

## **Have you Exposure to a trauma and No PTSD? Which factors help and which are not?**

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### **Abstract**

Exposure to a traumatic events gives people many post traumatic conditions resulting Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Post Traumatic Growth (PTG). Some of them may come up with acute Stress Disorder and some may having with grievances. But most of people overcome their traumatic condition with using their Emotional Intelligence and Resilience capacities. This article is focused on indicating basic mechanisms and resources in which can be lead to have better social rehabilitation along with the matters that can be important in trauma coping. The later part of the article appeals the concept of social work theory highlighting the psych dynamic approach which can be impact positively on psycho social rehabilitation. Traumatic experiences are really unpredictable and it can be resulted Post Traumatic Stress Disorders, Post traumatic growth in the end. But developing skills that required to overcoming trauma is facilitated by the Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Coping capacities that people having with. Exposure to a traumatic experience and not having a PTSD is determined by the many other factors such as social support system and government facilitation of the wellbeing afterwards the trauma. Here in this article the basic components of Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and coping mechanisms have been considered as the major factors.

**Keywords:** PTSD, PTG, Emotional Intelligence, Psycho Social Rehabilitation, Resilience, Social Work.

**Major classification:** Health Science.

### **1. Introduction**

Traumatic events are not just an event but it is an event in our life which can be caused many psycho social issues. But not all the people who face to traumatic event end up with PTSD or many other psycho social issues. Most of people overcome it using their emotional and resilience capacities. Meanwhile the coping mechanism that we used is a key factor in this regard. Emotional intelligence is to manipulate other persons. Emotional Intelligence has indicated a resource for a wellbeing. But as per the definition it explain our ability to understand our emotions and ability to use our emotions to enhance other thoughts. Person's emotional strength and resilience skills, which is interplay between genetic and environmental factors. Coping mechanism also play a huge contribution in terms of adaptive and mal adaptive coping styles to determine the overcome of trauma. Therefore this article tries to figure out the contribution of different factors for overcoming trauma and most of the time there is a collective contribution can be seen.

A systematic review method used using different models pointed out by researchers and many research institutes pertaining to the trauma and Bulathwatta, Witruk and Reschke (2016) study used as the end comparison of the all the research findings as it has concerned the three factors (Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and coping mechanisms) as the factors of traumatic experience overcome.

Concerning the different findings of the Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, Coping mechanisms there are commonly believed definition It is believed that resilience is like a muscle and can be taught or strengthened according to Bennett (2010) Bio psychosocial model, psychological processes, the nervous and immune systems within the body and the individual within society are interconnected. Post traumatic events (PTEs) may have diverse psychological and social consequences beyond the development of PTSD. Trauma healing process can be done using the certain steps and resilience, EI, and coping mechanisms should be appealed by the process (Van Der Kolk & Buczynski, 2015).

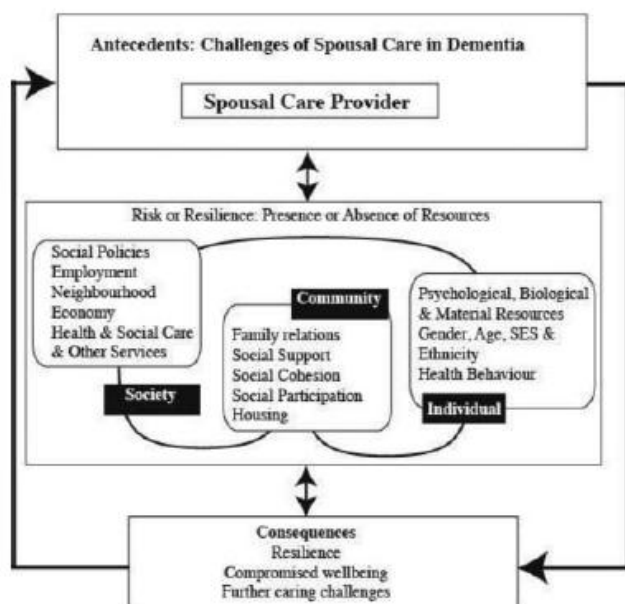
## **2. Method**

Different articles systematically reviewed to figure out the contribution emerged from them for the trauma coping. There are some reserachers Comorbidity and dispositional variables "Four Concrete Steps for Working with Trauma" by Van Der Kolk and Buczynski (2015). I caution that resilience is more than a cognitive process. This article pays the basic attention on how the people use their Emotional Intelligence and resilience capacities for overcoming traumatic experiences. In other word the basic aim is to focus your attention on Emotional Intelligence and resilience as the protective factors of Post Traumatic Experiences (PTSD).

### **2.1. Contribution of Resilience**

Resilience is not only important in psychological disorders but the disorders such as psychobiological basis. Much is known about the factors making caring for a spouse with dementia burdensome. However, relatively little is known about factors that help some spouses become resilient. We define resilience as 'the process of

negotiating, managing and adapting to significant sources of stress or trauma'. We aimed to assess whether spousal dementia carers can achieve resilience and to highlight which assets and resources they draw on to facilitate or hinder resilience, using an ecological framework.



**Figure 1:** The resilience framework applied to carers (Windle & Bennet, 2011)

The Resilience Framework (Windle & Bennett, 2011). The figure shows the relationships between the antecedents of resilience and the presence (or absence) of resources at the individual, community, and societal levels and their consequences for resilience.

How resilience helps to recover with traumatic conditions? Windle and Bennet model(2011) explain the contribution of resilience on trauma coping based on the society, community, and individual resources which can be interact with spousal care and consequences which can be resulted wellbeing and further caring challenges. Society, community, and individual represent as a source of resource provider or a source that don't provide resources.

The sources that provide resources from the basis of society level can be social policies, employment, neighborhood, economy, Health & Social Care, and Other services.

Social policies are really essential for general public wellbeing. These sources can be provided right through government level and community basis. Family relations, social support, social cohesion, social participation, and housing can be considered as the community level resources which can be considered as the community level contribution for your bounce back process of personal trauma.

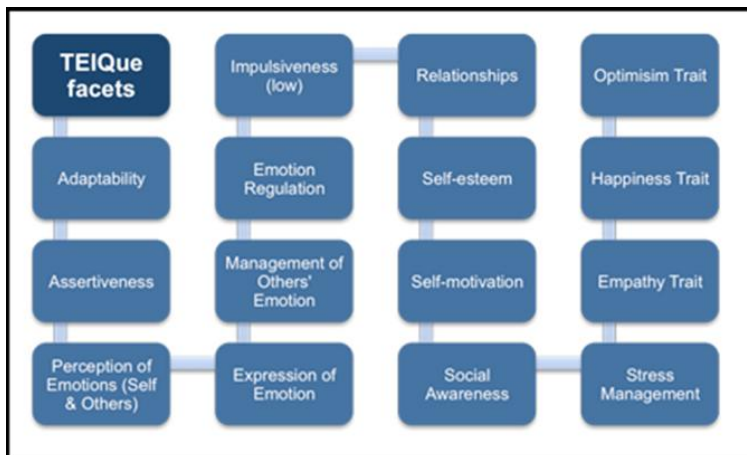
Individual level factors which lead to overcoming trauma also important for the trauma resilience. Frequently, time our mental framework based on the factors come from the society level and community level as man-made or natural trauma have roots in such domains. These individual factors are social economic status, psychological factors, ethnicity, and health behaviors.

Even though the dementia is a personal trauma it can be spread out towards the society level as it is a challenge for the compromised wellbeing and further caring challenges. Therefore according to the model proposed by Windle and Bennet (2011) the personal trauma has two polars. It is risk or resilience.

## 2.2. Contribution of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and manage your own emotions and the emotions of others. It is generally said to include 3 skills:

1. Emotional awareness, including the ability to identify your own emotions and those of others;
2. The ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problems solving;
3. The ability to manage emotions, including the ability to regulate your own emotions, and the ability to cheer up or calm down another person.



**Figure 3:** Path diagram of Facets of Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Free-Management-eBooks, 2015)

Emotional Intelligence is also very important factor to determine the individual capacity on trauma coping. Adaptability, assertiveness, Perception of Emotions, Impulsiveness, emotional regulation, management of other's emotion, Relationships, self-esteem, self-motivation, Social Awareness, Stress Management, Empathy Trait, Happiness Trait Optimism Trait are really important in terms of using emotional intelligence in overcoming traumatic situation.

Table (1) show the key findings of Bulathwatta et al. (2016) research and there were initial difference of level of trauma symptoms and using their emotional intelligence on trauma coping. Approach and avoidance coping and using emotional Intelligence collectively with resilience.

**Table 1:** Results of the t-test of two countries. (Germany and Sri Lanka)

Research variables	Min	Max	Sri Lanka		Germany		t	d
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Traumatic symptoms	0	300	0.98	0.45	0.55	0.50	-8.353	0.40
Emotional Intelligence	30	210	4.97	0.69	2.77	0.72	-29.02	0.84
Resilience-I(SOM)	0	80	2.93	0.41	2.81	0.50	1.204	0.13
Resilience-II(ER)	0	80	2.12	0.64	2.75	0.49	4.062	0.48
Approach coping	28	112	2.93	0.48	3	0.43	-2.453	0.06
Avoidance coping	28	112	2.10	0.35	2.26	0.38	10	0.21

Across countries. Regarding hypothesis 4

(tendency of using approach coping); tendency to using approach coping in German students (M=3,SD=0.43) was little bit higher than Sri Lankan students (M=2.93,SD=0.48,t=-2.453,  $p > .05$ ,d=0.06. Therefore Hypothesis 4 was proved.

Regarding hypothesis 5 (level of using avoidance coping); tendency to using avoidance coping in German students (M=2.26,SD=0.38) was little bit higher than the Sri Lankan students (M=2.10,SD=0.35,t=10,  $p < .000$ ,d=0.21), Therefore hypothesis 6 was not proved and Germans show bit higher amount of avoidance coping.

Regarding Hypothesis 6 (Level of Emotional Intelligence) tendency to use Emotional Intelligence in German students (M=2.77,SD=0.72) was significantly lower than the Sri Lankan students level of using Emotional Intelligence(M=4.97,SD=0.69,t=-29.02,  $p < .000$ ,d=0.84). Therefore Hypothesis 5 was disproved and Sri Lankan students have had more Emotional Intelligence than the Sri Lankan students during the Traumatic events they have come up with.

Finally, Hypothesis 7 (Level of resilience) tendency to use resilience capacity in terms of sense of mastery and emotional reactions was measured. German students: sense of Mastery ( M=2.81,SD=0.50) was little bit lower than the Sri Lankan students sense of mastery skills in terms of resilience(M=2.93,SD=0.41,t=1.204,  $p < .01$ ,d=0.13) but emotional reaction capacity in German students (M=2.75,SD=0.49,t=4.062,  $p < .000$ ,d=0.48), is significantly higher than the Sri Lankan students using of Emotional reaction capacities(M=2.12,SD=0.64).

Therefore, the hypothesis 6 was partly accepted and it was lead to assume that German students are good in emotional reactions during their resilience with trauma whereas Sri Lankan students are good in developing sense of mastery during their traumatic events.

### 2.3. Coping Mechanisms

Here in this diagram it is depicted that country difference between Germany and Sri Lanka in terms of using Emotional Intelligence, and Resilience for the trauma coping.

The impact of coping strategies cannot be ignored during the process of traumatic experience.

Bulathwatta and colleagues in 2016 points out that there is a significant variation in terms of approach and avoidance coping strategies during the traumatic events and coping up with the process.

The research was based on following hypothesis based on the coping strategies, emotional intelligence, and resilience as mentioned below.

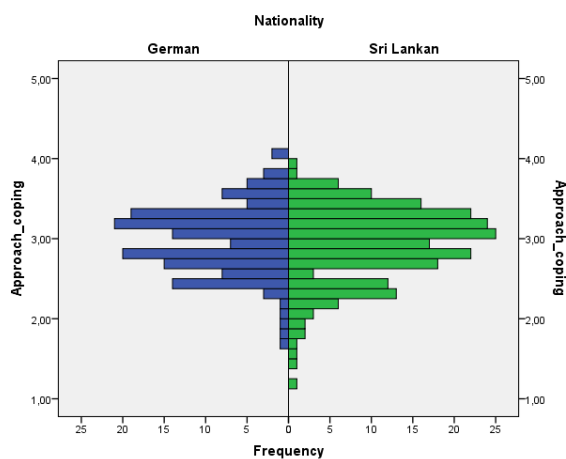
**H1:** Emotional Intelligence is a positive predictor of approach coping during the process of traumatic experiences.

**H8:** EI has a direct negative impact on Avoidance coping.

**H9:** Resilience has a direct negative impact on Avoidance coping.

**H10:** Resilience has a direct negative impact on Avoidance coping.

Furthermore the country differences points out that, Within countries. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis were conducted in order to figure out Hypothesis 1(Emotional intelligence → Approach coping), Hypothesis 8(Emotional Intelligence → Avoidance coping) and Hypothesis 9 and 10 Level of Resilience in between Germany and Sri Lanka (German students Resilience & Sri Lankan students Resilience),



**Figure 4:** approach coping among Sri Lankan and German students

It is clear from the Figure 1 that Approach copings in Sri Lankan students reportedly higher than the German students. However, standard statistical analysis should be implemented in order to identify the causes and effects of approach coping. Specially the variables considered in the current study.

**Country - Sri Lanka**

**Table 2:** Summary of hierarchical multiple regression analysis (Sri Lanka)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	Change Statistics					Durbin Watson
					R square change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.F Change	
1	.021	.000	-.013	.49466	.000	.032	2	149	.968	
2	.077	.006	-.014	.49495	.006	.825	1	148	.365	
3	.402	.162	.127	.45921	.156	8.978	3	145	.000	2.029

**Dependent variable Approach Coping**

**Table 3:** Stepwise regression with approach coping

Variables	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	ΔF	p
<b>Step 1</b>		0.000	0.127	0.032	0.968
Age	-0.002				
Subject	0.022				
<b>Step 2</b>		0.006	0.084	0.825	0.365
EI	0.053				

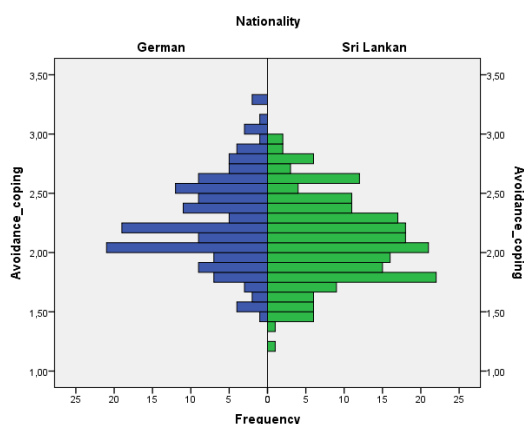
<b>Step 3</b>		0.162	0.011	8.978	0.000
Trau: Symptoms	0.219				
Sense of Mastery	-0.009				
Emotional reaction	-.220***				

Note. B are the unstandardized regression coefficients.

\* $p < 0.05$ . \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

Emotional Intelligence is not a good predictor ( $R^2=0.16$ ) to approach coping strategies in Sri Lankan students. But emotional reaction as a resilience capacity has significantly negative relationship between Approach coping strategies. ( $B=-0.220$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Hypothesis one which specify that Emotional intelligence and significant relationship with the approach coping is not proved with the Sri Lankan student sample.

#### 2.4. Avoidance coping in two countries



**Figure 5:** Avoidance coping among German and Sri Lankan students

The coping skill during and after trauma is determined by person's emotional strength and resilience skills, which is an interplay between genetic and environmental factors. These factors may start influencing right from intrauterine period, mostly, during the early days of childhood. The intensity of insults and the result after it, further determines the level of anxiety and tolerance to stress, the person will develop in life.

I think it is very essential to evaluate the level of exposure to the stressors in the past to determine the risk of developing the PTSD after traumatic exposure.

Coping skills in traumatic situation, is another key matter in traumatic condition. Coping mechanism can be determined in two main approaches. (Approach coping and Avoidance coping)

**Table 4:** Stepwise Regression analysis with Avoidance coping



Variables	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	ΔF	p
<b>Step 1</b>		.001	0.001	.087	0.916
Age	.002				
Subject	-.018				
<b>Step 2</b>		.80	0.79	11.731	0.001
EI	.144***				
<b>Step 3</b>		.177	.097	5.262	0.002
Trau: Symptoms	.097				
Sense of Mastery	.151				
Emotional reaction	-.200				

Note. B are the unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*p<0.05. \*\*p<0.01, p\*\*\*<0.001.

When we consider about the Avoidance coping the situation is rather different from the approach coping. Emotional Intelligence is not a good predictor (R<sup>2</sup>=0.18, B=0.144, P<0.001) to avoidance coping strategies. However, it has a significant value and it is a one and only single predictor within German student sample in the context of avoidance coping. Sense of mastery and emotional reaction as components of resilience not play a significant role on determining avoidance as a coping strategy among German students.

**Table 5:** Summary of Hierarchical Multiple regression analysis with Avoidance coping (Sri Lanka)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error	Change Statistics					Durbin Watson
					R square change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.F Change	
1	.158	.025	.012	.33713	.025	1.903	2	149	.153	
2	.316	.100	.002	.32500	.075	12.327	1	148	.001	



3 .522 .273 .243 .29514 .173 11.488 3 145 .000 2.012

**Table 6:** Stepwise regression analysis with Avoidance coping (Sri Lanka)

Variables	B	R <sup>2</sup>	Δ R <sup>2</sup>	ΔF	p
<b>Step 1</b>		.025	.025	1.903	.153
Age	-0.01				
Subject	-0.08				
<b>Step 2</b>		.100	.075	12.327	.001
EI	-.135***				
<b>Step 3</b>		.273	.173	11.488	.000
Trau: Symptoms	.159				
Sense of Mastery	-.048				
Emotional reaction	-.157***				

Note. B are the unstandardized regression coefficients. \*p<0.05.

\*\*p<0.01, p\*\*\*<0.001.

In the context of Sri Lankan students and avoidance coping situation is similar with German students with approach coping. Emotional Intelligence is a good predictor together with when the resilience and traumatic symptoms. (R<sup>2</sup> =0.273, B=-0.135, P<0.001), Surprisingly emotional reaction capacity of the Resilience also a good predictor of determining avoidance coping within Sri Lankan student sample during the process of developing avoidance coping ( B=-0.157, P<0.001). During and after trauma is two basic this that we need to pay our attention on trauma coping.

### 3. Discussion

Resilience Emotional Intelligence, and Coping strategies are interconnected concepts in terms of trauma coping. There is an impact of all the factors in certain extend for the process of coping with traumatic conditions. However, there is a difference of using the resilience, emotional Intelligence based on the nature of the traumatic situation.

Modern social work theories and

### 4. Conclusion

Traumatic experiences are really unpredictable and it can be resulted Post Traumatic Stress Disorders, Post traumatic growth in the end. But developing skills that required to overcoming trauma is facilitated by the Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and Coping capacities that people having with. Exposure to a traumatic experience and not having a PTSD is determined by the many other factors such as social support system and government facilitation of the wellbeing afterwards the trauma. Here in this article the basic components of Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, and coping mechanisms have been considered as the major factors. Comparing the German and Sri Lankan students using the emotional Intelligence and resilience show a significant differences and the level of approach and avoidance coping also showed a significant differences.

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