

Traumatic experiences in a lifetime: Impact on the bond with others and the role of emotions

Bruno Morgado^a, Gonçalo Rodrigues^{a*}, Marco Filipe^a, Vanessa Madureira^a, & Telma Almeida^{a,b}

^aIUEM - Instituto Universitário Egas Moniz, Caparica, Portugal; ^bCiiEM – Centro de Investigação Interdisciplinar Egas Moniz, IUEM

TRAUMA

- ❖ A traumatic event is a threatening experience that transforms an adaptive process into a maladaptive one.
- ❖ It is a condition in which disturbing and unpredictable factors, interrupt the psycho-sociological experience in a significant way [1].

Traumatic events occurred in a lifetime has an impact on the bond with others [5] and on emotional regulation in adults [6].

GOALS

- ❖ In the present study, we aimed to analyze if there was a correlation between traumatic events in life and the attachment with others.
- ❖ Another goal of this research was to verify if traumatic events have an impact on emotional regulation.

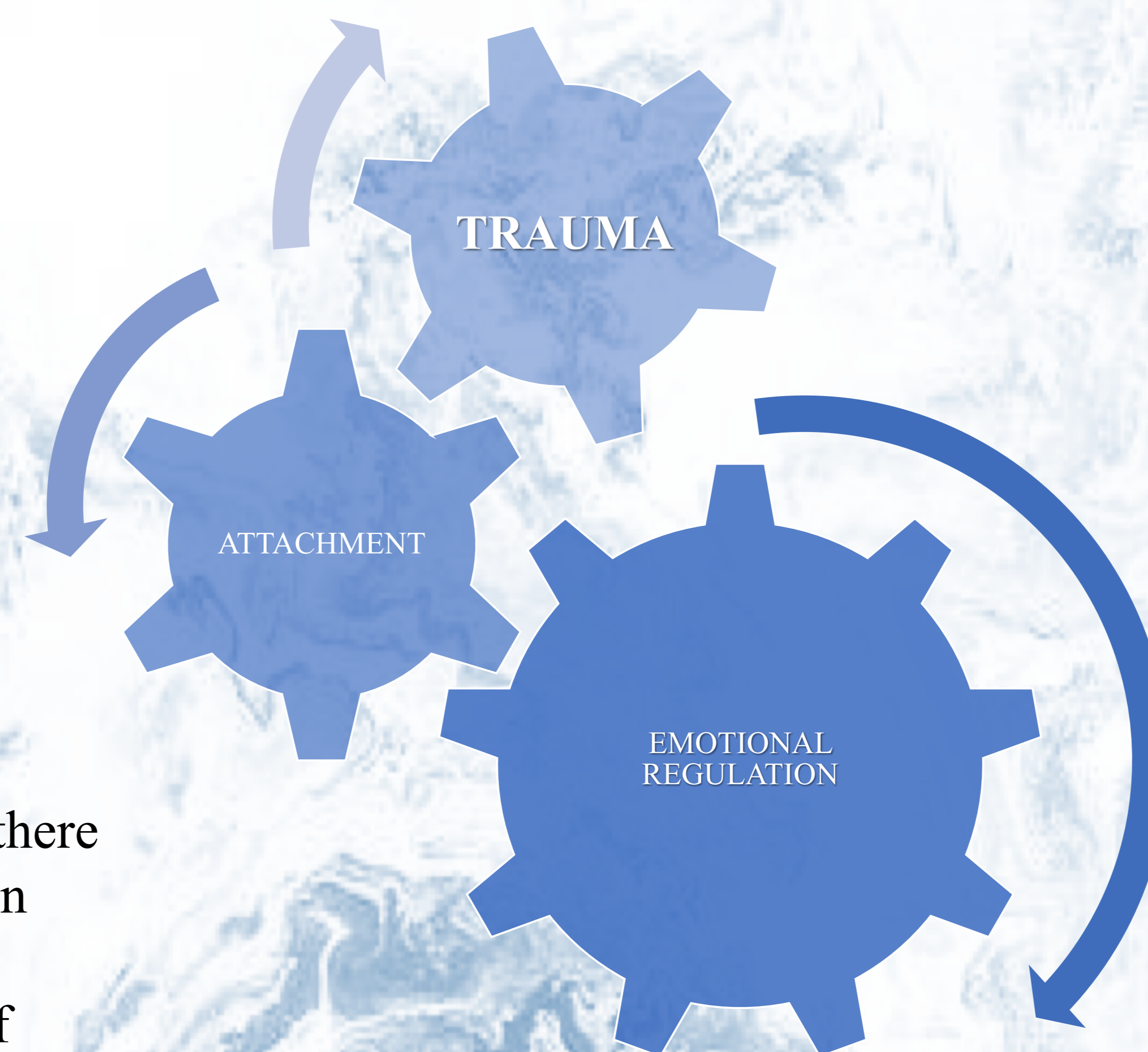
INTRODUCTION

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

- ❖ Emotional regulation concerns processes by which individuals experience their emotions and how they express them [2].

ATTACHMENT IN ADULTHOOD

- ❖ Attachment in adults is implicit in the establishment of interpersonal relationships [3].
- ❖ The influence of the relationship with the parents has repercussions on relationships established later, in adult life [4].



METHODS

INSTRUMENTS

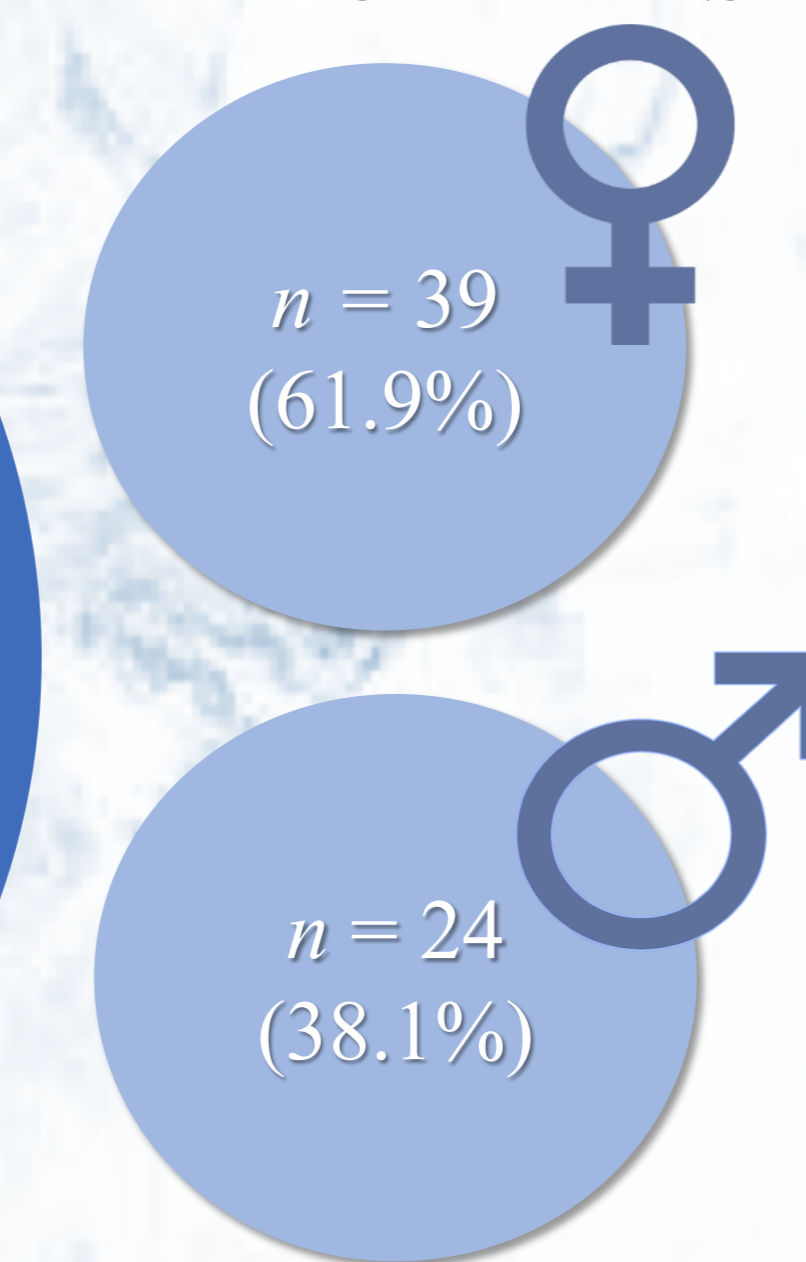
DERS – Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale [7]

AAS-R – The Adult Attachment Scale-R [8]

CTQ – The Childhood Trauma Questionnaire [9]

The participants answered online to a sociodemographic questionnaire, the DERS, the AAS-R, and the CTQ.

PARTICIPANTS



Ages between 18 and 61 years old ($M=28.78$, $SD=12.61$).

RESULTS

Table 1
Correlations between Trauma, Attachment, and Emotional Regulation ($n=63$)

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1 - CTQ_Total_Score	.842**	.715**	.692**	.774**	.612**	-.620**	-.051	.243	-.083	-.299*	.281*	.169	.221	.220	.038	.337*	.183
2 - Emotional Abuse	-	.604**	.425*	.561**	.372*	-.585**	.035	.413*	-.123	-.362*	.233	.110	.210	.121	.033	.330*	.142
3 - Emotional Neglect	-	-	.217	.357*	.594**	-.799**	-.092	.235	-.073	-.350*	.287*	.183	.272*	.269*	.084	.279*	.136
4 - Sexual Abuse	-	-	-	.581**	.285*	-.296*	-.088	-.003	-.043	-.078	.108	.048	.031	.092	.014	.146	.134
5 - Physical Abuse	-	-	-	-	.388*	-.429**	.036	.056	.025	-.041	.111	.022	.063	.081	-.030	.196	.100
6 - Physical Neglect	-	-	-	-	-	-.633**	-.124	.207	-.176	-.279*	.351*	.361*	.283*	.281*	-.007	.331*	.176
7 - Negative Indexes	-	-	-	-	-	-	.055	-.273	.138	.298*	-.230	-.161	-.214	-.162	-.014	-.268	-.120
8 - EVA_Total_Score	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.346*	.569**	.445*	.038	.069	-.043	-.076	-.026	.110	.093
9 - Anxiety	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.286*	-.549**	.476**	.402*	.423*	.366*	-.030	.472**	.345*
10 - Comfort/Proximity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.323*	-.417*	-.314*	-.459**	.415*	.024	-.343**	-.249*
11 - Trusting Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.212	-.159	-.221	-.227	-.016	-.169	-.109
12 - DERS_Total_Score	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.865**	.753**	.842**	.259*	.890**	.691**
13 - Non-Acceptance negative emotions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.530**	.610**	.174	.753**	.569**
14 - Inability to Engage in Goal-Directed Behavior	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.743**	-.108	.604**	.372*
15 - Difficulty to Control the Behavior	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.053	.678**	.508**
16 - Lack of Emotional Awareness	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.115	.361*
17 - Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.487**
18 - Lack of Clarity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The results of ANOVA showed significant statistical differences between participants who had experienced traumatic events in the last three years ($n = 28$, 44.4%) and participants who didn't ($n = 35$, 55.6%) in the following scales and sub-scales:

- Total score of CTQ [$F(1,61) = 11.510$, $p = .001$] – Participants who had experienced traumatic events showed higher rates of childhood trauma.
- Emotional Abuse [$F(1,61) = 9.814$, $p < .001$] – Adults who had experienced traumatic events showed higher rates of emotional abuse in their childhood.
- Anxiety [$F(1,61) = 4.630$, $p = .035$] – Adults who had experienced traumatic events showed higher rates of anxiety.
- Trusting Others [$F(1,61) = 9.692$, $p = .003$] – Participants who had experienced traumatic events showed lower rates of trusting others.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

There were significant statistical differences between participants who had a traumatic event and those who had not to experience traumatic events in adulthood: on Child Trauma, Anxiety, and Trusting Others. The total score of the CTQ showed a negative correlation with the Proximity with Others and a positive correlation with the total score of the DERS, and with Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies.

There was a positive association between Emotional Abuse and Anxiety. The Emotional Neglect and the Physical Neglect showed correlations with the DERS, Inability to Engage in Goal-Directed Behavior, Difficulty to Control Behavior, and Limited Access to Regulatory Strategies.

Participants who didn't experience trauma revealed higher levels of bond with others. Our results also demonstrate that victims of trauma in childhood develop dysfunctional patterns of emotions [10].

This research highlights the negative consequences of child abuse in adults, concerning the emotional regulation and bonding with others.

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