

## O-16 - DSM-IV PTSD SYMPTOMS, SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND LIFETIME TRAUMAS AMONG ADULTS EXPOSED TO 2004 TSUNAMI DISASTER IN MALAYSIA

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**Introduction:** Studies of PTSD among Malaysians are virtually unavailable. Three years after the 2004 tsunami, PTSD symptoms among Malays directly exposed to this disaster were examined.

**Aims:** To examine the potential predictive factors of PTSD symptoms.

**Objectives:** To determine PTSD prevalence, severity, and number of lifetime traumas. To examine if sociodemographic characteristics can be significant predictive factors of PTSD severity.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional survey was conducted interviewing 250 Malays from the most severely affected villages. Measurements include socio-demographic characteristics and number of lifetime traumas. The Posttraumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale (PDS)(Foa, 1996) was also included to measure DSM-IV PTSD symptoms.

**Results:** In total, 18.8% (47) of participants met DSM-IV PTSD criteria, with 14.8% having mild symptoms, 36.1% having moderate symptoms, 42.5% having moderate to severe symptoms, and 6.3% having severe symptoms. The highest reported symptom among all participants was criterion A: intense fear, helplessness and horror. Analysis of lifetime prevalence shows 4.4% never having traumatic experience, 48 % having one exposure, 28.4% having two exposures, 12.8% having between 3-4 exposures, and 6.4% having more than 5 exposures to traumatic events in their lifetime. Ordinal logistic regression analysis was additionally conducted to determine the relationship between PTSD level of severity and its socio-demographic predictors.

**Conclusion:** The prevalence of PTSD remained high with many participants still exhibiting severe symptoms. Findings in this study highlight that an immediate community intervention program is urgently needed.