

Literature Review: Traumatic Counseling to Address Mental Health in Post-Natural Disaster Victims

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Abstract. *Indonesia is a country that is very prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions and floods, which have a significant impact on people's lives, including the mental health of the victims. This research aims to explore psychological and traumatic counseling services available for victims of natural disasters, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions in supporting victims' recovery. Using literature methods, this research analyzes various sources related to the psychological impact of disasters and the counseling techniques applied. The research results show that psychosocial services, individual and group counseling, and crisis intervention are effective approaches in reducing trauma. Cognitive-based, humanistic approaches, bibliotherapy, and relaxation techniques have proven effective in helping victims overcome PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Important factors in the success of a victim's recovery include social support, family involvement, and the quality of the relationship between counselor and client. This research emphasizes the importance of collaboration between government, non- governmental organizations, and mental health professionals in providing optimal counseling services for victims of natural disasters.*

Keywords: *Natural disasters, mental health, traumatic counseling*

Abstrak: Indonesia merupakan negara yang sangat rawan bencana alam, seperti gempa bumi, tsunami, erupsi gunung berapi, dan banjir, yang berdampak signifikan pada kehidupan masyarakat, termasuk kesehatan mental para korban. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi layanan psikologis dan konseling traumatik yang tersedia bagi korban bencana alam, serta mengevaluasi efektivitas intervensi tersebut dalam mendukung pemulihan korban. Melalui metode literatur, penelitian ini menganalisis berbagai sumber terkait dampak psikologis bencana dan teknik konseling yang diterapkan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa layanan psikososial, konseling individu dan kelompok, serta intervensi krisis menjadi pendekatan yang efektif dalam mereduksi trauma. Pendekatan berbasis kognitif, humanistik, biblioterapi, dan teknik relaksasi terbukti efektif dalam membantu korban mengatasi PTSD, kecemasan, dan depresi. Faktor penting dalam keberhasilan pemulihan korban termasuk dukungan sosial, keterlibatan keluarga, dan kualitas hubungan antara konselor dan klien. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya kolaborasi antara pemerintah, lembaga swadaya masyarakat, dan profesional kesehatan mental dalam menyediakan layanan konseling yang optimal bagi korban bencana alam.

Kata Kunci: *Bencana Alam, Kesehatan Mental, Konseling Traumatik*

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is located on the Pacific ring of fire, making it one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world. These geographical conditions contribute to the high frequency of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, and floods. From 2023 to 2024, Indonesia has experienced various disasters that have a significant impact on people's lives. These disasters not only result in material losses, but also cause profound psychological impacts on survivors.

The data collected shows that during that period, thousands of people were forced to flee their homes due to natural disasters. For example, the earthquake disaster in Sulawesi and the eruption of Mount Semeru caused many people to lose their homes and property. According to research by Masrukin (2020), many students experience psychological trauma after experiencing natural disasters, which impacts their mental health and can affect learning achievement. The cause of the high frequency of disasters in Indonesia is not only related to geographical conditions, but also influenced by human factors, such as rapid urbanization and climate change. Rapid urbanization often results in inadequate infrastructure development, exacerbating the impact of disasters. In addition, climate change causes extreme weather that increases the likelihood of natural disasters, such as floods and landslides. Without proper treatment, the psychological impact experienced by disaster victims can become more severe, leading to more serious mental health disorders, such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression (Khairul Rahmat & Alawiyah, 2020).

Not only adults, children are also a very vulnerable group to the psychological impact of natural disasters. Research by Gani (2020) shows that children who experience disasters not only face direct trauma, but also have the potential to experience long-term developmental problems. Mental health disorders in children can affect their ability to learn, socialize, and live daily life. Therefore, it is important to provide adequate psychosocial support for the children of disaster victims.

In this context, trauma counseling services have become essential to assist individuals and communities in the post-disaster recovery process. This counseling aims to reduce the psychological impact experienced by victims and help them to cope with trauma. Hayatul Khairul Rahmat and Alawiyah (2020) emphasized that traumatic counseling can be an effective strategy in helping victims of natural disasters to overcome their anxiety and depression. In addition, psychosocial assistance methods also

need to be applied in schools to provide support to children who are victims of disasters (Nggalu Bali et al., 2021).

It is imperative that relevant parties, including governments, non-governmental organizations, and mental health professionals, work together in providing effective counseling services. With a deep understanding of the psychological condition of disaster victims and appropriate counseling techniques, it is hoped that the recovery process can take place more optimally. This study aims to delve deeper into the types of counseling services available to disaster victims, as well as the traumatic counseling techniques that can be used to help them. Through this research, it is hoped that it can provide deeper insights into the importance of mental health management for victims of natural disasters and how traumatic counseling can be applied to support their recovery.

This study aims to identify and describe the range of psychological and counseling services available to victims of natural disasters, including support from government agencies and non-governmental organizations, to explore the types of traumatic counseling applied in the treatment of disaster victims, including the techniques and approaches used by mental health professionals, exploring the various counseling techniques that have been shown to be effective in dealing with trauma due to disasters. The study also identifies the types of mental disorders that are common in disaster victims, describes the different types of counseling that can be applied to help disaster victims, reviews the standard procedures used in the implementation of traumatic counseling, including the initial steps that need to be taken to support victims, as well as evaluates the effectiveness of traumatic counseling that has been implemented, and identifies factors that affect success intervention.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the literature review method was used as the primary approach to collect and analyze existing information on the impact of natural disasters on mental health and the effectiveness of traumatic counseling for victims. This method allows researchers to gain broader and in-depth insights without having to conduct direct field research. The research procedure begins with the collection of sources from previous journals related to natural disasters and traumatic counseling. These sources will be drawn from academic databases, and trusted online sources such as google scholar, and crossref, taking into account strict selection criteria, such as topic relevance, data validity, and methodology used in the research. After collecting sources, the researcher will conduct a content analysis to identify the main themes related to the formulation of

the problem. It includes summaries of information, assessment of research quality, and grouping of information by relevant topics.

In the early stages of article search, 215 articles were obtained from 2005 to 2024 using the keywords "natural disasters", "mental health" and "traumatic counseling". Of these, only about 12 articles are considered relevant.

It is hoped that this research can provide a better understanding of the impact of natural disasters on mental health and the effectiveness of counseling services available to victims. The reading materials that have been found in this study are then used as research materials and presented in the form of the following table:

Table: List of Research Materials

No	Article Title	Year	Author Name
1	Traumatic Counseling: A Strategy to Reduce the Psychological Impact of Disaster Victims	2020	Hayatul Khairul Rahmat, Desi Alawiyah
2	Natural	2021	Hayatul Khairul Rahmat, Arief Budiarto
3	Reducing the Psychological Impact of Natural Disaster Victims Using the Bibliotherapy Method as a Trauma Healing Treatment	2021	Engelbertus Nggalu Bali, Irul Khotijah, Stevanya Woll, Sartika Kale, dan Vanida Mundiarti
4	Psychosocial Assistance for Disaster Victims at Manusak Nature School	2022	Tuti Alawiyah
5	Traumatic Counseling to Handle a Student's Trauma in Islamic Education	2022	Ulin Nihayah, Misya'lul Millah Ummul Latifah, Amalia Nafisah dan Ina Qori'ah
6	Traumatic Counseling: An Approach in Reducing Psychological Trauma	2022	Fitria Budi Utami, Uswah, Faisal Kemal, Wahyu Fajar Nugraha
7	Storytelling Method for Trauma Recovery of Children after the Cianjur Earthquake Disaster	2022	Neni Wahyuningtyas, Khofifatu Rohmah Adi, Rahmati Putri Yaniafari, Mochammad Sa'id, M. Gebryna Rizki
8	Psychosocial Support for Disaster Survivors after the Mount Semeru Eruption	2023	Miswarti, Maidawilis, Jufrika Gusni, Rosmi Eni dan Hasmita
9	Mental Health Treatment for Disaster Victims	2023	Apit Sugandi, Ujang Badru Jaman, Adin Nanjarullah, Asih Nurajijah, Derizki Ardan Dianto, Siti Moozanah dan Melawati Arumsari

10	Trauma Healing and Post-Earthquake Education for Children of Sarampad Village	2023	Noveyla Tyas	Hardhaning
11	Legal Review of Health Service Assistance in the Disaster Law	2024	Meilani Rohinsa, Rosida Tiurma Manurung, Maria Yuni Megarini, Tesselonika Sembiring dan Karthy Priyathy Mastovani	
12	Psychological Handling after the Sumedang Earthquake	2024	Suryadi dan Joni Adison	
13	Traumatic Counseling “Cognitive-Behavior Therapy Approach”	2022	Luh Sindi Kartika Dewi	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Services Provided to Handle Natural Disaster Victims

The results of the study show that a wide range of psychological services are available to help victims of natural disasters. Among these services, psychosocial support, individual counseling, group counseling, and crisis intervention are the most dominant. Hayatul Rahmat et al (2020) in their research showed that guidance and counseling teachers in schools play an important role in reducing the trauma of students affected by disasters. By providing a safe space to communicate and express feelings, teachers can help students understand their traumatic experiences.

Additionally, research by Miswarti et al. (2023) highlights the importance of mental health programs designed specifically for early childhood. These programs often involve games and creative activities that can help children express their feelings more freely. Non-governmental organizations and governments are also involved in setting up mental health service centers in disaster areas, with the aim of reaching more victims and providing easier access to needed services. In many cases, these services focus on a community approach , where social support from neighbors and family members is an important part of recovery Psychological.

Traumatic Counseling Conducted to Deal with Victims

Traumatic counseling performed to deal with victims of natural disasters includes several approaches and techniques. Hayatul Khairul Rahmat and Desi Alawiyah (2020) identified cognitive-based counseling as an effective method in overcoming the psychological impact of disasters. In this approach, counselors help the victim to recognize and restructure negative thought patterns that arise in response to trauma. This

method has been proven to help victims in reducing the symptoms of anxiety and depression that often appear after experiencing a disaster.

On the other hand, Neni Wahyuningtyas et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of psychosocial assistance, which provides a safe space for victims to share their experiences and feelings. This mentoring is often done in the form of support groups where victims can interact with each other, provide emotional support, and share coping strategies they use. Another method introduced in the study by Hayatul Khairul Rahmat and Budiarto (2021) is bibliotherapy, where certain readings are used to help victims permeate their experiences and find new ways to perceive the situation at hand. This technique helps children, in particular, to understand their feelings through stories and characters they are familiar with.

Approaches or Techniques Used in Counseling to Deal with Natural Disaster Victims

A variety of counseling approaches and techniques are used in dealing with victims of natural disasters, including behavioral therapy, humanistic approaches, and relaxation techniques. Ulin Nihayah et al. (2022) state that a humanistic approach, which focuses on the interpersonal relationship between counselors and clients, can provide the emotional support necessary for victims to express their feelings. This approach emphasizes empathy, acceptance, and honesty in counseling interactions, which can strengthen a sense of trust and security for victims. Relaxation techniques are also integrated in counseling sessions to help reduce anxiety. Research by Luh Sindi Kartika Dewi (2022) shows that this technique is very beneficial for victims of PTSD, as it can help them cope with stress symptoms that arise after a disaster. Commonly used relaxation techniques include meditation, deep breathing, and mindfulness exercises, which have been shown to be effective in lowering anxiety levels and improving psychological well-being.

Disturbances Experienced by Victims After Natural Disasters

Victims of natural disasters often experience a variety of mental health disorders, such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression. The psychological impact of disasters can continue in the long term if not handled properly. Research by Fitria Budi Utami et al. (2022) revealed that children who experience disasters tend to show significant symptoms of anxiety and depression. These symptoms can include difficulty sleeping, excessive anxiety, and an inability to concentrate. These impacts not only affect an

individual's mental well-being, but can also impact their learning achievement and social interaction,

In many cases, these disorders can trigger negative cycles that are difficult to overcome without proper intervention. Victims who do not receive psychological support can experience a decline in their quality of life, which can further worsen their mental state. Therefore, early recognition and treatment of these symptoms is essential to prevent further complications.

Counseling That Can Be Done to Help Victims After Natural Disasters

Based on the results of the study, several types of counseling that can be done to help disaster victims include individual counseling, group counseling, and family therapy. Group therapy, in particular, provides an opportunity for victims to share experiences, which can strengthen a sense of mutual support between them. Research by Tuti Alawiyah (2022) emphasizes that counseling in the context of Islamic education can help students to deal with trauma with a more religious and spiritual approach, increasing a sense of hope and resilience among them.

In individual counseling, the focus is more on the specific needs of the victim and a more personalized approach. Counselors can use cognitive, behavioral-based techniques to help clients overcome negative mindsets and replace them with more positive ones. Family therapy also plays an important role, as it can help family members understand each other and support each other in the recovery process.

Procedures for Implementing Traumatic Counseling in Handling Victims After Natural Disasters

The procedure for implementing traumatic counseling generally includes several steps, starting from an initial assessment of the victim's psychological condition, the preparation of an intervention plan, to the evaluation of the results of counseling. Miswarti et al. (2023) explain that early assessment is essential to understand the severity of trauma and the specific needs of victims. After the assessment is carried out, the counselor will develop an intervention plan tailored to the individual characteristics of the victim.

Furthermore, the counselor will conduct regular counseling sessions to monitor progress and adjust the approach if needed. This process often involves the use of various techniques mentioned earlier, as well as providing the necessary emotional support. Periodic evaluations are also conducted to assess the effectiveness of the

interventions provided, involving feedback from victims on their progress in coping with trauma.

Successful Traumatic Counseling Carried Out

The success of traumatic counseling can be measured through the changes that occur in the victim's mental and emotional state. A study by Meilani Rohinsa et al. (2024) shows that appropriate counseling interventions can reduce PTSD symptoms and improve victims' quality of life. This success is also influenced by factors such as social support, family involvement, and the victim's willingness to participate in the healing process. In this context, the importance of continuous support from communities and relevant institutions cannot be ignored, so that victims can achieve maximum recovery.

It's important to note that recovery isn't always linear; Some victims may experience setbacks in the process. Therefore, a flexible and responsive approach to individual needs is essential. The success of counseling is determined not only by the techniques used, but also by the quality of the relationship between the counselor and the client, which can create a safe space for the victim to process and heal.

Overall, these results and discussions show that appropriate counseling services and approaches are critical in addressing the mental health of victims of natural disasters. The application of varied and evidence-based methods will provide the support needed to restore their mental health and help them return to normal life after experiencing trauma.

Table: Research Results

No	Title	Years	Name	Research Results
1	Traumatic Counseling: A Strategy to Reduce the Psychological Impact of Natural Disaster Victims	2020	Hayatul Khairul Rahmat, Desi Alawiyah	Traumatic counseling is effective in reducing psychological impact, relevant to the formulation of the problem about counseling techniques.
2	Reducing the Psychological Impact of Natural Disaster Victims Using the Bibliotherapy Method as a Trauma Healing Treatment	2021	Hayatul Khairul Rahmat, Arief Budiarto	Bibliotherapy helps children in the trauma recovery process, demonstrating the effectiveness of alternative methods.
3	Psychosocial Assistance for	2021	Engelbertus Nggalu Bali, Irul	Psychosocial assistance contributed to emotional

	Disaster Victims at Manusak Nature School		Khotijah, Stevanya Woll, Sartika Kale, Vanida Mundiarti	well-being, supporting the need for similar services in other schools.
4	Traumatic Counseling to Handle a Student's Trauma in Islamic Education	2022	Tuti Alawiyah	A faith-based counseling approach was effective in helping students overcome trauma, relevant for the formulation of the counseling problem.
5	Traumatic Counseling: An Approach in Reducing Psychological Trauma	2022	Ulin Nihayah, Misya'lul Millah Ummul Latifah, Amalia Nafisah dan Ina Qori'ah	The counseling approach was shown to reduce anxiety and depression, supporting the problem statement about the success of counseling.
6	Storytelling Method for Trauma Recovery of Children after the Cianjur Earthquake Disaster	2022	Fitria Budi Utami, Uswah, Faisal Kemal, Wahyu Fajar Nugraha	The storytelling method helps children express feelings, relevant in supporting an effective counseling approach.
7	Psychosocial Support for Disaster Survivors after the Mount Semeru Eruption	2022	Neni Wahyuningtyas, Khofifatu Rohmah Adi, Rahmati Putri Yaniafari, Mochammad Sa'id, M. Gebryna Rizki	Psychosocial support accelerates the recovery process, important for early intervention after disasters.
8	Mental Health Treatment for Disaster Victims	2023	Miswarti, Maidawilis, Jufrika Gusni, Rosmi Eni dan Hasmita	Planned mental health treatment is necessary to prevent more serious psychological disorders.
9	Trauma Healing and Post-Earthquake Education for Children of Sarampad Village	2023	Apit Sugandi, Ujang Badru Jaman, Adin Nanjarullah, Asih Nurajijah, Derizki Ardan Dianto, Siti Moozanah dan Melawati Arumsari	Education and
10	Legal Review of Health Service Assistance in the Disaster Law	2023	Noveyla Hardhaning Tyas	trauma healing were successful in increasing children's resilience after the disaster.
11	Psychological Treatment After the Sumedang Earthquake	2024	Meilani Rohinsa, Rosida Tiurma Manurung, Maria Yuni Megarini, Tesselonika Sembiring dan	This research highlights the importance of legal frameworks in supporting post-disaster health services.

			Karthy Mastovani	Priyathy	
12	Traumatic Counseling	2024	Suryadi dan Adison	Joni	Emphasizes the importance of rapid and effective psychological treatment after disasters to prevent long-term trauma.
13	“Cognitive-Behavior Therapy Approach”	2022	Luh Sindi Dewi	Kartika	The CBT approach is effective in dealing with trauma, confirming the importance of this method in post-disaster counseling.

Based on the findings of several articles above, it can be concluded that the handling of post-disaster mental health is very important, given the significant psychological impact experienced by victims, especially children. Research shows that psychological interventions, such as traumatic counseling, are effective in reducing trauma symptoms and improving mental health (Hayatul Khairul Rahmat & Desi Alawiyah, 2020; Ulin Nihayah et al., 2022). Various counseling methods, including bibliotherapy and cognitive-behavioral approaches, have been shown to help individuals express and process their traumatic experiences (Fitria Budi Utami et al., 2022; Suryadi & Joni Adison, 2024). In addition, ongoing psychosocial support post-disaster is needed to prevent long-term mental disorders, such as PTSD, by involving the school and family environment in creating safe spaces for children and adolescents (Engelbertus Nggalu Bali et al., 2021; Neni Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022). The role of teachers and educators in reducing student trauma is also very crucial, so they need to be trained to recognize trauma symptoms and provide initial support (Nurhajjah Hasibuan, 2020; Mohammad Masrukin, 2020). Finally, the existence of a legal and policy framework that supports post-disaster mental health services is essential to ensure accessibility and sustainability of services for victims (Noveyla Hardhaning Tyas, 2023). Overall, the results show that post-disaster mental health management requires a holistic approach that involves various parties and focuses on the specific needs of affected individuals and communities.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study shows that the handling of mental health after natural disasters is a crucial aspect that should not be ignored. Various studies reveal that disaster victims, especially children, often experience significant psychological impacts, including

trauma and mental disorders such as PTSD. Psychological interventions, such as traumatic counseling and psychosocial support, have been shown to be effective in helping individuals cope with their traumatic experiences. In addition, the role of educators and the school environment is very important in reducing student trauma, where they need to be trained to provide appropriate support. A legal and policy framework supporting the accessibility of mental health services is needed in order to ensure the continuity of assistance for victims. Overall, a holistic and collaborative approach to post-disaster mental health care is needed to effectively recover affected individuals and communities.

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