



The Effectiveness of Person-Centered Therapy in Individual Counseling for Adolescents Experiencing Trauma from Romantic Relationships

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of individual counseling with a person-centered approach to adolescents who have trauma due to romantic relationships, while the population studied of adolescents who have trauma due to romantic relationships who are not in a relationship from 10 samples that are given a scale of trauma due to romantic relationships as a pre-test are taken 5 samples with the highest scores. This study uses a quantitative method with a One-group Pretest-posttest Research Design. The method of the results of the study revealed that the reduction of trauma experienced by clients by 20.2% with the evidence of the results of the psychological scale provided so that individual counseling with a person-centered therapy approach can be declared effective in reducing trauma in adolescents due to romantic relationships.

Keywords: Counseling, Individual, Relationships, Romantic, Trauma



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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a phase of development full of emotional and social dynamics. During this time, individuals undergo a variety of complex physical, psychological, and social changes. In adolescence, in addition to experiencing physical and emotional changes, they also undergo psychological changes, where at this moment adolescents develop an attraction to the opposite sex and begin to establish romantic bonds ([Sarwono, 2017](#)). It is not uncommon for the romantic bonds that are lived to have an impact on daily life, romantic relationships that do not meet their expectations such as being cheated, betrayed, left dead, persecuted, harassed and so on ([Istiana, 2020](#)). One important aspect of adolescent life is romantic relationships, which are often a source of happiness but can also lead to deep emotional trauma when the relationship ends badly. Trauma resulting from romantic relationships can affect adolescents' psychological and emotional well-being, negatively impacting their development ([Hanum & Hirmaningsih, 2019](#)).

The number of adolescents who have trauma at this time has many impacts, both on themselves and on the surrounding environment. Indonesia's statistical report recorded 1.74 million marriages throughout 2021. This number decreased by 2.8% compared to the previous year which reached 1.79 million marriages. If you look back a decade ago, the number of marriages in Indonesia

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reached its highest point in 2011, namely 2.31 million marriages ([Juita, 2023](#)). The data above proves that young people today are more cautious about starting a more serious romantic relationship.

Trauma is an unnatural experience that occurs to humans in general, such as terrible events, or sad, so that it has an impact on the human psyche, be it great fear, helplessness, sadness, and others ([Hasanah & Ambarini, 2020](#)). When associated with a romantic bond, trauma due to a romantic bond is a trauma that occurs due to events outside of habits that cause a strong fear response in the romantic bond that occurs in the individual ([Everly, 2019](#)). Trauma is a surprising and unexpected event, or an irrational (out of routine) situation that causes feelings of uselessness, intimidating life, which has an impact on both physical and emotional ([Sinaga et al., 2024](#)).

A bad event that can cause trauma in a romantic relationship is a breakup. A breakup is an agreement between two people in a relationship that aims to end an existing relationship ([Rebecca, 2020](#)). The termination of a relationship that has been established by both parties will have a bad impact on the perpetrator, especially in adolescence when emotional tension is quite high ([Hastuti, 2022](#)).

The adverse impacts that occur are in the form of feelings of disappointment, sadness, stress, despair, and PTSD. Everly & Lating revealed there are three common symptoms of psychological trauma and PTSD. First, Intrusive Symptoms include: (a) instantly recalling the event while in a daydream, or even entering into a dream. (b) feeling and acting as if the event happened again (c) symbolically recalling the suffering faced. Second, Avoidance Symptoms (avoidance symptoms) include: (a) avoiding symbolic places and thoughts from trauma, (b) prolonged remembrance of an event, (c) limiting emotions (d) feeling that there is not much time. Third, Arousal Symptoms (symptoms that disrupt brain function) include (a) increased alertness (b) excessive shock response (c) sleep disturbances (d) difficulty concentrating and (e) irritability and explosiveness (Hatia, 2018).

Emotional trauma due to romantic relationships can manifest itself in various forms, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and difficulty in building new relationships. Adolescents who experience this trauma often feel isolated, lose confidence, and find it difficult to trust others ([Malfasari et al., 2020](#)). Therefore, effective interventions are urgently needed to help adolescents cope with this trauma and restore their psychological well-being.

This is evident from the results of counseling conducted on several samples, namely AFW, WLN, SA, IA, NS, where they experienced trauma to the romantic relationships they experienced such as toxic relationships (rough both verbal and non-verbal) that they experienced, infidelity, abandoned for unclear reasons so that they overthought to make themselves insecure, and others. So in this case, efforts are needed to reduce the trauma they experience to romantic relationships which can be done by providing individual counseling. This is in line with research conducted by ([Gunawan et al., 2021](#)) The results of the research show that there is an increase in self-concept for students who are given individual counseling services with a person-centered approach in overcoming the self-concept of children from divorced parents. This is evidenced by the changes

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in the two subjects after the implementation of counseling. So it can be concluded that individual counseling with a person-centered approach is effectively used in overcoming the self-concept of children from divorced parents. Furthermore, research conducted by ([Elvira Z et al., 2023](#)) The results of his research show that during the individual counseling process, the relationship between the counselor and the client is warm and trusting, and the client is seen as an adult who can make his own decisions and take responsibility for his own decisions. When an individual knows and understands his true self according to his or her desires, counseling with a client-centered approach can help students improve their identity.

Individual counseling is a meeting between the counselor and the client on an individual basis, where there is a counseling relationship with the nuance of rapport, and the counselor seeks to provide assistance to develop the client's personality and the client can anticipate the problems faced ([Sofyan.S & Willis, 2019](#)). Individual counseling is a guidance and counseling service that provides opportunities for students to get direct and face-to-face assistance with their supervisor in a series of discussions about personal problems they are facing ([Daulay & Nuraini, 2022](#)). There has been no previous research that explains the effectiveness of individual counseling for adolescents who have trauma due to romantic relationships. From the many adolescents who are currently experiencing romantic trauma, this study aims to help them to be able to develop into better personalities and be able to go through the phases of trauma they face, and to find out the effectiveness of individual counseling with a person-centered therapy approach to these adolescents.

Person centered therapy is a counseling approach that involves direct interaction between the counselor and the client. with counselors (students who are guided), to get a harmonious picture between the ideal self and the counselor self that is in accordance with reality. This method emphasizes the student's ability to find significant self-problems and solve them ([Corey, 2020](#)). The person-centered therapy approach, developed by Carl Rogers, offers a potential framework for helping adolescents who are experiencing emotional trauma due to romantic relationships. The person centered therapy approach emphasizes the importance of creating a warm, empathetic, and non-judgmental environment, where clients feel welcome and valued ([Ningsih, 2019](#)). This approach allows teens to explore their feelings and experiences freely, which can aid in the healing process.

This is also in line with previous research conducted by ([Suroiyya & Habsy, 2024](#)) The results of his research show that the Person Centered Therapy approach can overcome overthinking that has a negative impact on the mental and physical health of individuals, such as anxiety, stress, headaches, digestive problems to more serious diseases. The same thing is also shown from research conducted by ([Fitra et al., 2023](#)) The results of her research show that the implementation of counseling carried out for victims of sexual violence is the first counselor to conduct counseling with a person-centered therapy approach so that the victim becomes better and used to doing activities as usual and carrying out his life. Research conducted by ([Saputra, 2023](#)) It also shows that the final results of the counseling implementation include: the counselor has been able to sleep peacefully, his feelings have also begun to calm down, it seems that he has been able to

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communicate well, the counselor has begun to focus on learning, the counselor tries not to skip school, the counselor begins to do activities as usual at school, begins to open up with his close friends and his anxiety gradually begins to disappear. The novelty of the current research is investigating specifically how person-centered therapy, which emphasizes empathy and unconditional acceptance, can be adapted to romantic relationship trauma, providing new insights into the effectiveness of this method in such specific contexts.

So from the above description, the purpose of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of the person centered therapy approach which aims to explore and analyze how effective the person centered therapy approach is in helping adolescents who are traumatized by romantic relationships and to provide practical and evidence-based information for mental health professionals, especially counselors and therapists, on how to apply the person centered therapy approach in a effective in individual counseling sessions with adolescents. In addition, the objectives of this study include assessing the extent to which the person centered therapy approach can help adolescents in overcoming trauma due to romantic relationships. This includes measuring changes in the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents after counseling sessions with this approach, then to delve deeper into the types of trauma that adolescents may experience as a result of romantic relationships, as well as how the trauma affects their lives, and to present empirical evidence regarding the success or shortcomings of the person-centered therapy approach in this context. This includes assessing the results of assessments, surveys, and interviews with adolescents who have undergone this therapy. Thus, based on the explanations above, the researcher is interested in studying a journal article entitled "the effectiveness of person-centered therapy in individual counseling for adolescents experiencing trauma from romantic relationships"

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method, with a pre-experimental research design One-group Pretest-posttest Research Design Combining posttest and pretest studies by conducting a test in one group before being treated and after being treated (Sugiyono, 2021). With the research design "One Group Pre-Test Post-Test Reseachr Design" where this study conducted a pre-test by providing a psychological scale to 10 samples, individual counseling was carried out to 5 out of 10 selected samples, then a final test (post-test) was given to find out whether or not there was a change in the presentation of trauma experienced by the client after individual counseling was carried out, so that this can represent the answer of this study. The population of this study is adolescents who have trauma due to romantic relationships with indications that they are not in a romantic relationship. From the test, data was collected which was then analyzed by the descriptive analysis method. The one group pre-test-post test design scheme is shown as follows:

Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
T ₁	X	T ₂

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Information:

T₁ : Initial test (Pre-Test) is carried out before being given treatment (counseling with person centered therapy technique)

X : Treatment was given to the sample using the person centered therapy technique.

T₂ : The final test (Post-Test) is carried out after being given treatment (counseling with person centered therapy techniques)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Individual counseling that has been carried out by 5 selected samples produced the following data:

No	Sampel	Initial score Trauma category	Final score Trauma category	Percentage of change
1	AFW	31	Medium 19	Light 20 %
2	WLN	42	Height 29	Medium 21.7%
3	SA	33	Medium 26	Medium 11.7 %
4	IA	43	Height 28	Medium 25%
5	NS	42	Tall 29	Keep 21,7%

From the table above, the results obtained from 12 items with 3 aspects of trauma indications, namely Intrusive Symptoms, Avoidance Symtomp, and Arousal Symtomp, obtained varied answers so that the values produced also varied. However, from the overall score obtained, it shows a better development of a client before individual counseling with an average percentage of 20.2% reduction in trauma rate.

No	Initials	Session			
		L	Ll	Lll	IV
1.	AFW	Clients begin to feel comfortable and begin to receive warmly. Clients can understand the counseling procedures that will be carried out.	The client began to tell and vent all his heartache and anything that traumatized him. The client tells what he wants from his romantic relationship or his future life	The client realizes that the impact of the romance trauma he faces is very disruptive to his daily life. And has the spirit to become a better person, focusing on himself with him wanting to continue his S2 studies abroad. And at this stage, the client also describes	The client feels that the counseling process that has been carried out previously has greatly encouraged him to live his life with gratitude and focus on his potential. In this session, the counselor also felt that the enthusiasm

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				what he wants to do to develop his potential.	of the client was very burning.
2.	WLN	Clients begin to feel comfortable and begin to receive warmly. Clients can understand the counseling procedures that will be carried out.	The client shared her experience that she was always left without clarity with men. She feels that men are only curious about her, she always does her best for the men who are close to her but is always left without clarity, it makes her overthink what is lacking in her so that she feels insecure with herself, and is afraid to get to know men. The client in this session also described what life he wants and how real life happens.	Clients feel that the trauma experienced seems difficult to recover from because of their sense of trust issues. Clients begin to accept what has happened that we can't control what others are doing, we can only control ourselves. Clients also feel that focusing on themselves is one way to get quality love and what has happened is a lesson for them to be more careful to be close to someone.	The client feels that from the counseling process that has been carried out, it is enough to change his mindset to not be too good with men and not expect more from someone. In this session, she has the intention to be a more passive woman in a relationship so that she does not feel disadvantaged and hurt by the man who left her, she also becomes enthusiastic about taking care of herself and looking better.
3.	SA	Clients begin to feel comfortable and begin to receive warmly. Clients can understand the counseling procedures that will be carried out.	The client feels that the trauma he faces is sometimes disturbing, sometimes not because of the many activities he does so that his thoughts on trauma do not dominate, the description of the problems faced by the client can also be explained by the	In this session, the client showed a strong self-defense such as not wanting to be involved in a romantic relationship because he was focused on the career he wanted to achieve. She feels the need to be someone who deserves to be proud so that she is	This session did not last too long because the client was very visionary and stable, he knew what he had to do to make himself better.

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		<p>client in detail and calmly, the counselor feels that the client has made peace enough with his time and is not disturbed by daily activities because of the trauma, but the client no longer has the desire to have a romantic relationship, and he is fascinated by his own world.</p>	<p>not left behind, from here the counselor considers that the client is not afraid to have a new relationship but is still focused on raising her value so that she can get equal and quality love.</p>	
4.	IA	<p>Clients begin to feel comfortable and begin to receive warmly. Clients can understand the counseling procedures that will be carried out.</p>	<p>The client began to tell about the trauma he experienced with heavy breathing, teary eyes and tears, the problems experienced felt quite heavy for him because he was cheated on by his lover who promised to marry him. In this session, the client described all his heartache and trauma. The client hopes that it will not happen again in the future because it will greatly interfere with his life, even to the point of hurting him.</p>	<p>The client is already in control of his emotions and is more stable than in the previous session. The client also felt that his health had deteriorated much because of the trauma he experienced, so he felt that this trauma was enough to make his body suffer and the client had the intention to live better by exercising, and not hurting himself. At this stage the counselor feels the client basically knows what he is doing is wrong but is often carried away, and when he</p>

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					realizes the impact on the new physique he realizes what he is doing is wrong.	
5.	NS	Clients begin to feel comfortable and begin to receive warmly. Clients can understand the counseling procedures that will be carried out.	The client described trauma she experienced she abandoned by her lover somewhere she didn't know the place where she cried because she didn't know anyone and was left alone by the man. Here the counselor saw the client's annoyance with the incident and he felt that the romantic relationship was enough to traumatize him with a man.	client	In this session, the client hopes not to meet such a man again, and he is also aware that actually women do not deserve to be treated like that. For this stage, the client still does not want to have a romantic relationship and focus on the advanced school that he will go to college. The counselor considers that the client still has the spirit to go through his days.	The client told about the plans that he will live in the near future and in the long term. The client feels that the counseling that has been carried out can make him feel more relieved and can exchange ideas in developing his potential.

Of the 5 samples, they gave a positive response from the individual counseling that was carried out, where they realized that the trauma they experienced interfered with their daily activities so that they had a desire to become a better person. Individual counseling implemented by the researcher uses a person-centered therapy approach so that the sample can analyze the reality and life goals, the acceptance of the reality of life makes a person more peaceful with the past that has happened. Then the development of self-potential carried out in the 3rd session of individual counseling makes them realize that they are worth more than what they think. The IA client with the highest percentage of change in the initial score, had a poor experience of a romantic relationship, he was cheated on by his partner. And the incident made it difficult for her to trust other men who wanted to approach her. And he felt what was lacking in himself so many times that he was treated like that. He felt inappropriate and no one loved him sincerely. From the individual counseling that has been carried out, he realizes that it is not his fault and he feels that he is much more valuable and eager to become a better person by developing his existing potentials. From the traumas experienced by the client, the client realizes that with "healthy mental

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health, other aspects of his life will work more optimally. A healthy mentality is also inseparable from a good physical condition," said SA.

Individual counseling that has been implemented on the 5 clients above is indicated to experience the following symptoms of trauma symptoms, although not overall, but the clients as a whole show the same symptoms, namely avoidance.

According to Kembaren in ([Ayyun, 2022](#)) Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder include:

- a. Re-experiencing, such as: recalling events that traumatized them, through nightmares or events that are almost identical to the traumatic events experienced, the occurrence of psychological disorders when imagining them ([Ghochani et al., 2020](#)).
- b. Avoidance, namely: always trying to avoid things related to romantic relationships, both in terms of future planning, relationships, security, a place, food, and even fragrance. Which he considers to be able to avoid himself so as not to cause pain to him ([Cooper & Di Malta, 2024](#))
- c. Hyper-arousal (Wakefulness), including: lack of self-control over emotions or habits, such as sleep, excessive anxiety, lack of self-confidence, difficulty concentrating, irritability and others ([Amiri et al., 2020](#)).
- d. The onset of other symptoms such as psychological symptoms (anxiety, trust issues, feeling inappropriate, impulsive such as overeating or overeating) physical symptoms (feelings that go up or down drastically, headaches, stomach disorders, etc.) ([Frelre et al., 2020](#)).

According to national psychology figure Prof. Zakiya Drajat, mental health is first, people who do not have psychological disorders that are difficult to cure, and are not affected by the actions of others. Both of them have harmony between the heart and the mind. Third, those who are mentally healthy are those who are willing to adapt to the people closest to them. And fourth, those who are mentally healthy are those who know their potential and can develop it ([Aziz, 2019](#)).

Basically, every human being wants his physical and spiritual health. Allah sent down the Qur'an in which there are instructions in the treatment of both physical and psychological as explained in Q.S Al-Isra verse 82:

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

Meaning: "And we have revealed from the Qur'an that it is an antidote and mercy for the believers and the Qur'an does not add to the wrongdoers but the loss (Q.S Al-Isra : 82)

The above verse explains that Allah has sent down the Qur'an as an antidote and mercy to believers, judging from the fact that most of the sick people experience mental and soul shocks because of the trauma they suffer ([Lota, 2020](#)). Apart from the effectiveness of the individual counseling carried out, the researcher also gives a warning where all things that are experienced, be it joy or sorrow, all the tests that Allah gives us will definitely have a way and He gives a definite test according to the capacity of his servant. Staying away from the prohibition by not having a romantic relationship with someone who has not yet become a mahram is one way to avoid trauma.

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In line with previous research relevant to this study, such as research conducted by (Suroiyya & Habsy, 2024) The results of his research show that the person centered therapy approach can overcome overthinking that has a negative impact on the mental and physical health of individuals, such as anxiety, stress, headaches, digestive problems to more serious diseases. The results of his research show that the implementation of counseling carried out for victims of sexual violence is the first of all, counselors conduct counseling with the Person Centred Therapy approach so that the victim becomes better and used to doing activities as usual and carrying out his life. Research conducted by (Fitri et al., 2022) juga menunjukkan hal serupa jika resiliensi korban bullying tergolong rendah dengan skor responden "A" yaitu 45 dan responden "R" yaitu 48. Kedua pendekatan konseling individual tersebut berpusat pada klien dan efektif dalam meningkatkan resiliensi korban bullying yang diberikan kepada responden "A" dan "R" ternyata efektif. Tidak hanya itu penelitian yang dilakukan oleh (Suroiyya et al., 2024) The results of his research show that adolescents report an increase in psychological and family functioning. They also showed improvements in psychophysiological function (heart rhythm coherence). Caregivers reported improvements in their child's family functioning and psychological functioning. Caregivers observed more sustained benefits in their child's psychological functioning, while adolescents reported more sustained benefits in family functioning. Changes in psychological and familial functioning are intertwined. There are very few differential effects based on demographic factors, trauma exposure, or past and current treatment factors.

From the comparison of previous studies, it can be concluded that the use of person centered therapy techniques can overcome the symptoms experienced by the sample such as anxiety, overthinking, insecurity, stress and others, although from previous studies it does not specifically discuss romantic relationships, but the results of the use of the person centered therapy technique can overcome the same symptoms as experienced by the sample in this study and this is also It is proven from the findings obtained by the researcher where after the use of the Person Centered Therapy technique there is a change in the initial score and the final score, so that in general it can be said that the Person Centered Therapy technique can be used in counseling.

CONCLUSION

From the above explanations of the effectiveness of person-centered therapy in individual counseling for adolescents who experience trauma from romantic relationships, researchers can conclude that it shows an average of 20.2% reduction in Trauma Symptoms among participants after undergoing individual counseling. It is measured using a psychological scale that assesses various aspects of trauma, including intrusive symptoms, avoidance symptoms, and hyper-arousal symptoms. The participants showed a positive response to the counseling sessions, which indicated that they were beginning to realize how their trauma was affecting their daily activities. This awareness motivates them to strive for personal improvement and healing. Person centered therapy has a positive impact because the use of person centered therapy techniques in counseling emphasizes the importance of a warm and trusting relationship between the counselor and the client. This relationship allows clients to feel respected and empowered to make their own decisions.

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As for the implications for practice: this study shows that the application of person centered therapy in counseling practice can be beneficial for adolescents who face trauma from romantic relationships. This highlights the need for a tailored approach that takes into account each individual's unique experience. The limitation of this study is that it only focuses on trauma caused by romantic relationships, which may not cover the entire range of experiences and traumas that adolescents face. This narrow focus may limit the application of the findings to other types of trauma. Suggestions for future research that addresses material similar to this one is to explore the effectiveness of person-centered therapy for different types of trauma outside of romantic relationships. This can include trauma from family problems, bullying, or other important life events, thus expanding the scope of understanding regarding its application.

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