**Relationship Between Emotion Regulation Strategies and PTSD Symptom Clusters**

**Jenea C. S. Varela, Kent D. Hickson Jr., & Craig J. Bryan**

**Objective:** 7-8% of the United States population will have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in their lifetime.Previous research found that the ability to effectively regulate emotions and specific strategies has been linked to symptoms of PTSD. The purpose of this research was to find a relationship between emotion regulation strategies (e.g., cognitive reappraisal and emotion suppression) and PTSD Symptom Clusters (e.g., B - intrusions, C- avoidance, D - negative alterations of cognition and mood, and E - alteration in arousal and reactivity). Emotion suppression was hypothesized to be strongly correlated with D symptoms. **Methods:** Participants were recruited from Veteran Support Centers in 61 different institutions and included 315 student veterans and service members attending post-secondary colleges and universities in the United States. A zero-order correlation analysis was used to assess the relationships between emotion regulation strategies and PTSD symptom clusters. **Results:** All correlations with cognitive reappraisal and PTSD symptom clusters were negative and all correlations with emotion suppression was positive. Emotion suppression was strongly correlated with D symptoms (negative alterations to cognition and mood) and B symptoms (intrusions). Effect size of correlations were small. **Conclusions:** Hypothesis for the study was correct, suppression was related to an increase in severity of PTSD symptoms. However, due to small effect sizes, it is not the sole contributor of these symptoms. Nonetheless, from the results of this study, improving emotion regulation skills may help reduce certain symptoms of PTSD. Future studies should evaluate other possible contributing factors that may influence PTSD symptoms as well as explore how these factors influence both PTSD symptom clusters as well as individual symptoms. Identifying these relationships with PTSD will help individuals better understand their symptoms and how to effectively reduce them.