrified to face the new year when the school session will start again, and the same problem will undoubtedly arise again. So this fear and anxiety lead to the issue of trauma in the participants. The following is Participant 4's statement throughout the counseling session

"I like to hide what I see and feel I don't express. Let me be with the parents who feel that there is no money, the younger siblings should not know if they can. It's unfortunate with this financial situation bro".

"That's why I asked for the SPA8, because the job has an allowance, so if I get a job, I can help my family".

"Look, if the end of the year is new, you can push it first, but it depends. This money thing bro, like every moment in my head, I always remember what my mother and father were like. So sad".

Participant 4: Session 1

Participant 6 (Argument between father and brother)

Next, Participant 6, for this second type of crisis, has experienced an issue involving his father and brother, who argued due to a misunderstanding. This incident also strengthened his feelings of worry and eventually led to feelings of uneasiness toward his father, especially when his father was angry. In this issue, Participant 6's brother has left their home and family because he can't stand their father's attitude, who likes to accuse him of every fault. The issue that touched his brother's heart and feelings was the issue of losing a large amount of cash. Their father had accused Participant 6's brother of stealing it, which eventually led to a protracted argument between them. To satisfy his father, Participant 6's brother has chosen to leave their home. Participant 6 was very impressed by this, and after almost a year of his brother's passing, Participant 6 became very homesick and sad about this. The following is Participant 6's statement throughout the counseling session.

"Yes, he didn't take the money because he had his own money."

"I don't know what's important, and he's disappointed with my father. My father said, "Where is Hisyam? Maybe he ran away with the money "....."

"He greeted everyone in the house, apologized, and said he didn't want to set foot in this house. That's why he ran away to KL".

Participant 6: Session 2

Theme 3. Social/Coincidence (Social/Adventitious)

The Social/Coincidence domain in the TSI-2A addresses trauma that stems from external social factors or coincidental events, often involving a broader societal context. This domain recognizes that trauma can arise not only from personal or unexpected experiences but also from social interactions, circumstances, or societal changes that indirectly affect the individual. In this study, the participants' trauma was deeply intertwined with the societal upheaval caused by the Sulu army invasion, which affected not only the immediate community but also the broader social fabric of the region. For the adolescents involved, the invasion disrupted their sense of belonging and security within the community, resulting in social isolation and alienation. Additionally, the presence of law enforcement and military operations in response to the invasion created a heightened atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, further exacerbating the trauma experienced by the participants.

The Social/Coincidence domain highlights the role of external, often uncontrollable, factors in shaping the individual's trauma response. In this case, the adolescents' trauma was not caused by direct personal harm but by their exposure to the collective societal trauma experienced by the community. Participants expressed feelings of helplessness and frustration as they witnessed the suffering of others, particularly the loss of life among soldiers and civilians. This form of trauma is distinct from personal, direct trauma, as it often involves secondary exposure to traumatic events through social networks, media, or community events. The TSI-2A captures this distinction by emphasizing the social and coincidental nature of the trauma, where the individual's emotional response is tied to the broader societal experience rather than a single, isolated event.

Furthermore, trauma in the Social/Coincidence domain often leads to feelings of disconnection from others, as the individual may struggle to understand their place within a society that has been disrupted by traumatic events. The participants in this study reported feeling estranged from their peers, unable to communicate their distress or find common ground with others who had not experienced the same level of trauma. This disconnect highlights the importance of considering social context when evaluating trauma symptoms, as individuals affected by societal upheaval often experience trauma in ways that are different from those who have experienced personal, direct harm. As such, interventions for trauma in this domain should focus on fostering social support networks and helping adolescents reconnect with their community, thus addressing the emotional and social repercussions of trauma within a collective context.

Coincidence

Participant 2 (Accident between brother and outsider)

For this third type of crisis, Participant 2 was once again affected by an issue that hit one of his family members. His stepbrother was involved in an accident done deliberately by an outside party to gain money from the accident. As a result, this issue has been prolonged due to the vindictive nature of the Sulu people who are not satisfied since they did not get any compensation due to the planned accident. As a result, Participant 2 witnessed these nations' arrival with a total of no less than 20 people to Participant 2's house with various weapons, including machetes and samurai swords. This is very scary and worrying. What he has gone through has caused a feeling of trauma in him. The following is a statement issued by Participant 2 throughout the counseling session.

"You want to see my father. But use a machete".

"So, my friend saw many Sulu people in that house, my friend is looking for me to let me know that there are many people in your house, Sulu people carrying machetes. I'm worried that he will also shake his body".

"So, I have my mother's phone, and my family all come to the house to give me satellite that, but Sulu doesn't want to settle, maybe because he has a grudge against my brother."

Participant 2: Session 1

Participant 4 (Invasion Issue)

Participant 4 also stated that he was traumatized by the invasion issue at his residence. The invasion that happened a few years ago until now is still a horrible delusion for Participant 4 when until now there are still rumors that this armed group will come back to claim the victory they did not achieve before. He is the one who went through the incident himself, resulting in him and all his family members always being awake at night. In addition, if necessary, they will all leave their homes for a while. This incident left a wrong impression on him. The following is Participant 4's statement throughout the counseling session.

"I am afraid of the invasion issue, bro. I thought a lot that time they came to attack back. But I just keep this stuff to myself. I don't talk to anyone".

"Sometimes I also think that if I come suddenly, I want to come again, then I will die in my hands. Did they die because of the war? I'm already sick. It's getting worse".

"Very scared, bro. Because even though there are security guards, they are still afraid. "

"Yes, sometimes I remember when I was sleeping."

Participant 4: Session 1

Participant 6 (Invasion Issue)

Participant 6 also experienced the same issue as Participant 4, which was about the invasion issue that had previously hit his village. This participant went through moments of fleeing to another village because his village was the main target of the invaders. The experience of seeing the invaders and staying awake at night is one of the most harrowing experiences apart from seeing the war machines of the Malaysian army patrolling to overcome this problem. During the incident, Participant 6 neighbors whose houses were burned by intruders and some who had been involved in helping the intruders. All these things became a horrible memory for Participant 6. The following is a statement from Participant 6 regarding this issue throughout the counseling session.

"Yes, its hard and all kinds of things, bro, extreme fear. Even when I want to sleep at night, I'm afraid. My feeling at that time was that if we could, we would like to get out of Sabah and live in other people's countries so that we don't experience the problem of invasion. Here a large number of soldiers makes us even more scared.

"Families from other villages come to the house. Family members don't sleep almost every night because they are on guard for fear that they will come and attack the house. Our village is the one closest to the Philippines, so it's easy. Can they enter our village"?

"The effect is that we are all worried, worried. How are we going to live again? All that is still stored in my mind until now. My heart is always worried. I think about my mother in the village, and I am afraid they will suddenly attack again because we have heard many rumors that they want to come back and attack again".

Participant 6: Session 1

DISCUSSION

Developmental/ Maturational Crisis

For the trauma caused by the maturational crisis (Developmental/Maturational), it was determined that Participant 3 and Participant 5 had been affected by this type of crisis, causing them to experience trauma in

their lives. This first type of crisis that relates a person to maturity and change from a physical and emotional point of view shows that these two participants are during this crisis (Weaver et al., 2003). Both stated they felt very disappointed and sad due to the issue they experienced. However, this situation took too long for them to deal with, causing them to feel traumatized by this matter. Through the Pre-Test that both participants of this study went through, it was found that the crisis they experienced showed a high and problematic level. This means that they are deeply affected by the trauma they went through (Bonsaksen T. et al., 2022).

In the researcher's opinion, the issue faced by Participant 3 is directly related to education from parents at home. This means that parents must be sensitive in observing their children's behavior to curb a behavior that is different from the norm before it becomes more and more protracted. The pressure that Participant 3 goes through, whether at school or home is increasing his sadness, and indirectly other issues such as isolation or ostracism have existed in him, and he feels it. If this is not contained from the beginning, it will lead to various other issues that cause Participant 3 to become increasingly burdened with his situation. Through the distortion in CBT, Participant 3's thinking is more of a black-and-white type of thinking (Rosenfield & Michael, 2004). According to these researchers, he is believed to put only two options: success or failure, happy or sad, voice or just keep quiet through this kind of thinking method. Looking at Participant 3's situation, he tends to choose to be sad and just remain silent. As a result, he experienced a state of trauma due to his actions (Lotzin A. et al., 2022).

For Participant 5, the issue faced by this participant also involved attention from parents and the participant's lack of understanding regarding the role he should play as a student. A teenager who is getting older, a teenager cannot escape from having feelings of affection and love for others. The lack of proper attention and disclosure from the two participants' parents caused him to receive significant opposition regarding his love relationship with a man. As a result of this resistance, he was forced to break the connection and decided to obey his family's wishes. As a result, he became sad with this decision because he felt that what happened was coercion and should not be like that. In addition, the relationship that had previously been made public by his friends at school resulted in him being said to be the wrong person and a liar. This caused him to become more depressed and sadder (Idoiaga N. et al., 2022). However, there was nothing he could do other than be patient in facing this problem. This incident has supported a previous French et al. (2013) study. Among the issues that can lead to various harms from the aspect of thinking and psychology in general is the subject of separation. In addition, the break can lead to multiple issues, such as self-confidence decreases and personal relationships becoming increasingly poor.

Situational Is Usually Unexpected

Further, the trauma caused by the crisis is an unexpected situation (Situational Is Usually Unexpected) (Weaver et al., 2003). Through this type of crisis, a total of four people has been directly involved in this crisis, namely Participants 1, 2, 4, and 6. This second type of crisis concerns unexpected events such as death, dangerous diseases, fights, and divorces (Weaver et al., 2003). Three participants, namely Participants 1, 2 and 6, stated that they became traumatized when they witnessed the arguments among their family members. At the same time, Participant 4 said that he became traumatized due to the hardships of life endured by both his parents due to problems with bad finances. In addition, of these four participants, the female participants, namely Participants 4 and 6 showed the highest scores through all four domains compared to the other two male participants, namely Participants 1 and 2. From our point of view, this is different because gender causes differences in accepting an issue even though the problem is the same.

The first participant, Participant 1, experienced trauma due to the turmoil between his mother and father leading to the issue of divorce. This very worrying and uncomfortable situation happens more often and brings stress and anxiety to the participants (O'Donovan R.; & Burke J. 2022). This added to the noise from their voices shouting during the fight reinforced his constant discomfort and worry. Through the story unfolding during the counseling session with Participant 1, the researcher was able to conclude that the issue in Participant 1's family had taken more than a year and that the lack of effective communication among the family members was one of the causes of this fight. This problem caused him to feel sad seeing his mother, who in his view, was very dependent on his father, while according to this participant they had already agreed to divorce when it was time for retirement. In addition, the researcher thinks this problem can be solved if one of their parents can lower their ego and try to have a good discussion. This is because if both of them cannot tolerate and solve this problem,

this matter will become more complicated and will cause the divorce issue mentioned before actually to happen. If this happens, the researcher thinks that the most affected are their children, and one of them is Participant 1. The family crisis faced by Participant 1 has supported the previous research done by Thompson & Heather (2011). Their study found that individuals involved even indirectly with a family crisis will face trauma problems that can lead to various other issues such as low self-confidence.

In addition, Participant 2, also faced trauma due to a conflict involving his stepbrother and his father. According to Participant 2, Participant 2's half-brother has long been engaged in syabu-type drug abuse, which causes him to become aggressive and act beyond expectations quickly. Recently, his brother lost his job and is dependent only on their father. So, all the expenses involving the purchase of drugs are also obtained from their father. So, in the researcher's opinion, their father can no longer stand this situation and tries to correct the problem by admonishing his eldest son to stop taking drugs. But the opposite situation happened when Participant 1's brother tried to force their father to sell their father's land to get money.

As a result, a significant conflict has occurred, and in the researcher's opinion, if this does not get help from the police, lives will be lost because the fights involve sharp tools such as machetes and knives. This event has caused Participant 2 to become extremely afraid and worried about his father's safety while he cannot do anything. In the researcher's opinion, Participant 2 became traumatized because he may have seen such a fight for the first time, and both of these fights involved people close to him while he could only see. The crisis faced by Participant 2 has supported previous research done by Thompson and Heather (2011). The statements given by these researchers tend to state that if an individual is indirectly involved in a fight issue or crisis, the feelings he faces at that time will cause him to become traumatized. Additionally, his inability to calm the situation will put him in a stressful and confusing situation (Vasconcelos AG. et al., 2022).

Participant 4 had experienced trauma from the severe financial problems faced by his parents. The participant's father, who works as a junior employee at FELDA, has to support his family, who are growing up daily. The needs of life also increase because Participant 4 and his siblings are still under the responsibility of their father. In contrast, daily necessities such as clothes, food, and school needs increase yearly, while Participant 4's father's income is still the same as before. The researcher thinks that Participant 4 feels this burden due to his position in his family. He is one of the older children among his siblings, so his sense of responsibility is very high. In addition, the researcher also felt that Participant 4 was very good at assessing the situation being faced by both his parents. The poverty and hardships their families face are also borne from the emotional point of view of this Participant 4. Through the theory of CBT thought distortion, Participant 4 has a thought pattern that focuses on conclusions (Rosenfield & Bradley, 2004). This is because Participant 4 tends to quickly jump into decisions regarding the issues faced by his family while there may still be a way out of the problems. The last participant who experienced trauma due to this second type of crisis was Participant 6. The trauma in him resulted from an argument he witnessed between his father and his brother. This dispute has resulted in Participant 6's brother taking the final word to leave the family forever. In the researcher's opinion, through the counseling session conducted for Participant 6, he showed hatred towards his father who likes to make sudden decisions without thinking about the long-term effects on other family members. In addition, the researcher also thinks that participant 6 becomes afraid if his father starts to get angry about something that should not be. This is because someone will become a victim of his temper, like what happened to Participant 6's brother.

Participant 6 felt traumatized by the situation and had to accept that his brother had taken himself away from them, even though the matter could have been resolved well. The situation experienced by Participant 6 has supported a previous study about household problems. According to Thompson and Heather (2011), individuals affected by issues that occur in a family are also known as crises indirectly. According to this researcher, a person who experiences a problem like this will experience trauma because they experience the same situation and feelings as the person facing the crisis. This will cause the self-confidence of individuals who share this issue, and the relationship between family members will also be affected.

Social/ Adventitious Crisis

For the last type of trauma, which is social/adventitious type trauma (Social/Adventitious), the same participants have gone through it, namely Participants 2, 4 and 6. This is because three of the six participants have two main

reasons that cause them to become trauma and the type of trauma is more natural and involves specific attacks that can result in loss of life. Through a study using the TSI-2-A measurement tool, female participants were particularly affected by matters involving the loss of life and scary issues. This is because Participants 4 and 6, who became traumatized due to the invasion issue in Lahad Datu, have shown the highest score compared to Participant 2, who is a man.

As for the second issue in the third type of crisis faced by Participant 2, he experienced trauma as a result of himself witnessing a group of people armed with long machetes and samurai come to his house to claim the rights of their friend who suffered an accident allegedly caused by the brother of Participant 2. The truth is that the matter is something that has been planned for profit. This has been done by a small part of the community in their area for a long time, and they have known it for a long time. They often do the same thing to people to get money quickly and violently. As a result, the whole family is surrounded by feelings of fear every day because this fighting crisis has involved a nation that is stubborn and difficult to discuss. This also caused this Participant 2 to feel insecure and to be constantly worried about the situation that occurred with his brother. In the researcher's opinion, this race, known for its vengeful nature, can act unexpectedly. As a result, of this situation, Participant 2 everyday experiences fear and worries about the fate of himself and other family members. His understanding of seeing these foreign nations come home with swords and samurai swords caused this Participant 2 always to remember and always be in fear. This situation also supports the previous study done by Thompson and Heather (2011), which states that things that happen beyond the ability and are passed indirectly will lead to traumatic situations such as fights and accidents.

As for the next participant, Participant 4, he also experienced trauma problems stemming from the issue of armed invasion in his area. Regarding the invasion issue experienced by Participant 4, he and all his family members are significantly affected, and he feels that they are very threatened by this problem. This issue involves land claims from foreign nations to the Malaysian government, and a series of these claims have led to armed clashes between the Malaysian army and the invading tribes. Accordingly, the area where Participant 4 lives have been affected because most of these invading tribes used Participant 4's village as an entrance and hiding place. In the researcher's opinion, Participant 4, a teenage girl, was shocked and could not accept circumstances beyond her expectations, such as shooting scenes, deaths, arrests, confiscation of property, and the deployment of Malaysian soldiers near her residence.

In addition, the researcher also thinks that apart from the incident, rumors that are too easy and widely spread may increase the anxiety in these participants. The effect is that until now, he still feels that his neighborhood is not safe. He and his family are still on the alert at night, and if there are rumors that are believed to be reliable, the family will leave their house for a while until they feel that the situation has subsided again. The problem faced by Participant 4 has supported previous studies conducted by Triliva et al. (2014). According to them, teenagers are among the individuals who are most easily affected by crises such as conquest, war and death. This will cause teenagers to experience lasting trauma from the crisis they are facing.

Participant 6 also experienced trauma due to the invasion. Like Participant 4, Participant 6 also shared deep feelings due to the issue of the invasion of the Sulu people from the Philippines, who aimed to get the land they said was an inheritance from their king. As a result of this incident, Participant 6 himself experienced moments of difficulty shrouded in fear because he had to flee to a village further away from his village. This is because Participant 6's village is the main target for intruders. After all, it is very close to the sea. We believe that his sense of trauma is getting thicker because he has seen a glimpse of the person called the intruder.

The feeling is still thick in the soul of Participant 6, and he still cannot believe that he went through such things in his life. In addition, the researcher also thinks that Participant 6 has a lot of assumptions and irrational thoughts, which is proven when he states that one day these intruders will return because they still haven't got what they want. At the same time, this is impossible to happen. The situation faced by Participant 6 has supported previous research done by French et al. (2013). According to their research, teenagers are generally very problematic from the point of view of thinking and psychology of the effects of the war they witnessed. This is the result of a very severe crisis that they experienced.

Ethical considerations were meticulously addressed throughout the research process to safeguard the well-being

and rights of all participants. Participant confidentiality was stringently maintained by assigning anonymized identifiers and securely managing all data in encrypted digital storage and locked physical files accessible exclusively to the research team. Informed consent was diligently obtained from participants and their legal guardians prior to participation, ensuring that they were fully apprised of the study's objectives, procedures, and potential risks. This process adhered to the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence.

To provide a secure and supportive environment, all counseling sessions were conducted individually in private settings, fostering an atmosphere of trust and openness. A licensed and experienced counselor facilitated these sessions, closely monitoring participants for any signs of distress. Should discomfort or adverse reactions have arisen, immediate psychological interventions were available, ranging from de-escalation techniques to referrals for specialized support. Furthermore, participants were reassured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any repercussions. Follow-up counseling was an integral component of the study to address any residual emotional impact arising from participation. Participants exhibiting signs of prolonged distress were offered additional support through referrals to external mental health professionals. The study's design and implementation adhered to the ethical protocols stipulated by the Malaysian Ministry of Education and relevant institutional review boards, ensuring that the research upheld the highest standards of ethical rigor while contributing meaningfully to the understanding of trauma impacts.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, through these three types of crises, each of the teenagers in this study can be explicitly divided for each crisis they experience. In addition, it can be observed that the cause that caused them to be traumatized is in line with the level of trauma expressed through the TSI-2-A measurement tool that they answered. In addition, through the findings in this study, it was found that female participants are more easily affected by a crisis that causes them to become traumatized compared to male participants. This has been proven through the findings in this study. This study is very beneficial to various parties, so it is a good and positive if studies like this are expanded further to obtain actual data and facts about what is happening in the field. In addition to being a reference for new researchers, it will also help the authorities to think for a moment about efforts and the best methods in dealing with issues involving crisis and trauma in Malaysia in particular and around Southeast Asia in general.

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21. Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia. Email: mohdarsad@unimap.edu.my
22. Faculty of Chemical Engineering & Technology, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia Email: amirulridzuan@unimap.edu.my.
23. Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia. Email: zahritao24@gmail.com.
24. Department of Languages & General Studies, Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Malaysia. Email: kasturi@unimap.edu.my.