

## Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults

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### ABSTRACT

This study tries to understand the relationship between Post traumatic Growth, Flourishment, and Social Support and aiming to uncover potential correlational and regression effects. A series of psychometric evaluations that included Trauma History Questionnaire, Post Traumatic Growth Inventory, The Flourishing Scale, and Social Support Inventory were administered on a sample of 75 young adults. Contrary to expectations, no significant correlation or regression was found between any variables. (PTG-flourishing: ( $r = 0.123$ ,  $p = 0.293$ ); PTG-social support: ( $r = -0.024$ ,  $p = 0.842$ ); flourishing-social support: ( $r = -0.071$ ,  $p = 0.549$ ). This absence of associations prompts a re-evaluation of existing theoretical frameworks and underscores the complexity of factors influencing post-traumatic experiences and psychological well-being. The implications and the possible explanations of these findings are discussed in the context of future research directions.

**Keywords:** *Post-traumatic growth, Flourishing, Social support, Non-significant correlation, Trauma*

**T**rauma is a psychological phenomenon, which consists of the aftermath of experiences that one undergoes, leaving them overwhelmed and exhausting their ability to cope. The effects of trauma are more than diagnostic boundaries of DSM, and impacts an individual's overall wellbeing and functioning abilities. The event is referred as Traumatic event. Traumatic event or trauma causing event may often involve threats to life, safety, physical integrity, and invoke a feeling of fear, helplessness, or horror in the individual who experienced them. Traumatic events can be manmade or natural or a mix of both.

After the research done by Tedeschi & Calhoun in 1996, **Post Traumatic Growth** theory was put forth. This viewed Trauma with a new lens. It did not see trauma as a negative thing any longer but a chapter of life, which lead to both positive and negative consequences. Tedeschi and Calhoun first presented post-traumatic growth, or PTG, in the mid-1990s. This challenged the hegemonical view that trauma inevitably leads to long lasting psychological distress. It offers an alternate view point that trauma can help facilitate growth and can act like a catalyst for development. PTG forces one to reevaluate their life philosophy, priorities,

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## Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults

and assumption in the wake of a distressing and/or traumatic event. Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996) talk about five core domains of PTG, i.e., Appreciation of Life, Relationship with others, new possibilities, personal strength, and spiritual or existential change. It also brings a shift in the understanding of mental health, trauma, growth, and resilience.

**Flourishment** or Flourishing is a concept of Positive Psychology that represents a psychological state of optimal psychological functioning and overall well-being, that goes beyond the absence of mental illness and symptom reduction. Flourishment aims to bring the client/patient to a state of fulfilment, happiness, peace, pleasure, and joy while also instilling resilience, purpose, and a deep connection to their communities.

As we navigate the intricacies of flourishing within the broader context of this research, the aim is to unravel the interplay between post-traumatic growth, flourishing, and social support.

According to Cohen & Wills (1985) *Social Support* encompass *emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal resources provided by others*. Several studies on the topic show how these resources affect psychological well-being, coping efficacy, and overall resilience, depending on their perceived availability and sufficiency.

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Sample*

Participants will be recruited through convenience sampling, using google forms in existing networks, social media, and community organizations. A minimum of 75 participants will be targeted. Inclusion criteria: Individuals aged 18 and above, with a willingness to participate in the study and consenting to share the information about their trauma, social support, and flourishing.

**Psychometrically Validated Questionnaire:** Trauma History Questionnaire by L. M. Hooper, P. Stockton, J. Krupnick, and B. L. Green (2011) is used to measure Trauma. The Post Traumatic Growth Inventory by L. G. Calhoun and R. G. Tedeschi is used to check the levels of PTG. Diener et al. (2009)'s the Flourishing Scale is also administered to check flourishing levels. The Social Support Inventory by Hamilton McCubbin, Joan Patterson, and Thomas Glynn (1982) is utilised to measure Levels of Social Support.

#### *Data Analysis*

Inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analysis, will be used to investigate correlations between post-traumatic growth, thriving, and social support, which were measured.

#### *Hypotheses:*

- Null Hypotheses(H<sub>0</sub>): There is no significant relationship between post-traumatic growth (PTG) and flourishing (FS).
- There is no significant relationship between social support (SSQ) and flourishing (FS).
- Post-traumatic growth (PTG) and social support (SSQ) do not significantly predict flourishing (FS).

## Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults

- Alternative Hypotheses (H1): There is a significant positive relationship between post-traumatic growth (PTG) and flourishing (FS).
- There is a significant positive relationship between social support (SSQ) and flourishing (FS).
- Post-traumatic growth (PTG) and social support (SSQ) significantly predict flourishing (FS).

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. *Tedeschi, R. et al. (2004). Posttraumatic growth: Conceptual foundations and empirical evidence.* - Tedeschi and Calhoun's contributions made it possible to conduct study on post-traumatic growth. Their findings imply that the trauma connected to PTG may be beneficial to a large number of individuals.
2. *Fredrickson, B. L. et al. (2005). Positive affect and the complex dynamics of human flourishing.* Fredrickson and Losada's study of flourishing highlights the role that positive affect plays in the dynamics of human well-being. The broaden-and-build idea, which is introduced in the study, contends that happy emotions increase people's thought-action repositories and help them create long-lasting personal resources. This viewpoint deepens our understanding of flourishing beyond simple recuperation by emphasizing its fundamental relationship to positive affect.
3. *Cohen, S., et al. Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis.* Cohen and Wills' work on social support provides a good understanding into how interpersonal relationships effects responses to stress. The study infers that, social support serves as a protective shield against the possible negative impact of stressors. Understanding how the interpersonal support operates becomes important in understanding its role in the context of trauma and growth.
4. *Helgeson, V. S et al. (2006). A meta-analytic review of benefit finding and growth.* Helgeson, Reynolds, and Tomich perform a meta-analytic review exploring benefit findings and growth across various populations. The study collects findings from diverse researches, offering a comprehensive overview of the variables associated with post-traumatic growth. Their study contributes valuable insights into the prevalence, predictors, and variability in the experience of growth following the trauma.
5. *Holt-Lunstad, J et al. (2010). Social relationships and mortality risk: A meta-analytic review.* Holt-Lunstad, Smith, and Layton's meta-analytic review talks about the impact of social relationships on mortality risk. The study provides a perspective on the physiological and long-term effects of interpersonal support, broadening our understanding of how social connections contribute to overall well-being. This broader view is essential for understanding the role of interpersonal support in the trajectories of post-traumatic growth and flourishing.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Correlation Analysis:*

- PTG and FS: Post-traumatic growth (PTG) and flourishing (FS) exhibited a weak positive association, although it was not statistically significant ( $r = 0.123$ ,  $p = 0.293$ ).
- PTG and SSQ: PTG and social support (SSQ) exhibited a very slight negative connection ( $r = -0.024$ ,  $p = 0.842$ ) that was not statistically significant.

**Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults**

- SSQ and FS: A marginally negative connection ( $r = -0.071$ ,  $p = 0.549$ ) was discovered between social support (SSQ) and flourishing (FS), although it was not statistically significant.
- FS and THQ: There was a very slight positive connection ( $r = 0.012$ ,  $p = 0.922$ ) however it was not statistically significant between flourishing (FS) and trauma history (THQ). Regression Analysis:
- Regression analysis revealed that neither post-traumatic growth nor social support significantly predicted flourishing.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.145 <sup>a</sup>	.021	-.006	7.849

a. Predictors: (Constant), SSQ, PTG

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	94.192	2	47.096	.764	.469 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4374.186	71	61.608		
	Total	4468.378	73			

a. Dependent Variable: FS

b. Predictors: (Constant), SSQ, PTG

**Correlations**

		PTG	SSQ
PTG	Pearson Correlation	1	-.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.842
	N	75	74
SSQ	Pearson Correlation	-.024	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.842	
	N	74	74

		SSQ	FS
SSQ	Pearson Correlation	1	-.071
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.549
	N	74	74
FS	Pearson Correlation	-.071	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.549	
	N	74	75

		PTG	FS
PTG	Pearson Correlation	1	.123
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.293
	N	75	75
FS	Pearson Correlation	.123	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.293	
	N	75	75

## Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults

### *Possible Explanations*

It is conceivable that factors like personality traits, unique coping mechanisms, or environmental conditions that were not investigated in this study could have an impact on flourishing.

Furthermore, it's possible that the measurement instruments employed were not fully capable of capturing the complex experiences of post-traumatic growth, social support, and flourishing.

### *Interpretation*

Implications of the Results: These results point to the need for a more thorough comprehension of the elements promoting flourishing in trauma survivors.

- These findings highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the factors that support trauma survivors' flourishing.
- In order to completely comprehend the complexities of post-traumatic growth and its connection to flourishing, researchers and clinicians should consider looking at additional factors and use more advanced assessment techniques.
- To better understand the intricacies of post-traumatic growth and its relationship with flourishing, clinicians and researchers should think about examining other variables and using more sophisticated measurement approaches.

## **CONCLUSION**

- The study investigated the relationships between post-traumatic growth, social support, and flourishing.
- Weak correlations were found between these variables, and regression analysis did not identify significant predictors of flourishing.
- These findings underscore the complexity of factors influencing flourishing outcomes following trauma and highlight the need for further research in this area.

### *Future Directions*

- To gain a better knowledge of the factors that lead to long-term flourishing, future research should employ longitudinal designs and look into additional variables.
- Interventions intended to promote flourishing in trauma survivors should use a more complete approach, going beyond post-traumatic growth and social support.
- This format provides a structure for describing your study's findings, discussing their consequences, evaluating the data, and making recommendations for more research and application.

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## Exploring the Absence of Associations: Post-Traumatic Growth, Flourishing, and Social Support in Young Adults

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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