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Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese

--Manuscript Draft--

Manuscript Number:	PAC-2024-0524R2
Full Title:	Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese
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Article Type:	Empirical Study
Keywords:	Bali bombing; collective memories; shared memories; past trauma
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Response to Reviewers:	Dear Editors, We are sending you a revision of our manuscript entitled "Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese" Manuscript ID PAC-2024-0524R1 We would like to express our gratitude for the constructive reviews and the invitation to revise and resubmit our manuscript. Both the reviewer and editor raised important points regarding Islamophobia and Peace Psychology literature, which we have addressed by incorporating relevant references and additional sentences. This revision has significantly improved the manuscript and provide a deeper understanding of how narratives and collective memory contribute to knowledge on peace and conflict from the perspective of psychology. We have responded to the reviewer and editor's comments via the attached table. Along with the responses, we have resubmitted the revised manuscript with each change indicated via yellow highlights.

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	Thank you again for considering our manuscript; we look forward to receiving your assessment of the revised manuscript. Please address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to the corresponding author's email. Thank you for your time and consideration. Sincerely, Authors
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Manuscript Classifications:	Democracy, conflict, and peace; Inter-group conflict; Peace building; Qualitative research methods and conflict

Cover Letter

16th April 2025

Dear Editors,

We are sending you a revision of our manuscript entitled "**Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese**" Manuscript ID PAC-2024-0524R1

We would like to express our gratitude for the constructive reviews and the invitation to revise and resubmit our manuscript. Both the reviewer and editor raised important points regarding Islamophobia and Peace Psychology literature, which we have addressed by incorporating relevant references and additional sentences. This revision has significantly improved the manuscript and provide a deeper understanding of how narratives and collective memory contribute to knowledge on peace and conflict from the perspective of psychology.

We have responded to the reviewer and editor's comments via the attached table. Along with the responses, we have resubmitted the revised manuscript with each change indicated via yellow highlights.

Thank you again for considering our manuscript; we look forward to receiving your assessment of the revised manuscript.

Please address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to the corresponding author's email.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Authors

Manuscript ID PAC-2024-0524R1- Responses to reviewers' comments

REVIEWER 2

Comment	Response
The article is much improved and I think warrants publications. However, the issue of Islamophobia should be stated more explicitly in the conclusion.	Thank you for the feedback. We have addressed it by providing additional sentences on page 30: "Further research is recommended to explore the dynamics of intergroup perceptions between (Hindu) Balinese and Muslims, particularly in relation to stigma and the potential increase in discrimination triggered by Islamophobia, as well as efforts toward mitigation at the community level." and page 32 "By encouraging narratives that emphasize understanding, healing, and unity, the Balinese community can work towards processing their grief and building bridges with others, promotes positive intergroup relations, without diminishing the profound impact of the tragedy they experienced, and at the same time moving forward to recover the tourism industry." "Promotes positive intergroup relations" also refers to or includes tackles Islamophobia.

EDITOR

Comment	Response
We are encouraging all articles to more fully and explicitly engage with the peace psychology literature. You might review the PAC issues with your own key words to find articles that are relevant to consider or include.	Thank you for the suggestion. We provide additional references to more explicitly engage with the peace psychology literature: Page 6: "Moreover, open communication within communities and families about traumatic events is associated with better mental health outcomes. For example community-based open dialogue interventions have improved social cohesion and integration post - genocide in Rwanda (Dehrone et al., 2022). Within schools and families, open communication facilitates children's mental well-being and promotes positive intergroup relations, suggesting that discussing past traumas can mitigate their psychological impact (Dalgaard

	et al., 2019; Stefaniak et al., 2022). This suggests that silencing collective trauma can have negative effects on collective resilience, mental health, and intergroup relations." Page 7 "The reasons why and how collective memories change can be attributed to several factors including: 1) changing societal contexts, which can shift the narratives surrounding events; 2) differing experiences, particularly across generations; and 3) variations in how memories are constructed and retold over time (see e.g., Barreiro et al., 2016; Halbwachs, 1953; Roediger, 2021; Schuman & Scott, 1989). An understanding of how societies reconstruct and retell past memories or events would make a significant contribution to intergroup peace and conflict studies (Wagoner & Brescó, 2016)." Page 28 "In the subsequent discussion, we incorporate the narrative analysis framework into the role of collective memory, as highlighted by (Camia & Zafar, 2021), (Nicholson, 2016), (Pond & Peterson, 2020), and (Sow et al., 2023), to illustrate the existence of prejudice and attitudes towards other groups." Page 32 "By encouraging narratives that emphasize understanding, healing, and unity, the Balinese community can work towards processing their grief and building bridges with others, promotes positive intergroup relations, without diminishing the profound impact of the tragedy they experienced, and at the same time moving forward to recover the tourism industry."
Please add in-text call-out for Table 3	Thank you, we have revised as peer review coordinator's suggestion. Please see on page 13: "…However, some formed novel narratives as outlined in Table 3."

Running Head: Bali bombing's memories and traumatic events

Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese

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Masked Manuscript without Author Information

Bali bombing's memories and past traumatic events among Balinese

Abstract

The 2002 Bali bombing spurred significant attention and development in terrorism studies in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia. After two decades, the present study aims to explore Balinese memories of the bombings and their coping mechanisms. Through open-ended questions, we gathered data from participants (N = 324) divided into three groups based on their direct, staggered, or vicarious experience of the event. Six themes emerged from the participants' narratives: 1) the attack's catastrophic impact on tourism and the economy, 2) condemnation of the terrorists' actions, 3) the attack as a reminder from Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa (The Balinese God), 4) gratitude for the positive meaning behind the attack, and 5) the importance of unity in the face of adversity, and 6) the conclusion that 'we are all the same'. While some Balinese harbour hatred toward the perpetrators, others adopted a more positive outlook. We argue these findings suggest that promoting such positive narratives could potentially mitigate hatred and foster harmonious intergroup relations.

***Keywords*:** Bali bombing, collective memories, shared memories, past trauma

Public Significant Statement

Two decades after the Bali Bombings, this study explores how the Balinese remember and cope with the traumatic event. The findings reveal diverse narratives, ranging from Bali's economic devastation and condemnation of terrorism to spiritual reflections and calls for unity. These results suggest that promoting positive narratives could mitigate prejudice and contribute to long-term reconciliation and tourism recovery.

The 2002 Bali bombing incidents marked the beginning of a significant growth in attention in terrorism studies in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia (Hassan, 2007; Wright-Neville, 2004). Following the incidents, numerous studies were conducted that sought to examine the perpetrators, related terrorist group networks, and to investigate the motivations and factors that had resulted in a series of terror actions in Indonesia (Magouirk et al., 2008; Putra & Sukabdi, 2013).

The Bali bombing incident is unique due to the island's distinct religious composition. Bali is an integral part of Indonesia, situated between the islands of Java and Lombok. However, unlike Java and Lombok, where the majority follow Islam, Bali is distinguished by Hinduism being the predominant religion, with around 80% of the population practising this faith. In general, the native inhabitants adhere to Hinduism, with human development index region for the area being 78.01, mean years of schooling was 9.45, and labour force participation rate was 77.1 in 2023 (Kesuma et al., 2024). The perpetrators of the Bali bombing were linked to Islamist jihadist group(s), but notably, their primary targets were foreigners rather than Balinese people, as demonstrated by the choice of targets (Putra & Sukabdi, 2013). Although the number of foreign victims was higher compared to Balinese victims, the Bali bombing incidents had a significant impact on the people of Bali, not least because it represented the first terrorist incident on the island.

While there have been studies investigating the perpetrator groups of the Bali bombing (Hassan, 2007; Milla et al., 2013), research focusing on the perspectives of the victims communities —specifically, how Balinese people think about and remember the Bali bombing—is still understudied. Two decades after the first Bali bombing incident, the present study aims to explore the memories of Balinese people regarding the bombings and how they cope with these past traumatic events. The findings of this investigation can help us to

understand how individuals, who indirectly became targets, interpret an incident and perceive the perpetrators.

It is important to note, however, that this was not the first time Bali experienced a traumatic event. During the 1965-66 anti-communist purges in Indonesia, many victims and their families continued to face stigma. Bali's case is particularly significant because, proportionally, it had the highest victimization rate during these purges (Cribb, 2001; Robinson, 1995). Many of the perpetrators and victims were extended family members, schoolmates, childhood friends, or neighbours within the same communities, making it very likely that many of them still carry that trauma. In the present study, we do not examine Balinese memories of the 1965-66 events directly, but these past experiences may influence how the Balinese respond to other traumatic events.

Bali Bombings

On October 12th, 2002, the Indonesia island of Bali experienced a devastating terrorist attack involving three simultaneous bombings, two of which occurred in the tourist hotspot of Kuta (Hassan, 2007; Stein et al., 2022). The attacks, strategically timed during peak tourist season, targeted crowded areas, including Paddy's Pub nightclub, the open-air Sari Club bar, and the United States consulate in Denpasar. Although the attacks primarily targeted foreigners, the Balinese locals in the affected zones were also impacted. Known as the 2002 Bali Bombings, this tragedy claimed 202 lives, including 38 Balinese Indonesians, and injured over 200 people. In 2005, a similar attack occurred, resulting in 20 fatalities and 129 injuries, predominantly among Balinese Indonesians. Both incidents involved suicidal attacks and car bombs orchestrated by the extremist Jemaah Islamiyah network.

The aftermath of the Bali Bombing attacks had far-reaching consequences, leading to a substantial decline in Bali's tourism sector due to heightened safety concerns (Stein et al.,

2022). This decline resulted in widespread economic repercussions, including job losses and business closures. Although the tourism industry eventually recovered, the incident's lasting impact on safety perceptions persisted, shaping Bali's approach to tourism. Despite the destination's ongoing revival, the traumatic episode had a lasting impact on both the indigenous Balinese population and the tourism industry (Gurtner, 2016).

Two decades later, the psychological wounds of that day persist. This study aims to explore how memories of the Bali bombing have persisted in the minds of the Balinese people, how they attribute meaning to those events, and how these processes have impacted coping mechanism, group alignments, and social cohesion in the region.

Individual and Collective Memories of Past Events

Memory comes in two primary forms: individual and collective. Individual memory involves recalling personal experiences, contributing to the understanding of one's identity, location, and circumstances, thereby shaping individual thoughts (Kuzmanić, 2008). Additionally, an individual’s recollection of personal life events, encompassing specific details, emotions, and context, is known as autobiographical memory (Conway, 2005). In contrast, collective memory relates to shared knowledge within groups and communities. Both individual and collective memory play essential roles in shaping personal and social identity (Bruner & Feldman, 1996; Gillis, 1996; Halbwachs, 1953).

This study examines and embraces both autobiographical and collective memory. For individuals who personally experienced an event, occurrences like the Bali bombings can trigger long-lasting, emotionally charged autobiographical memories of significant life events. In terms of collective memory, individuals draw upon shared recollections—such as the Bali bombings—to construct a common understanding of the past, leading to shared representations within groups (Kuzmanić, 2008). Shaped by social, cultural, and historical factors, collective

memory is closely linked to the social identity of specific groups (Brockmeier, 2002; Wertsch & Roediger, 2008).

Past incidents are often remembered differently from various perspectives: whether from the viewpoints of survivors, victims, families of victims, witnesses, law enforcement, politicians, medical personnel, local residents, or perpetrators (see e.g., Oriannes et al., 2024; Rimé et al., 2009). A study on the collective memories of the Paris terrorist attacks on 13 November 2015, conducted by Oriannes and colleagues (2024), shows that the social construction of memory largely depends on how respondents position themselves. There are distinct emphases in memories, particularly between victims, witnesses, healthcare workers, and law enforcement regarding the Paris attacks.

The perspectives of perpetrators and victim groups, in particular, are notably different from one another. For instance, the Armenian genocide is depicted in Turkish schoolbooks as intercommunal warfare, with victims considered collateral damage rather than systematically killed (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019; Latino, 2018). In contrast, Armenia observes April 24 as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, a public holiday commemorating the first deportations of Armenians by the Ottomans occurring on that date in 1915 (Savelsberg, 2021). Regarding collective trauma, perpetrators may struggle with the memory of inflicting trauma as it can threaten a positive collective identity. Coping strategies may include denying history, minimizing culpability, reshaping the memory of the event, avoiding historical acknowledgement, or accepting responsibility (Bikmen, 2016). Conversely, victims' recall of trauma can serve as an adaptive mechanism for group survival while simultaneously increasing awareness of existential threats. This can prompt a search for meaning and the development of a trans-generational collective identity (Hirschberger, 2018).

For instance, in Ukraine, the Holocaust is regarded as a dark period in their history, and there is an active effort to forget and avoid discussions about Holocaust events that took place

in Ukraine or were carried out by Ukrainians (Wylegała, 2017). As a result, Ukrainians' collective memory of the Holocaust has significantly faded, making it challenging to trace the instances of Jewish killings in Ukraine during that time.

Moreover, while past negative events can serve as valuable lessons, recalling them may also reignite conflicts. For instance, Hakim and Adams (2018) conducted a study where participants were asked to remember the events of 9/11. The results showed that such recollection could garner support among participants for the American government to take military action against countries deemed as enemies or threats to America. This suggests that past traumatic events are susceptible to being exploited by politicians or leaders, who can use them to mobilize the masses and foster resentment against other groups. The Bosnian Muslim massacres from 1992 to 1995 illustrate this, with Serbian leaders emphasizing past instances of Turks (Muslims) committing violence against Serbians (Winton & Unlu, 2008).

On the other hand, a study on Palestinians' experiences of collective trauma amid ongoing repression and structural violence found that such trauma, transmitted across generations through storytelling and memory, can help sustain collective resilience (Veronese et al., 2023). Moreover, open communication within communities and families about traumatic events is associated with better mental health outcomes. For example community-based open dialogue interventions have improved social cohesion and integration post - genocide in Rwanda (Dehrone et al., 2022). Within schools and families, open communication facilitates children's mental well-being and promotes positive intergroup relations, suggesting that discussing past traumas can mitigate their psychological impact (Dalgaard et al., 2019; Stefaniak et al., 2022). This suggests that silencing collective trauma can have negative effects on collective resilience, mental health, and intergroup relations.

Although some past events are preserved through documentation, commemoration, and history lessons, collective memories can become inconsistent over time as well as across

generations, regardless of how traumatic the events were. This is found in many major world event (see e.g., Dégeilh et al., 2021; Hirst et al., 2015; Schuman & Scott, 1989). The reasons why and how collective memories change can be attributed to several factors including: 1) changing societal contexts, which can shift the narratives surrounding events; 2) differing experiences, particularly across generations; and 3) variations in how memories are constructed and retold over time (see e.g., Barreiro et al., 2016; Halbwachs, 1953; Roediger, 2021; Schuman & Scott, 1989). An understanding of how societies reconstruct and retell past memories or events would make a significant contribution to intergroup peace and conflict studies (Wagoner & Brescó, 2016).

Bali has a long history of violence that exhibits similarities and differences features with the pattern of violence globally, which had been discussed by previous scholars, such as Dwyer, (2010, 2015), Dwyer and Santikarma (2003), Lemelson (2014), Robinson (1995), and Suryawan (2010). For instance, during the 1965-66 anti-communist purges in Indonesia, the propaganda campaign "cleaning environment", constructed individuals who refused to comply as members of Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI). As a result, Balinese were forced to kill their family members and relatives. However, not everyone coerced to kill, as the "cleaning environment" propaganda seemed to catalyse the horizontal conflicts in Bali, which were largely related to land disputes and inheritance. Post-1965, the propaganda continued, and those labelled as having affiliations with the PKI, or referred to as "PKI children," experienced marginalization in various forms, including limited educational and career opportunities. In the reform era, the old narrative surrounding communism in Indonesia underwent a total transformation, impacting how perpetrators and victims were perceived (Dwyer, 2010, 2015; Dwyer & Santikarma, 2003).

Dwyer (2010, 2015) in her writings on the 1965 Park reveals the genealogies of remembering and collective memory during the community activities, which did not

necessarily break the silence and facilitate open discussions about the 1965 events. Instead, this activity prompted communities to re-examine and question the identities of perpetrators and victims. Previously, perpetrators were positioned as victims, while former victims re-questioned their victim identities, wondering what kind of victims they were. Many chose to remain silent, as uncovering the history of violence in Bali would pose a challenge to the future of Bali's tourism. Portraying Bali as contradictory to the narrative of harmony and exoticism would lead to international withdrawal. The silence "*Ngeb*" shown by Balinese individual in Dwyer and Santikarma's (2003) research, as well as Lestari et al. (2022, 2023) seems to be a defense mechanism employed by the Balinese to maintain their harmony both at the public and private family domains.

Considering the factors outlined above, it is important to examine how the Balinese remember the Bali bombing incidents 20 years later. Do their memories emphasize negativity and resentment, lean toward positive reflections, or encompass other dimensions? Additionally, we aim to explore the similarities and differences in memory between those who directly experienced the bombings and those who did not. The first group includes individuals who were old enough at the time to understand the events and their context, thereby forming autobiographical memories. The second group consists of those who were too young or not yet born and thus unable to grasp the significance of the incidents.

Such that, among the Balinese participants, we classified their memories related to the Bali bombings into three groups: direct, staggered, and vicarious. Direct memories are those relating to personal experiences of the event, requiring the individual to be in Kuta during the bombing. Staggered memories relate to those based on learning about the event from a report in the media or hearing another account, and not having a personal direct experience. Vicarious memories, on the other hand, refer to those acquired indirectly but from others who had first-hand direct experiences, not secondary media sources. Vicarious memories are consequently

associated with the younger generations who lack their own personal experiences of the event. In our research, these three categories—Direct, Staggered, and Vicarious—will be classified by age (see below for detailed information on the divisions).

Previous studies have found that vicarious memories (Panattoni & Thomsen, 2018; Pillemer et al., 2015), seen from an observer's perspective, and direct or personal memories, typically experienced from a first-person viewpoint, share similar qualities and functions. That is, despite personal memories often being more emotionally intense and vivid, both types of memories serve roles such as guiding behaviour, strengthening social bonds, and contributing to one's sense of self-continuity and self-enhancement (Camia & Zafar, 2021; Muzzulini et al., 2022; Pond & Peterson, 2020; Sow et al., 2023).

Within the narrative analysis perspective, narrative can be used as storytelling (Stephens, 2011), and is referred to as 'narrative as a thinking' by Murray (1997). People who have direct experiences usually retell an event or sequence of events that are easily retrieved from cognitive storage. However, storytelling is not merely a cognitive process; when retelling, people tend to draw on dominant narratives which publicly found in their lives (Esin, 2011; Murray, 1997; Stephens, 2011). Similar to the argument above, a dominant public narrative has the power to set behavioural standards and attitudes, and have discursive effects (Camia & Zafar, 2021; Pond & Peterson, 2020; Sow et al., 2023). Within the discursive effects of narrative, storytellers, actors, and audiences position themselves and are simultaneously positioned by the dominant narratives accordingly (see e.g., Barreiro et al., 2016; Cordonnier et. al., 2021). This aligns with what Murray (1997) and Esin (2011) describe as narrative being a social construction, particularly in the context of identity constructions. In relation to collective memory, Wertsch (2002) introduced the concept of 'schematic narrative,' which organizes our understanding of past events through specific plots and scenes, shaping what he terms 'national collective memory.' Like the discursive effects of narrative, schematic

narratives play a vital role in constructing the identities of specific groups (Kaidesoja, 2024). These narrative templates focus on how individuals create and interpret stories within shared cultural frameworks, acting as cognitive structures that guide people in processing narratives and making sense of their experiences.

Furthermore, schematic narratives, similar to master narratives, shape collective memory by reflecting the broader cultural context. Although abstract, schematic narratives form the foundation for many specific stories commonly found in public texts that are widely accessible and read by members of a nation or community. These texts allow readers to share and transmit stories about the national past to others (Wertsch, 2021).

While it may be true that there are similarities in the functions between vicarious and personal memories, the content of what is more often remembered or expressed, whether negative or positive, or even forgotten, may differ, especially in traumatic events that involve dysphoric (painful and frightening) experiences (Er, 2003; Whitehouse et al., 2017). The present study also seeks to investigate this issue, exploring the potential differences between vicarious and personal memories in the context of the Bali bombings.

Overview of the Present Study

This study is an exploratory qualitative investigation of the autobiographical and collective memories of Hindu Balinese individuals who either directly experienced or later heard accounts of the Bali bombing incidents. Specifically, research participants were divided into three groups: (a) The "direct experience" group included individuals aged over 35 who were either present at the event or very close to the epicentre; (b) The group categorised as "staggered experience" consisted of individuals aged over 35 who were not in close proximity to the epicentre, and hence knowledge about the event through media coverage or other secondary sources, and (c) The "vicarious experience" group comprised individuals aged 18 -

25 who learned about the event indirectly through the first-hand accounts of others who were present during the incidents.

Methods

Participants

Research participants were obtained by distributing questionnaires to individuals who met the criteria outline above through several communities in Bali, including custom villages called Banjar, administrative villages, non-government organisations (NGOs) dedicated to survivors of the Bali Bombing, and universities. A total of 324 participants took part in the study, consisting of: a) 76 participants in the "direct experience" group (Male = 39; Female = 37); b) 178 participants in the "staggered experience" group (Male = 83; Female = 95); and c) 70 participants in the "vicarious experience" group (Male = 25; Female = 45). All of the participants were Balinese Hindus with the majority were held bachelor's degrees, and lived in Badung Regency of Bali Island. Participant demographics are reported in Table 1.

[Table 1 here]

Data Collection

This research is part of a broader study that employed both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In this investigation, our focus is on the qualitative data. Data collection was undertaken in Bali, Indonesia, made use of the Qualtrics platform, and was conducted from August 2020 until February 2022. The language used in all the questionnaires was Bahasa Indonesia.

The participants are divided into three groups: direct, staggered, and vicarious. The direct group was asked about their experiences with the Bali bombing, including their

recollections, thoughts, and emotions. The staggered group were alternatively prompted to recollect their initial exposure to information regarding the Bali bombing. The vicarious group were asked to recall how they learned about the bombing event from others who were present and the significance attributed to the event. "For example, "where were you when you first learned about the Bali bombing?", "To what extent do you feel goosebumps when recalling this memory?", "Can you tell me more about your/others experiences (e.g., your feeling, your thoughts) about the Bali Bombing?"

Analysis

Our analysis aimed to identify themes related to the Bali Bombing based on the participants' responses to the prompts asking them about their recollections of the event or the narratives they had received. To this end, we applied thematic analysis in accordance with Braun and Clarke (2006). The initial stage in this approach involved gaining a better understanding of the data by reading each personal story and making note of the public narratives drawn upon by participants across direct, staggered, and vicarious experiences. Subsequent steps included generating initial codes from the content, collating codes into themes and gathering relevant data, defining and labelling themes. Initially, we identified 33 codes in direct experience accounts, 34 in staggered experiences, and 22 in vicarious experiences, and coded others for participants' responses that only described the event. These codes were then grouped into nine themes, (a) negative impacts of the bombing, (b) cruel acts in the name of religion, (c) God's reminder, (d) increase alertness, (e) positive meaning behind the bombing, (f) unity, (g) we are the same, (h) feeling towards the event, and (i) others.

[Table 2 here]

This was an iterative process, in which codes and themes were reviewed and revised by authors to obtain those that were most relevant to the research questions. We conducted within and cross-comparison analysis as part of this process, and attempted to identify the similarities and differences among stories in each group (within) and the stories across the different experience categories (cross-comparison). In so doing we reviewed the themes and sub-themes and determined six themes that represented the public narrative of the Bali Bombing incident. Here, we merged a theme about God reminder and increase alertness into one theme because they have a similar meaning about reminder from God to increase alertness toward migrants, and excluded themes that only described the event or the participants feeling or emotional states towards the bombing. We labelled the three themes that appeared across each experience category (direct, staggered, and vicarious) as common narratives. Whilst themes that only appeared in one or two of the categories are termed novel narratives. The final themes were reviewed jointly by the authors.

The results section is divided into two parts. The first section explains the common narratives and the second section explains the novel narratives. Several representative extracts with pseudonyms are disclosed to help contextualise the findings.

Results

The majority of participants' narratives across, vicarious, staggered, and direct experiences drew on public narratives around Bali and the Bombing. However, some formed novel narratives as outlined in Table 3. We begin our reporting of results by explaining the themes under common narratives and then move on to address context-specific narratives.

[Table 3 here]

Common Narratives

a. The attack brought about catastrophic impacts to tourism and the economy

In this theme, the accounts constructed by participants mostly associate the Bali Bombing to the economic and tourism sectors, which are the main source of income for the Balinese. Here, stories referenced dominant narratives about the decline of Bali's tourism and economy after the Bali Bombing (see e.g., Pambudi et al., 2009; Putra & Hitchcock, 2006), as seen in Ketut's personal narrative below.

> When the incident happened... one hour before the incident I passed by in front of the scene of the incident on my way home.... when I was home an hour later, there was a very powerful explosion... so powerful that it destroyed my house... because the explosion was near my house (10 m). Luckily, there were no fatalities among the occupants… we just had a few scratches. **The first Bali bombing incident destroyed the lives of the local people. Tourism slumped; for 6 months there were no revenues in the surrounding areas affected by the bomb blast.** (Ketut, 48 years old)

Ending the story by emphasizing the phrase 'Tourism slumped', Ketut, who was at the scene before the bomb exploded, reproduces an influential narrative that situates the event within the intersection of the attack, tourism, and the economy, noting how this event had a significant impact on Bali. Specifically, by emphasizing the phrase the Bali bombing destroyed the lives of the local people, as part of his personal narrative, Ketut wanted to emphasise that the group that was significantly affected was the local population, including Ketut, who worked and lived in the area nearby.

Intan's story about the bombing also drew on the same public narrative. Even though Intan was not at the scene at the time of the incident and heard about the bomb explosion from relatives, they were still an example of a Balinese person who experienced the personal impacts of the Bali Bombing on tourism and the economy.

> When I first heard the news about the Bali bombing, I was greatly shocked and saddened, because at that time I worked in hospitality. I could not imagine what was becoming of the situation and **condition of tourism** at that time, as the guests staying at the hotel panicked right after they heard the news. **Occupancy**

> **dropped drastically, and at that time we were also instructed by the management to take a leave because the hotel's revenues were decreasing**. (Intan, 41 years old)

Drawing on a narrative about the impact of bombs on tourism, Intan's personal narrative illustrates the impact at the macro and microeconomic levels. By referencing that 'occupancy dropped drastically', Intan's story concerning the Bali Bombing relates to how Bali tourism was negatively affected. These macro conditions had an impact on micro conditions as individual incomes dramatically decreased due to the decline in the tourism industry's ability to employ workers in mass numbers.

This dominant narrative not only appears in the personal narratives from participants who experienced it directly and who lived through the Bali bombing period but also in those from individuals who were not yet born or still in their childhood years. One example was Dinda who reproduced (retelling) the story about the Bali Bombings that she heard from her relatives who work in the tourism sector. Dinda explicitly stated that the situation that occurred at that time was very tense and associated the declining number of tourists who visited Bali with the economic decline.

> The person telling this story is a relative of mine. When the Bali bombing happened, he was an employee at one of the hotels. **At the time of the Bali bombing incident, the atmosphere was very tense, and there were massive layoffs resulting in an economic downturn** (Dinda, 21 years old)

The three examples in this section illustrate how a core component for many of the stories of the Bali Bombing is found within dominant narratives about tourism and economic decline. For years, a broader narrative about the downturn in tourism and the economy in Bali has been closely linked with the Bali Bombing events. All of this is logically consistent given that Bali is a world tourism destination and the primary income for most of the Balinese derives from this sector. Within the global literature, political stability is crucial for the tourism industry (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005; Putra & Hitchcock, 2006). Terrorism undoubtedly poses a

significant threat to political stability, presenting challenges for tourism by reducing tourism activities and investment (Mataković & Cunjak Mataković, 2019). Personal stories that focused on this theme were emphasising the macro-economic impacts on the tourism industry and the economic development of the Balinese, as well as more micro-scale impacts on individuals. In contrast to this, the next theme focuses on personal stories that relate to external groups and provide expressions that highlight the participants' perceptions of these groups.

b. This was a terrorist act that deserves condemnation

In building their personal stories a number of participants drew on narratives related to terrorist groups. Specifically, their accounts regarding the Bali Bombing expressed strong condemnation of such attacks conducted by terrorist groups as they were considered inhumane. Ayu, who witnessed the event directly, understandably described that the event produced unpleasant emotions for them. Ayu's account illustrates the extent of negative feeling felt by many individuals towards the perpetrators of the attacks.

> At the time of the Bali bombing incident, I felt tense, panicked, and terrified because I saw a large ball of fire around the location, and the incident was very clear to see. **The perpetrators of the Bali bombing were very inhumane, extremely vile. I felt the sadness of many of my relatives who were affected by the Bali bombing**. (Ayu, 63 years old)

The negative attitudes related to the Bali Bombing and its impacts have created two distinct identity constructions. The first is the identity of the victims who are typically described as an innocent group who have been forced to experience a variety of negative impacts, including emotionally, physically, and financially. The second concerns the identity of the perpetrators, which are closely associated with the broader category of terrorists who are considered inhumane and deserving of condemnation. These identity constructions provide an example of how victims and perpetrators are typically portrayed in numerous mass violence. Putra et al. (2024) developed a theoretical model of victimization and perpetration through their case

studies on mass atrocities in Asia (Indonesia, Cambodia, East Timor, and Myanmar), which elucidates the similar mechanisms of in-group and out-group identification employed by both victims and perpetrators. Such condemnation can be seen in the personal narrative provided by Wayan. Wayan is one of the Balinese people who were not at the scene during the event. However, he reported similar emotions as those expressed by individuals like Ayu who experienced the event directly.

> I was greatly shocked. I felt sad because many innocent people became victims and **I condemn the people who carried out the bombing**. (Wayan, 51 years old)

Such narratives condemning terrorists are common and can be seen across the public domain in Bali and Indonesia more generally. Bombing events are generally understood to be caused by terrorist movements. This narrative is widespread and has been transmitted generationally. For example, the personal story provided by Putra explicitly draws on this narrative. When compared with the stories constructed by Ayu and Wayan, Putra's personal story about the Bali Bombing has similar content and refers to the same public narrative, even though Putra only retold his relatives' stories. In fact, in the process of retelling, the identities of the perpetrator and victim are positioned as in direct conflict.

Putra mentioned that, "...acts of terrorism in the name of religion by doing jihad as a means of eradicating western lifestyle which were tolerated in Bali, particularly by the Hindu religion" which indicates how acts of terrorism were aimed at eradicating something that is perceived to be accepted by the Balinese public who are predominantly Hindu. The narrative referred to in a personal story has the potential to reinforce prejudice and hatred as it presents the ideals of various groups as being at odds. For example, the use of 'jihad', and 'in the name of religion' are examples of phrases that contain prejudice against perpetrators who are often believed to be affiliated with certain groups. Putra also referenced 'Western lifestyle' in reference to practices and behaviours that are considered unacceptable to the terrorist

perpetrators but as tolerated by Balinese people. This contrast positions Bali as a potential target area for the perpetrators and a potential perceived outgroup, despite all those involved being nationally Indonesian.

> He lived close to the location of the Bali bombing incident. It was night-time. He really felt the effects of the bomb explosion. At the location, he saw lots of body parts and fire everywhere. At that time, he was so scared that he contacted all his family to stay away from the location. **According to him, this was an act of terrorism in the name of religion by doing jihad as a means of eradicating western lifestyle which were tolerated in Bali, particularly by the Hindu religion**. (Putra, 24 years old)

The three personal narratives presented in this section show how the identity category of terrorist perpetrators and the identity category of victims are positioned in a broader narrative that represents these as antagonistic identities. The three accounts also demonstrate how a sense of solidarity can arise when an event is perceived as coming from an external source with characteristics that distinguish the perpetrators. For example, the phrases, 'empathy towards my brothers', and 'providing impacts to all my brothers', are types of social support and solidarity that usually emerge when a group is faced with disaster, or when positioned as victims (see e.g., Hitchcock & Putra, 2005; Putra et al., 2024; Suryawan, 2010). The next section discusses in more detail how the victim's experience is interpreted as a warning from God to always maintain vigilance.

c. This was a reminder from Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa (the Balinese Hindu God)

Personal stories in this category present the Bali Bombing as a warning from Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa (ISHWW), especially emphasising the importance of maintaining collective vigilance. The warning from ISHWW to maintain vigilance in this section manifests in two ways: increased outgroup vigilance (vigilance towards perpetrators) and ingroup vigilance (self-vigilance). These forms of vigilance appeared across all categories of experience.

For example, in Sutha's personal story she explained what she did before and during the bomb blast, providing a detailed description of the event, including her interpretation of the meaning of the event. In generating her personal interpretation and sense of meaning, Sutha drew on a widespread narrative that presents ISHWW's power as guiding people towards virtues by revealing specific signals and signs around an event. In her case, Sutha believes that the Bali Bombing was a reminder from ISHWW to get closer to Him, but at the same time, the event also served to raise awareness of the existence of groups that hate the Balinese way of life for its perceived adoption of Western values.

> At the time of the incident, I was alone in my room watching TV, while the other members of my family were in their own rooms. Suddenly, there was a huge explosion and the electricity instantly went out. For a moment I thought it was a very big bolt of lightning, but that thought soon disappeared after I heard the noise of people asking for help because they were injured. There were also people shouting, "Fire!", and sure enough I saw very large flames about 500 m from my house. I could estimate that the location was on Legian St., and by looking at it I already suspected it was a bomb. And it became clearer after I came closer to the location that there were many victims injured and dead. **From this incident, I think that in this life we must get closer to ISHWW, and one more thing is that I realize that there are groups who hate the way we live…** (Sutha, 60 years old)

A similar narrative was also reproduced by Tuti, who was involved as a volunteer at the time of the attack. In her personal account, Tuti describes her contributions as a volunteer coordinator. Despite her fear, she continued to perform her responsibilities during the evacuation process. Apart from reproducing the narrative relating to the events being an example of ISHWW's warning and a reminder of the need for vigilance, Tuti also referenced the narrative relating to the Bali Bombing and the paralysis of tourism discussed above.

> I was watching TV, and there was a running text about the bombing that was taking place, and a few minutes later news and video recordings of the situation in Kuta were broadcasted. I happened to be the supervisor of the KSR (volunteer corps) of PMI (the Indonesian Red Cross) in Unwar (Warmadewa University). PMI Bali Headquarters in Denpasar, Badung contacted the Unwar KSR to join and gave a helping hand in evacuating victims on the site. I was greatly shocked, terrified, and worried about a follow-up bomb, but I must mobilize the KSR students to go down to the site. For a week long the Unwar KSR worked at the

> bombing site. The Bali bombing incident paralyzed tourism in Bali in particular and in Indonesia in general. **Many parties were made aware to always be alert and to filter people who enter Bali. For the Balinese people, the incident increased their alertness and their devotion to Ida Hyang Widhi**. (Tuti, 54 years old)

Once again, Tuti's account emphasizes the presence of outsiders. By using the word "filter," Tuti implies the need to distinguish between those who pose a threat as opposed to normal visitors. This sentiment suggests the need for enhanced caution to filter potential threats from entering Bali. Similar to Tuti's account, Hitchcock and Putra (2005) reported several cultural strategies employed by the Balinese following the Bali Bombing to enhance the island's security. These strategies included the development of the *polisi pariwisata* (tourist police) and the strengthening of traditional institutions, such as *banjar* (hamlets) and *pecalang* (paramilitary units), to regulate migrant.

The previous two personal narratives demonstrate the two forms of vigilance references above: outgroup and ingroup vigilance. Similarly, Mita's narrative based on her relatives' account emphasises vigilance directed at the ingroup. The Balinese are positioned in her account as a group that is responsible for controlling their morality and ethics in order to avoid becoming the target of terrorists. Although this account also recommends ingroup vigilance, Mita's narrative positions the Balinese not as pure victims but as parties who may have some responsibly for becoming targets. In this account, the disaster is linked with tolerance for immoral behaviour in the past.

> He told of how the Bali bombing affected him and his family. He viewed it as a warning and **a message from the Almighty ISHWW about the morals and also the ethics of the Balinese people especially those in Kuta area**. (Mita, 21 years old)

Mita's account provides an example of how victims were selected in numerous mass violence, often perceived as having contributed significantly to the violence and subsequently serving as justification for the brutality (Putra et al., 2024). For example, the 'cleaning environment'

propaganda during the 1965-66 anti-communist purges in Indonesia, which involved violence against the PKI and its alleged affiliates, was deemed justified for the sake of the unity of the nation (Dwyer & Santikarma, 2003; Putra et al., 2024). Similarly, in the Bali Bombing, targeting Bali was considered acceptable to save the island from 'Western' influences, thereby shifting the responsibility onto the victims rather than the perpetrators.

The examples in this section illustrate how collective themes can emerge across different contexts and become prominent interpretations or narratives about an event, such as the Bali Bombing. These narratives, which are shaped by shared experiences, beliefs, and values, can transcend individual perspectives, and gain widespread acceptance within a community.

Moreover, these narratives have the ability to be transmitted across generations, even among those who did not directly experience the impact of the event. This intergenerational transmission allows the narratives to maintain their prominence and continue to shape the collective understanding of the event over time. The ability of these narratives to be reproduced and transferred between individuals and across generations contributes to their dominance in the public discourse. As a result, these narratives become deeply ingrained in the collective memory and can have a lasting impact on how the event is remembered and understood by the community as a whole.

Novel Narratives

In this section, we will examine some of the themes that emerged in specific experiential contexts, such as first-hand experiences of the Bali Bombing compared to later non-personalised reporting. By exploring these themes, we can gain insight into how different levels of proximity to the event can shape the narratives that develop around it.

a. We have to be grateful because there is a positive meaning that can be found from the experience of the attack.

This theme refers to personal narratives reported by participants that referred to their gratitude and belief that there is always a positive meaning that can be found from the attack. In Duta's account, he explained that he happened to live near the bombing location and related what he was doing when the bomb exploded, his feelings about the event, and his reflection and subsequent personal meaning he attached to the event. The narrative element of gratitude was expressed at the conclusion of his account. In particular, he references a request he refused from his wife that prevented him from being a victim. Duta associated his luck with karma. This kind of narrative expressing gratitude, attributing a positive meaning, and referencing karma reflects a dominant public narrative that we encounter in Balinese everyday life. And this is especially the case when individuals try to accept the changes and challenges brought on by traumatic events. Concepts of karma thus serve as a form of local knowledge that shape Balinese attitudes towards life.

> Before the bomb explosion, I was at home, and my wife asked me to go out to buy food, but I refused. 15 minutes later there was a very powerful explosion, which shook the house and caused the door of the house to suddenly fling open and the ceiling of the house to collapse. I had no idea that it was a bomb explosion. Had I not refused my wife's request, I might have become a victim myself because the site of the explosion was an access road in and out of the location where I live. After I decided to get out of the house, I saw on the street, precisely on Poppies 2, many tourists running around injured and billows of smoke and fire rising. Immediately I remembered my relative whose house was right behind the explosion site (Sari Club Restaurant). I witnessed in person the many victims who died lined up on the sidewalk, and until now the memory is still embedded in my mind. The next morning after the incident, many human body parts were found around the local residents' houses. What I, as well as the other Balinese Hindus, **learned from this incident is that whatever thing that happens it is always to be grateful for because there is always wisdom behind all events which have everything to do with karma** (Duta, 54 years old)

Themes attributing a positive meaning to the event also appear in the personal account provided by Mudra. In contrast to Duta's story which focused more on karma and the individual, the

positive meaning extracted by Mudra is broader, covering relationships between individuals and groups. In his account, Mudra references narratives about brotherhood and love for others, as '...all as ISHWW's creations'

> At that time, I was in Tabanan gathering with a few friends for a worship ritual. Suddenly, there was a thumping sound. I thought it was the sound of a truck tire blowing and a few minutes later there came news by telephone that in Legian, at Sari Club, there had been a bomb blast. The next day there was more detailed news about the number of victims. **Nothing is more meaningful than a sense of solidarity and compassion among us all as ISHWW's creations. (Mudra, 55 years old)**

These two personal accounts illustrate the way participants in both the direct and staggered experiences built positive meanings from their experiences of the Bali Bombing.

The next section will refer to a more. For participants who have direct experiences, it is considered difficult to attach positive meanings to perpetrators or opposite groups. Here, individuals with direct experience seem reluctant to accept the idea that perpetrator and victim are basically from the same nation and must be united. On the other hand, the perpetrators and victims are considered as different groups so prejudice and hatred are quite difficult to eradicate.

b. Unity is the most important thing that we need now

Narratives about the importance of unity and solidarity dominate this theme. This narrative only appears in staggered experiences. The personal story recounted by DekTa included two distinct narrative components. At the beginning of his account, DekTa discusses his distaste for terrorists, but at the end, he presents a somewhat countervailing narrative emphasising unity and togetherness rather than revenge.

> In my opinion, the Bali bombing was a humanitarian tragedy under the pretext of "religion" carried out by someone who claimed to be devoutly religious but in reality, had the heart to cruelly kill his fellow humans through suicide bombings. For me and the Balinese Hindus who believe in the law of *karmapala*, we believe that the perpetrators will receive punishment from

> ISHWW Almighty for their heinous acts. **In general, the Balinese Hindus did not take revenge for their actions but instead worked hand in hand to give help** (DekTa, 49 years old)

Despite his strong condemnation of the terrorists and their actions, DekTa's personal story also emphasizes the importance of unity and offering support in the aftermath of the tragedy. His statement, "In general, the Balinese Hindus did not take revenge for their actions but instead worked hand in hand to give help," reflects the values of Balinese society, which prioritizes unity and solidarity. This emphasis on coming together and supporting one another, rather than seeking revenge, is presented as a core aspect of Balinese Hindu identity. DekTa's account suggests that these values played a significant role in shaping the community's response to the Bali bombing, enabling them to focus on healing and rebuilding in the face of adversity.

c. We are all the same

Some personal stories, such as Damri's, draw on a narrative that stresses the fundamental unity and equality of all people, extending this even to the perpetrators and victims of the Bali bombing. This narrative point emphasizes that both the terrorists and those they targeted must be able to understand that their position is ultimately the same, as fellow human beings. By positioning these two conflicting groups as essentially the same, this narrative aims to foster empathy and solidarity between them. Damri's account provides a clear example of this perspective, as they express a willingness to prioritize Balinese values, which they believe to be noble and valuable to all. In doing so, Damri's narrative indirectly positions the perpetrator group as one that should learn to understand and adopt the idea that 'we are all the same'. Specifically, Damri drew on a narrative of *tat twam asi* as a form of Balinese local knowledge that shapes the way Balinese perceive others as equal as themselves.

> It was very horrible and I could not understand why they had to bomb. Why couldn't they have a thought... a view... **that I am you... so if you feel pain, I**

> **do too... where I am from the term for this is *tat twam asi***. (Damri, 45 years old)

The examples in this section provide insight into how traumatic events do not always produce negative personal meanings. There are conditions under which traumatic events can produce positive subjective interpretations. As reported by Hitchcock and Putra (2005), the Balinese organized religious rituals, such as purification ceremonies using holy water, aimed at protecting Bali from malevolent influences and preventing similar events from occurring in the future. Through these rituals, the Balinese encouraged everyone to refrain from blaming specific religions and to release all negative energies. The perpetrators of the 1965-66 anti-communist violence in Bali employed a distinct yet similar strategy, consuming the blood of their victims to eliminate negative influences and forget the events (Dwyer & Santikarma, 2003; Suryawan, 2010). Hitchcock and Putra (2005) noted that these traditional practices might be controversial, but they demonstrate the cultural strategies employed to revive tourism in Bali. We argue that, simply, for the Balinese, forgetting and silence are likely more beneficial than remembering when it comes to mitigating Bali's positive image within the tourism landscape.

Unfortunately, we only find these narratives to be present in the staggered category suggesting that those with direct experience of the event may find it harder to endorse positive sentiments that include the perpetrators. This is unfortunate as such narratives have the potential to help reduce anger and encourage unifying sentiments rather than division. More broadly, it is desirable for narratives that minimize prejudice and discrimination among groups and help build community resilience spread more widely.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to investigate the memories of the Bali bombing attack among Balinese people and how they cope with the past traumatic events. We assessed 324

Balinese people's memories based on their experience of the event as in direct, staggered, and vicarious. Participants in the direct and staggered groups had an autobiographical memory of the event (more specifically, the former experienced the event in person, and the latter heard about it right after) while participants in the vicarious group had a collective memory of the event as they did not experience it in person, but rather heard about it through storytelling.

Our study identified six themes related to participants' narratives on the Bali Bombing. Those themes are 1) the attack brought catastrophic results to tourism and the economy, 2) This was a terrorist act that deserves condemnation, 3) This was a reminder from Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa (the Balinese God), 4) We have to be grateful because there is a positive meaning that can be found from the experience of the attack, and 5) unity is the most important thing that we need now, 6) and we are all the same. Three of these themes were consistently present in every narrative category (i.e., themes 1, 2, and 3), while the others were mentioned in only the direct or staggered categories (i.e., themes 4, 5, and 6).

The role of public narratives in personal stories is similar to that of public discourse, providing discursive effects that position actors and resulting in identity construction (Lestari et al., 2023; Stephens & Breheny, 2013). When examining the narratives surrounding the Bali Bombing, the accounts provided contained notable features in how the different actors and groups were positioned and identities constructed. In the three themes that appeared across all experience categories, the Bali Bombing was dominantly remembered negatively, with the perpetrators' identity constructed as being in opposition to that of the Balinese. Storytellers employed specific words attributed to each group, which could foster negative attitudes towards groups believed to be associated with the perpetrators (see Putra et al., 2022).

The novel themes found primarily in the staggered category, on the other hand, provide insight into how different perspectives can shape significantly different understandings and identity constructions related to the bombing. The context-specific themes are more positively

valenced and illustrate the complexities inherent in how communities make sense of and respond to traumatic events.

For example, themes such as "the attack caused catastrophic damage to tourism and the economy" and "the attack was a terrorist act that deserves condemnation" may foster broader negative sentiment directed towards Muslims, who are believed to be connected to the perpetrators. This is particularly relevant considering both past incidents worldwide and more recent events domestically and internationally, as bomb attacks carried out by Islamic groups are receiving increased attention (Putra & Sukabdi, 2013). Such narratives could then influence intergroup behavioural and moral standards. "The attack was a reminder from Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa" is an example of a narrative used by participants to regulate the behaviour of the victim group. In this narrative, the event serves as a reminder, altering the victims' behaviour to be more alert post-bombing and fostering in-group solidarity and cohesiveness. These findings align with previous studies highlighting group survival and collective memory (Hakim & Adams, 2018; Hirschberger, 2018).

Moreover, we see that the shared components among the narratives across various experience categories illustrate what Kuzmanić (2008) referred to as collective memory, wherein individuals draw upon others' memories to construct shared frameworks of the past, leading to the development of shared representations among group members. In this context, participants retell stories from a first-person point of view with similar qualities and functions. It has been known that memories play a crucial role in guiding communal behaviour, fostering social bonds, and constructing self-continuity and self-enhancement (Camia & Zafar, 2021; Pond & Peterson, 2020; Sow et al., 2023).

On the other hand, we found different stories when it comes to novel narratives, particularly those found in the staggered condition, which are more positive in interpreting the aftermath of the bombing. For instance, they emphasized themes of gratitude, unity, and

equality. Such narratives can serve to unite opposing groups and underscore the significance of tolerance in addressing prejudice and hostility. These findings contrast with research on the Bosnian Genocide (Winton & Unlu, 2008) but are more in line with previous studies suggesting that traumatic events can foster intergroup understanding, the creation of meaning (Hirschberger, 2018), emotional recovery, and group support (Hakim & Adams, 2018).

Storytelling, whether in negative or positive forms, plays a significant role in transforming personal memories into collective ones as these interpretive acts involve social cognitive processes and the internalization of dominant narratives that exist publicly across a society (Murray, 1997; Stephens, 2011). The concept of narrative as thinking (Esin, 2011; Murray, 1997) depicts storytelling as a memory retrieval process, where memories, events, or sequences of events with personal significance are shared. Conversely, events only become narratives when meaning is attached to them (Esin, 2011). Therefore, the narrative structure in storytelling typically encompasses personal meaning (coda) ascribed by the storyteller (Riessman, 2008).

In the process of meaning-making, storytellers often draw upon public or dominant narratives in society. Thus, personal stories or narratives are not exclusive; they are inherently linked to broader public narratives (Bamberg, 2005; Murray, 1997; Stephens, 2011). Additionally, retold personal narratives permeate everyday life, reaching wider audiences and eventually transforming into public narratives. In this regard, the evolution of public narratives closely mirrors that of collective memory. Therefore, focusing on stories shared publicly can be a potent method for examining collective memory among group members. In the subsequent discussion, we incorporate the narrative analysis framework into the role of collective memory, as highlighted by (Camia & Zafar, 2021), (Nicholson, 2016), (Pond & Peterson, 2020), and (Sow et al., 2023), to illustrate the existence of prejudice and attitudes towards other groups.

Additionally, we also observed the influence of local knowledge with references mad to belief in Karma and Tat Twam Asi (i.e. I am You, You are Me - The soul that resides in every human being comes from the same source, namely Brahman, Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, or God) and that these served to help mitigate some of the more negative interpretations potentially fostering more tolerance towards others, although unfortunately such narrative themes were absent in the vicarious experience category. In essence, local knowledge refers to the cultural heritage of specific cultural groups, acquired, developed, and applied by communities to navigate their natural and social surroundings (Agar, 2005; Antweiler, 1998; Lestari et al., 2023). It represents tacit shared wisdom about community behavior, that is often rooted in life values and shaping. The role of this local knowledge is similar to schematic narratives, as described by Wertsch (2002), where the shared culture and norms within the Balinese community influence how participants interpret and respond to traumatic events. Lestari and colleagues (2023) have pointed out that while local knowledge exists to provide support in times of adversity, it is also dynamic and can be reconstructed to adapt to changing circumstances. The absence of narratives about local knowledge in the vicarious experience category raises questions about its preservation or adaptation by younger generations. This would be unfortunate if found to be a broader pattern, or it may reflect how the story of the Bali Bombing has been framed in public media and national history books. Beyond the role of local knowledge, drawing on previous studies on violence in Bali (Dwyer & Santikarma, 2003; Hitchcock & Putra, 2005; Robinson, 1995; Suryawan, 2010; Warren, 1995), the strategies employed by the Balinese in responding to violence and past traumatic events are not solely motivated by their cultural values, but also driven by the Balinese strategies to preserve the tourism industry, which has long been the primary source of income for the majority of its population.

Limitation and Future Studies

Unfortunately, in our findings, novel positive narratives were not discovered within vicarious experiences. This suggests that these uplifting narratives have not been widely transmitted and shared across generations. Despite their potential to transform prejudice into tolerance, these narratives have not gained widespread public prominence. Therefore, informed policies and social interventions could prioritize the amplification of novel narratives, particularly local knowledge, to reduce prejudice among conflicting groups. However, it is important to recognize that for those with direct experience, accepting unity between victims and perpetrators can be challenging. While our research observed participants' expressions toward perpetrator groups, it did not specifically investigate Balinese views regarding these groups, such as Muslims after the Bali bombing. Further research is recommended to explore the dynamics of intergroup perceptions between (Hindu) Balinese and Muslims, particularly in relation to stigma and the potential increase in discrimination triggered by Islamophobia, as well as efforts toward mitigation at the community level.

Even though we collected more than 300 participants' accounts, the data were collected in open-ended form. Further studies could utilise interview and *focused group discussion* (FGD) as more probing data collection techniques. In the context of collective memory and the positioning and discursive effects of narrative, FGD has the potential to provide a better understanding of group dynamics and observations on how memory and narrative are transferred intergenerationally.

Our study of the Bali Bombing along with other research on experiences in Apartheid in South Africa (Morselli & Passini, 2010), and Timor-Leste (Putra et al., 2024) suggest that although past traumatic events may leave lasting traumatic stress that cannot be fully eliminated, such events do not necessarily provoke intergroup hatred. A comparative study of these three countries could be conducted to better understand how positive narratives about

traumatic events and past conflicts can be encouraged. We recognise that there is more work to be done before any interventions be proposed but any such interventions should seek to make use of both Balinese local knowledge and broader Indonesian cultural knowledge to help establish unifying narratives.

Further research is also recommended to compare Balinese memories of the 1965-66 anti-communist purges and the Bali Bombings. Such a comparison could help identify both the similarities and differences in how the Balinese cope with and remember these traumatic events, offering a more comprehensive understanding of collective memory in contexts marked by multiple historical traumas.

Conclusion

Our study revealed interesting findings regarding common narratives in the aftermath of significant incidents like bombing attacks. Such events evoke memories and reflections that are not solely negative but can also carry positive aspects. Initially, Balinese victims of the Bali bombing expressed negative emotions due to the perceived catastrophic impact on Bali's economy, which led to feelings of hatred and prejudice towards the perpetrators. However, some Balinese also interpreted the bombing as a divine warning, suggesting that even amidst tragedy, there can be a silver lining. Those who held this perspective did not harbour feelings of hatred or prejudice.

The bombing incident in Bali understandably led to the emergence of intergroup hostility specifically among some Balinese towards the perpetrators, who could be identified as part of the majority Muslim group in Indonesia. Such reactions are a natural response to the trauma and suffering experienced by the victims of a terrorist attack. However, our study also found that some Balinese were able to adopt a more positive perspective in their narratives. We believe that if these more constructive viewpoints are shared and discussed more frequently

within the community, they have the potential to help mitigate prejudices and promote more harmonious relationships between groups. By encouraging narratives that emphasize understanding, healing, and unity, the Balinese community can work towards processing their grief and building bridges with others, promotes positive intergroup relations, without diminishing the profound impact of the tragedy they experienced, and at the same time moving forward to recover the tourism industry.

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Table

Tables

Table 1. *Research participants*

	Direct	**Staggered**	**Vicarious**
Total	76 (23.4%)	178 (54.9%)	70 (21.6%)
Gender			
Male	39	83	25
Female	37	95	45
Age (years old)			
Range	35-72; *one missing data*	35-74	18 - 25
Average	47.1; *one missing data*	48.0	24.7
Domicile			
Bali Province	0	4	2
Badung Regency	70	78	43
Bangli Regency	0	8	0
Banyuwangi Regency	1	0	0
Buleleng Regency	0	4	0
Gianyar Regency	0	15	3
Karangasem Regency	0	5	0
Klungkung Regency	0	7	1
Tabanan Regency	0	5	2
Denpasar City	5	50	19
Mataram City	0	1	0
Pontianak City	0	1	0
Education			
Primary school	2	7	0
Middle school	7	7	0
High school	33	63	16
Associate degree	8	11	1
Bachelor's degree	22	72	48
Master's degree	3	15	3
Doctoral degree	0	2	0
Others (unspecified)	1	1	2

Table 2. *Initial coding*

Direct	Staggered	Vicarious
Negative impacts of the bombing		
Bring disadvantages Economic advantages Mental breakdown Bad impacts on tourism Struggling to find a job Chaos	Bring disadvantages Paralyzing Bali Chaos Anxious about future career Life becomes worthless Not to be repeated again	Bad signs for Bali Bad karma Unfortunate Bring disadvantages Dark Decrease in economic and social life, and tourism industry Deserted/desolate Collapse Struggling Take time to recover
Cruel acts in the name of religion		
Cruel acts Uncivilised Cursed No religion asks people to do bad things	On behalf of religion Minority and majority Inhuman Innocent people as victims Cursed Terrorist is cruel	Cruel acts Innocent people as victims Put religion as the reason for the acts Tragic
God reminder		
It is a time to learn about religion in a good way	A reminder from God Remember God	A reminder from God A sign of the way God protects us
Increase alertness		
Increase alertness towards migrants Become paranoid People's bad intentions towards Bali	A sign that Bali is not safe anymore Become paranoid Increase alertness towards migrants Don't be arrogant that Bali is safe Don't be carried away Contemplation	Increase safety and security
The positive meaning behind the bombing		
Destiny God decides everything God is always with us Balinese loves peace	Karma Being lucky could avoid the negative impacts	-

Must be grateful There are always positive impacts of bombing Appreciate life Grateful to be alive Only a few Balinese become victims Bali is safe	There are always positive impacts of bombing Support from the world	
Unity		
-	We need to be united, don't fall for incitement.	-
We are the same		
-	We are the same	-
Feeling towards the events		
Horrifying Getting emotional Unbelievable Trauma Scare Shock Terrified Sad Confused	Getting emotional Angry Shock Scare Sad Speechless Trauma Unbelievable	Getting emotional Shock Sadness Trauma Feeling down
Describing the events		
Others	Others	Others

Table 3. *Narratives of Bali Bombing across participants*

Narratives	Direct	Staggered	Vicarious
The attack brought about catastrophic impacts on tourism and the economy.	V	V	V
This was a terrorist act that deserves condemnation.	V	V	V
This was a reminder from God.	V	V	V
We have to be grateful because there is a positive meaning that can be found from the experience of the attack.	V	V	
Unity is the most important thing that we need now.		V	
We are all the same.		V	