

Mental Health and Human Resilience

Post-traumatic growth after ABI: a pilot study in a Singaporean cohort

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Introduction: Acute Brain Injury (ABI) is often perceived as both a physically and psychologically traumatic event. The multiple deficits as a result of brain injury can change perceptions of self, relationships and general life outlook. Positively overcoming this adversity whilst assigning meaning to this struggle leads to the potential for post-traumatic growth. Cultural differences may influence coping processes, and post-traumatic growth after ABI has not been widely studied in Southeast Asian populations. We used two validated questionnaires on high-functioning stroke patients.

Methodology: We administered the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) and Post-Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) to nine Singaporean ABI patients diagnosed with spontaneous brain haemorrhage between 2014-2017. Participants consisted of eight females and one male, with an average age of 54.2 years. The PTGI consisted of five factors: relating to others; new possibilities; personal strength; spiritual change and; appreciation of life.

Findings: Appreciation of life and relating to others were the highest rated factors on the PTGI. Depression on the HADS displayed significant negative correlations with new possibilities ($r = -.814, p < .01$) and Personal strength ($r = -.748, p = .02$) on the PTGI. Within the PTGI, New possibilities was positively correlated to personal strength ($r = .895, p < .01$) and relating to others ($r = .736, p = .024$). Relating to others significantly correlated to personal strength ($r = .723, p = .028$).

Conclusion & Significance: In this pilot study of high-functioning stroke patients, we found that a renewed appreciation for life and social support were important factors contributing to post-stroke recovery and growth. Results also suggest that the development of new possibilities and perceived self-efficacy are related to fewer depressive symptoms. Further research can look into increasing sample size, and cross-correlations of multiple quality of life questionnaires for patient's post-ABI.

Recent Publications:

1. Calhoun L G and Tedeschi R G (2009) Handbook of posttraumatic growth: research and practice. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Vol. 1).
- 2.