

International Conference on

Fostering Human Resilience

June 15-16, 2015 Las Vegas, USA

Post-Traumatic stress and world assumptions – The effects of religious coping

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Religiosity has been shown to moderate the negative effects of traumatic event experiences. The current study was designed to examine the relationship between Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) following traumatic event exposure; world assumptions- defined as basic cognitive schemas regarding the world; and self and religious coping- conceptualized as drawing on religious beliefs and practices for understanding and dealing with life stressors. This study examined 777 Israeli undergraduate students who completed several questionnaires which sampled individual world assumptions and religious coping in addition to measuring PTS, as manifested by the PTSD Check List (PCL). Results indicate that positive religious coping was significantly associated with more positive world assumptions, while negative religious coping was significantly associated with more negative world assumptions. Additionally, negative world assumptions were significantly associated with more avoidance symptoms, while reporting higher rates of traumatic event exposure was significantly associated with more hyper-arousal. These findings suggest that religious related cognitive schemas directly effect world assumptions by creating protective shields that may prevent the negative effects of confronting an extreme negative experience.

Biography

Liat Korn is a senior researcher and lecturer in the field of Medical Sociology. Her doctoral thesis (2005) was on "Water Pipe Smoking among Teen-agers in Israel: A sociological Analysis" from Bar-Ilan University, Israel. In her post-doc she studied and conducted the Israeli HBSC (Health Behavior of School-aged Children) and HBSC-ME (HBSC in the Middle East). She published more than 20 papers in reputed journals and conducted several studies including risk behaviors among teenagers and young adults in Israel. She offers courses and seminars in Sociology; Medical Sociology, Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Risk Behavior.

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