

Abstract

Traumas are events that a person finds exceptionally taxing or disturbing, and posttraumatic growth is the idea that you can grow from these experiences. The current study aimed to identify differences in posttraumatic growth as a function of the type of trauma experienced. Data regarding traumatic experiences and posttraumatic growth was collected from individuals who had experienced trauma. Trauma types explored include type 1 (single episode) and type 2 (multiple episodes) trauma, as well as attachment, identity, interdependence, achievement, survival traumas. Differences in growth as a function of childhood trauma exposure were also examined. There was no difference in posttraumatic growth (PTG) between type 1 and type 2 trauma. Childhood trauma exposure lead to less PTG in attachment, interdependence, survival, and type 1 trauma relative to those exposed to trauma in adulthood. The frequency of the trauma, age when the trauma was first experienced, and individual appraisal of the trauma were good predictors of PTG in attachment, survival, and type 1 trauma, with age of first experience being the strongest predictor. Survival traumas yielded lower levels of PTG than interdependence trauma in PTG factors new possibilities and spiritual change, and identity trauma yielded lower levels of PTG than interdependence trauma in spiritual change. A proposed hierarchy of trauma based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs is provided, with suggestions for future research.

Keywords: *trauma, posttraumatic growth, trauma types.*

Honors College
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306