

Abstract

More than a decade of research has indicated that individuals who have experienced traumatic events may report positive psychological changes as a result of their struggle to cope with the impact of the event. This cluster of changes has been labelled posttraumatic growth (PTG). Several measurement instruments have been developed to quantify such growth, one of the most widely used being the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) developed by Tedeschi and Calhoun (1996). The objective of the present study was to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the PTGI on data yielded by a South African sample, to determine if the hypothesised factor structure showed appropriate fit in this context. Analyses were performed with three hypothesised models: the five factor model, the three factor model and the model of posttraumatic growth as a unitary factor. Whilst the results of the CFA did not provide overt support for the adequate fit of the models tested, it did yield a profile of PTG in the South African sample that is similar to that of samples from other countries of origin. The findings implied that the factorial validity of the PTGI is unclear and the inventory may require modification for use in the South African context. This highlighted the need for further investigation in order to provide a comprehensive exploration of the PTGI and its applicability in this context. This is in line with the current focus on the socio-cultural and contextual elements that may influence the perception of PTG.

Keywords: *posttraumatic growth, the Posttraumatic Growth Inventory, factor analysis, South African context*