

NEUROTICISM AND POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA ADOLESCENTS FROM THREE DIFFERENT REGIONS AFTER THE 1992-1995 WAR

M. Hasanović^{1,2}

¹Department of Psychiatry, University Clinical Center Tuzla, ²School of Medicine, University of Tuzla, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Aim: To estimate the neuroticism and its relations towards psychological trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among Bosnia-Herzegovina (BH) adolescents after the war 1992-1995.

Methods: The sample of 217 pupils (108 females and 109 males) aged 15.1 ± 2.1 years divided in three groups from: Srebrenica ($n=69$), Zvornik ($n=79$), and Bijeljina ($n=69$), who were exposed to the war catastrophes in the 1992-1995 war and became refugees and internally displaced persons during and after the war, were assessed on war traumatic events, PTSD presence, neuroticism, and its' associations. Data collection took place in June 1999 in the adolescents' schools, with the ethical approval.

Results: Srebrenica pupils were significantly more introverted. The prevalence of PTSD statistically significantly differed between groups: Srebrenica (73.9%), Zvornik (60.8%) and Bijeljina (47.6%)(Chi-square=9.854, $df=2$, $p=0.007$). The PTSD prevalence, PTSD symptoms' and social dysfunction were the most severe in Srebrenica, than in Zvornik and finally in Bijeljina group. In Srebrenica group neuroticism significantly associated with PTSD cluster symptoms and problems in social functioning. Adolescents with PTSD, in all three groups and in whole sample, were more nervous. Loss of father significantly increased introversion of adolescents in all three groups, and decreased adolescent's sociability in Zvornik and Bijeljina.

Conclusions: Bosnia-Herzegovina refugee and internally displaced adolescents, suffer very frequently from PTSD 3.5 years after war. PTSD prevalence is highly reported and significantly differed between groups. PTSD associated positively with neuroticism and introversion. Loss of father significantly increased adolescents' introversion in all three groups, and it decreased adolescent's sociability in Zvornik and Bijeljina.