

Posttraumatic Growth Among Suicide-Loss Survivors

An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (Preliminary Results)

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Background

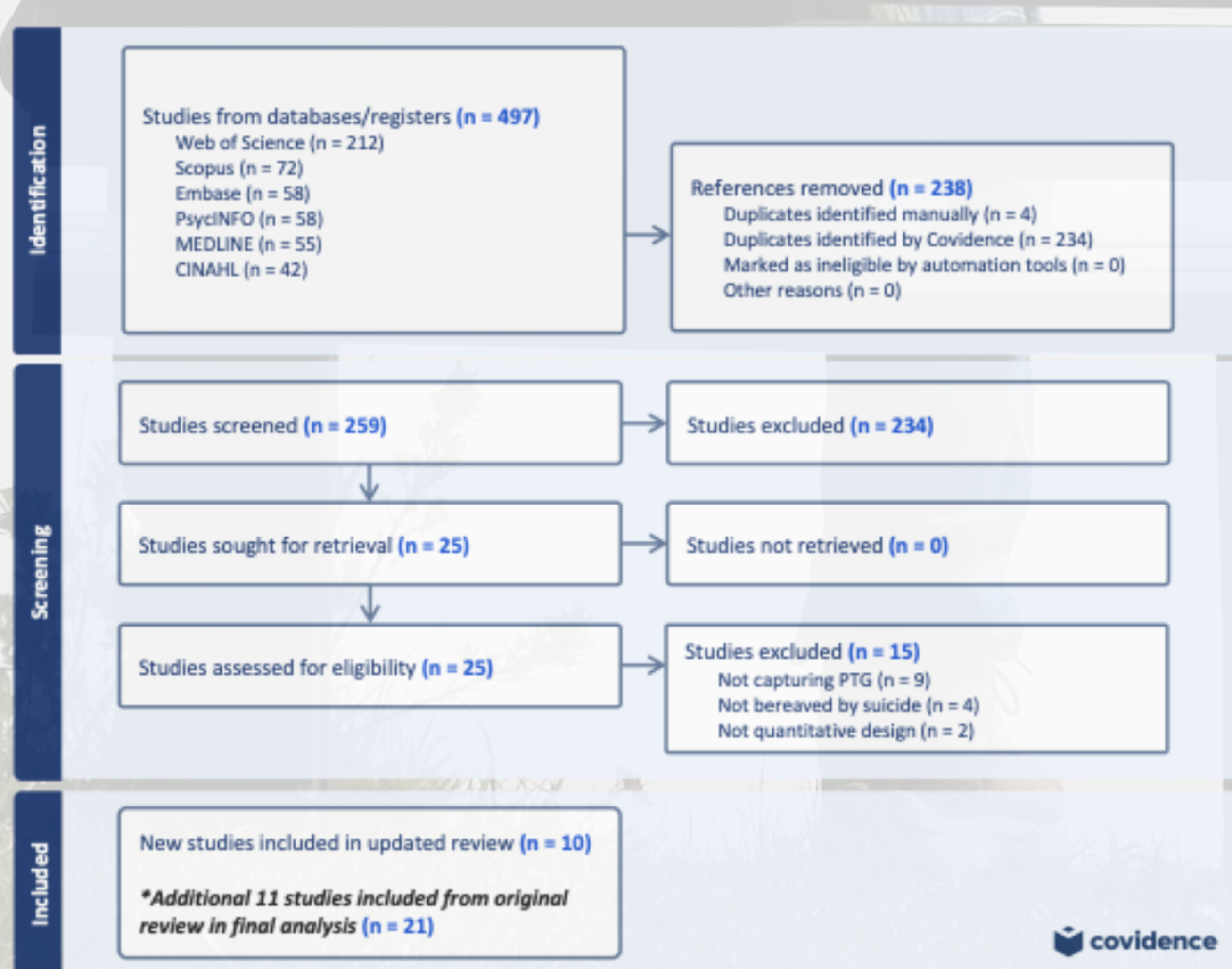
- Over 700,000 people die by suicide each year globally
- Up to 94.5 million people can be affected by suicide annually
- People bereaved by suicide are at an increased risk of suicidal behaviour themselves
- Posttraumatic growth (PTG), defined as personal improvement that occurs as a consequence of experiencing a traumatic or extremely challenging event or crisis, can occur following suicide bereavement
- Only one systematic review and meta-analysis on posttraumatic growth following suicide bereavement has been conducted; **this current updated review contains preliminary findings which build upon the original study (Levi-Belz et al., 2021)**

Aims

- Investigate factors which facilitate and inhibit PTG in individuals bereaved by suicide
- Synthesise data from both the original and updated reviews to examine trends over time

Methodology

- Inclusion Criteria (*same inclusion criteria as the original review*)
 - i) participants must have been bereaved by suicide
 - ii) data must be quantitative
 - iii) study must report data on posttraumatic or stress-related growth
- Databases
 - MEDLINE, PsycINFO, Embase, CINAHL, Scopus, and Web of Science (Core Collection)
- Search string:
 - (*Posttraumatic Growth, Psychological/*OR *posttraumatic growth* OR *post-traumatic growth* OR *post traumatic growth* OR *personal growth* OR *stress-related growth* OR *stress related growth*) AND (*Suicide/*OR *suicid** OR *suicide loss* OR *suicide survivor** OR *suicide bereave** OR *suicide grief*)
- Protocol preprint is available on PsyArXiv (Whittaker et al., 2024)



Preliminary Results

PTG correlations

Original factors

Time since loss:

Original study = .18***

Updated study = .22**

Social support:

Original study = .40***

Updated study = .39***

Self-disclosure:

Original study = .47***

Updated study = .42*

New factors

Intrapersonal

Adaptive coping = .39*

Maladaptive coping = -.05

Interpersonal

Adaptive coping = .60**

Maladaptive coping = -.19*

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001

Data Analysis

- Total participants between studies = 1890
- Not all studies included in correlations

Key Findings

- *Time since loss, social support, and self-disclosure* appear to be consistent predictors of PTG following suicide bereavement
- Intrapersonal factors (e.g., *personality, pre-loss mental illness, affect*) appear to have weaker impacts on PTG development than Interpersonal factors (e.g., *social support, self-disclosure, attachment style*)
- Adaptive coping strategies appear to have stronger effects on PTG than maladaptive coping strategies

Quality Assessment

- Newcastle Ottawa Scale (NOS) results: *Poor = 15 | Fair = 6 | Good = 0*
- Results from Egger's regression were insignificant, meaning authors' risk of bias was not likely to influence results

Discussion

- Adaptive coping strategies appear to have stronger effects on PTG than maladaptive coping strategies
- Three primary factors of *time since loss, social support, and self-disclosure* each showed small to medium strength positive correlations to PTG, reinforcing the findings from the original study by Levi-Belz et al. (2021)
- *Complicated grief, perceived burdensomeness, and thwarted belongingness* were identified as inhibiting factors for PTG

Next Steps

- Quantitative survey and qualitative semi-structured interviews comparing forms of bereavement while examining the roles of coping style, personality, and reflective functioning on the development/maintenance of PTG

Resources

Levi-Belz, Y., Kryszka, K., & Andriessen, K. (2021). "Turning personal tragedy into triumph": A systematic review and meta-analysis of studies on posttraumatic growth among suicide-loss survivors. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 13(3), 322–332. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000977>

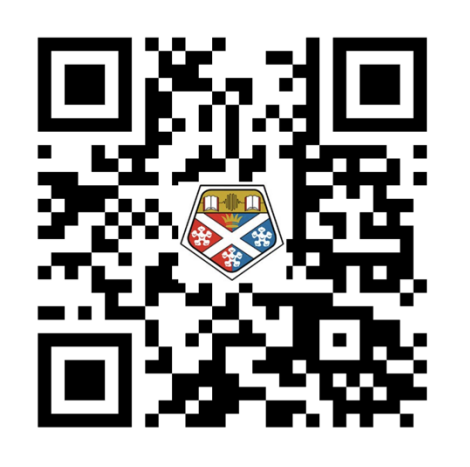
Whittaker, S., Rasmussen, S., Cogan, N., Tse, D., Martin, B., Andriessen, K., ... Levi-Belz, Y. (2024, April 11). Posttraumatic Growth Among Suicide-Loss Survivors: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocol. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/w8bh6>

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