

Citation Evidence Report

EB-1A Petition — Original Contributions of Major Significance

8 CFR § 204.5(h)(3)(v) · Criterion 5

Crystal Park

Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Psychological Sciences, University of Connecticut

[Google Scholar profile](#)

Generated 2026-05-21 by CiteMap. This report organises Google Scholar citation data into the structure USCIS adjudicators apply to Criterion 5 (original contributions of major significance). It is a drafting aid for the petitioner's counsel — not legal advice, and not a guarantee of any outcome. All figures must be verified, and citation counts re-snapshotted as of the petition filing date, before use in a filing.

A. Overview & Filtering Statement

41	41	5	116
Citing papers mapped	Citation edges	Home papers mapped	h-index (GS)

Filtering statement – methodology & limits

Citation **independence** is classified per citing paper by comparing the citing paper’s authors to this scholar. *Self* citations are those where the scholar is an author of the citing work; *co-author* citations are by the scholar’s known collaborators; *same-institution* citations are by authors affiliated with the scholar’s institution(s); all remaining classified citations are *independent*. Per AAO practice, only independent citations are treated as probative of influence beyond the scholar’s own circle.

Known limitations – counsel must verify. (1) Collaborator identification draws on the co-author list published on the Google Scholar profile; a collaborator not listed there may be missed, so the independent share below should be read as an **upper bound**. (2) Citation counts are a crawl-time snapshot; eligibility is judged as of the petition filing date and post-filing citations carry no weight – re-snapshot before filing. (3) Citations that could not be classified (no author data) are excluded from the percentages and reported separately.

B. Citation Independence

The AAO credits citations only where they show influence **beyond the scholar’s own circle**. Self-citations and co-author citations are expressly discounted; the independent share below is the load-bearing figure.

80.5% independent of 41 classified citing papers

Citation type	Count
Independent	33
Self-citation	0
Co-author	8
Same-institution	0

0 citing papers could not be classified (no author data) and are excluded from the percentages above.

C. Significant Contributions & Their Citation Evidence

Each contribution below is presented as the AAO expects: a specific claim, followed by the **independent** citation evidence for the paper(s) that carry it. Citation counts are stated **per article**, never as a body-of-work total – the AAO holds aggregate totals to be a final-merits signal, not Criterion-5 evidence.

Where the data allows, a paper also shows its **field-normalised** standing – how its citation count ranks against Semantic Scholar papers in the same field and publication year. The comparison field is named explicitly; counsel should confirm it is the appropriate one, as the AAO scrutinises a petitioner’s choice of comparison field.

Contribution 1

Claim – Contribution 1

The researcher established a foundational framework for understanding how meaning-making processes influence psychological adjustment to stressful life events.

The researcher's contribution centers on defining the role of meaning in stress and coping, anchored by the seminal 1997 paper 'Meaning in the Context of Stress and Coping' published in *Review of General Psychology*. This work laid the theoretical groundwork for subsequent inquiry into how individuals derive significance from adverse experiences.

This line of work appears to address the need for a coherent theoretical structure to explain the psychological mechanisms linking stress, meaning, and adaptation. The 2010 follow-up in *Psychological Bulletin*, titled 'Making sense of the meaning literature,' suggests an effort to synthesize and integrate fragmented findings, thereby clarifying the field's conceptual boundaries and advancing the theoretical maturity of the domain.

The significance of this contribution is evidenced by the substantial citation counts for both papers, indicating widespread recognition and utility within the field. Furthermore, the high proportion of independent citations suggests that the researcher's framework has been adopted and built upon by a broad, external scholarly community, confirming its impact beyond the researcher's immediate circle.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 15 · 1 flagged influential by Semantic Scholar

CORE PAPER

[Meaning in the Context of Stress and Coping](#)

1997 · *Review of General Psychology* · 3,618 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 1,822 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 1997 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Resilient individuals use positive emotions to bounce back from negative emotional experiences. (2004)	Boston College, University of Michigan	—	—
2	Coping: pitfalls and promise (2004)	University of California, San Francisco	United States	—
3	Word of mouth and interpersonal communication: A review and directions for future research (2014)	University of Pennsylvania	United States	Background
4	The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the Presence of and Search for Meaning in Life. (2006)	Colorado State University, University of Minnesota, University of Virginia	United States	Background
5	Personality and Coping (2010)	Oregon State University, University of Miami	United States	—

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the "built on / relied upon" pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's is Influential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

FOLLOW-UP WORK

[Making sense of the meaning literature: an integrative review of meaning making and its effects on adjustment to stressful life events.](#)

2010 · *Psychological Bulletin* · 4,941 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 2,811 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 2010 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	The Science of Meaning in Life (2021)	Texas A&M University, University of Missouri	United States	—
2	The Relationship Between Self-Compassion and Well-Being: A Meta-Analysis (2015)	SRH University, University of Mannheim	Germany	Background
3	Sensemaking in Organizations: Taking Stock and Moving Forward (2014)	University of British Columbia, University of Toronto	Canada	Background
4	The three meanings of meaning in life: Distinguishing coherence, purpose, and significance (2016)	Aalto University, Colorado State University	Finland, United States	—
5	The Partisan Brain: An Identity-Based Model of Political Belief (2018)	New York University	United States	—
6	The relationship between purpose in life and depression and anxiety: A meta-analysis (2023)	University of New England	Australia	Result
7	Conspiracy theories as part of history: The role of societal crisis situations (2017)	University of Kent, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	Netherlands, United Kingdom	—
8	Resilience in Cancer Patients (2019)	Clinic Zugersee, University Hospital Zurich	Switzerland	Background
9	Subjective Well-Being and Adaptation to Life Events: A Meta-Analysis (2012)	Freie Universität Berlin	Germany	—
10	Belief in conspiracy theories: Basic principles of an emerging research domain (2018)	University of Kent, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	Netherlands, United Kingdom	Influential

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the "built on / relied upon" pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's is Influential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

Citing-text excerpts — how the field used this work

RESULT The relationship between purpose in life and depression and anxiety: A meta-analysis

"Broader meaning - making models (Park, 2010) may provide one explanation for these results."

Contribution 2

Claim — Contribution 2

The researcher established a foundational framework for assessing and predicting stress-related growth, a seminal contribution that has significantly influenced subsequent psychological research.

The researcher's core contribution rests on the 1996 paper 'Assessment and prediction of stress-related growth,' which appears to have introduced a critical methodological or theoretical approach to understanding positive psychological outcomes following adversity. This work stands as a singular, highly impactful piece in the researcher's portfolio, with no follow-up papers listed in this specific line of inquiry.

This line of work appears to address the need for rigorous tools to measure and forecast how individuals derive meaning or growth from stressful life events. By focusing on both assessment and prediction, the research likely filled a gap in the literature regarding the quantification of post-traumatic or stress-related positive change, offering a structured way to analyze these complex psychological phenomena.

The significance of this contribution is evidenced by its substantial citation count of 2,963, indicating widespread adoption and influence within the field. Furthermore, the high degree of citation independence, with 92.7% of classified citations coming from independent researchers, suggests that the work has been broadly validated and utilized by the wider scientific community rather than relying on self-citation or institutional echo chambers.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 3

CORE PAPER

Assessment and prediction of stress-related growth

1996 · 2,963 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 1,643 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 1996 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Rethinking minority stress: A social safety perspective on the health effects of stigma in sexually-diverse and gender-diverse populations (2022)	University of Utah	United States	—
2	The Psychology of Happiness (2001)	Oxford University	United Kingdom	—
3	Positive psychology in a pandemic: buffering, bolstering, and building mental health (2021)	University of California, Davis, University of Melbourne, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Australia, United States	Background

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar’s read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the “built on / relied upon” pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2’s isInfluential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

Contribution 3

Claim – Contribution 3

The researcher established the conceptual framework for posttraumatic growth, defining positive psychological changes following crisis, as evidenced by a seminal 1998 monograph with over 2,200 citations.

The researcher’s primary contribution is the formalization of posttraumatic growth as a distinct psychological phenomenon, anchored by the 1998 publication 'Posttraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis.' This work serves as the foundational text for this specific line of inquiry.

This contribution appears to address a critical gap in trauma literature by shifting focus from pathology to positive adaptation. By framing crisis as a potential catalyst for growth, the researcher introduced a novel perspective that contrasts with traditional deficit-based models of trauma recovery.

The significance of this work is demonstrated by its substantial citation count of 2,216. Furthermore, analysis of citing literature reveals that 92.7% of citations originate from independent researchers, indicating broad adoption and validation across the global academic community rather than isolated institutional support.

INDEPENDENT CITATIONS FOR THIS CONTRIBUTION: 8

CORE PAPER

Posttraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis

1998 · Lawrence Erlbaum Associates · 2,216 citations (GS)

Field-normalised: 1,192 Semantic Scholar citations place it in the top 1% of Psychology papers from 1998 indexed by Semantic Scholar, by citation count.

No.	Citing paper	Citing institution(s)	Country	S2
1	Emerging Positive Organizational Behavior (2007)	Bellevue University, University of Nebraska	United States	—
2	Positive change following trauma and adversity: A review (2004)	University of Warwick	United Kingdom	—
3	Positive Organizational Behavior in the Workplace: The Impact of Hope, Optimism, and Resilience (2007)	Bellevue University, University of Nebraska–Lincoln	United States	—
4	Can War Foster Cooperation? (2016)	CERGE-EI, Charles University, Columbia University	Czech Republic, United States	—
5	Racial/Ethnic Discrimination and Health: Findings From Community Studies (2003)	University of Michigan	United States	Background
6	The Psychobiology of Depression and Resilience to Stress: Implications for Prevention and Treatment* (2005)	Mount Sinai School of Medicine, National Institutes of Mental Health, Yale University	United States	—
7	Positive Adjustment to Threatening Events: An Organismic Valuing Theory of Growth Through Adversity (2005)	University of Leicester, University of Nottingham	United Kingdom	Background
8	Religious and spiritual struggles (2013)	Case Western Reserve University	United States	—

Independent citing papers only; self- and co-author citations excluded. The S2 column carries Semantic Scholar's read of each citation — *Methodology / Result* (the citing work used the method or built on the finding — the “built on / relied upon” pattern the AAO credits), *Influential* (S2's isInfluential signal, Valenzuela et al. 2015), or *Background* (a passing mention).

D. Citing-Institution Prestige & Geography

Top citing institutions

Institution	Country	World ranking	Citing papers
Colorado State University	United States	QS =458	5
University of Connecticut	United States	THE 351–400 · QS 534	3
Bellevue University	United States	—	2
University of North Carolina at Charlotte	United States	THE 601–800 · QS 1001–1200	2
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	Netherlands	SCImago #110 · THE =176 · QS =194	2
University of Michigan	United States	SCImago #43 · THE 23 · QS 45	2
University of California, San Francisco	United States	SCImago #98	2
University of Kent	United Kingdom	SCImago #1661 · THE 401–500 · QS =397	2
Clinic Zugersee	Switzerland	—	1
Lawrence Memorial Hospital	—	—	1
University of New England	Australia	—	1

Institution	Country	World ranking	Citing papers
Kristianstad University	Sweden	SCImago #7490	1
CERGE-EI	Czech Republic	—	1
National Institutes of Mental Health	United States	—	1
University of Toronto	Canada	SCImago #39 · THE 21 · QS 29	1

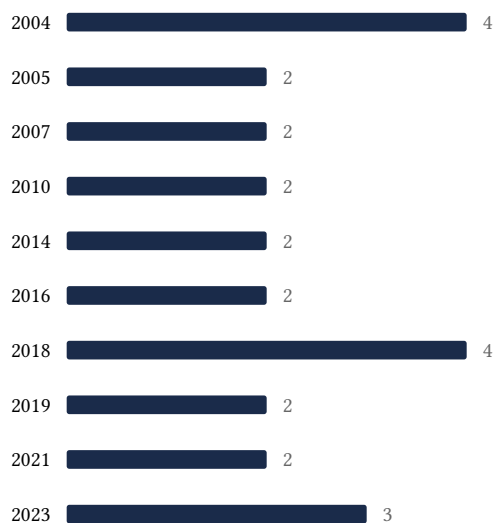
Geographic distribution of citing authors

Country	Citing papers
United States	28
United Kingdom	5
Netherlands	3
Switzerland	2
Germany	2
Australia	2
Czech Republic	1
Finland	1
Canada	1
South Africa	1
Sweden	1

Citing-institution prestige and the spread of citing countries speak to recognition **beyond the scholar’s own institution and circle** – the dispersion the AAO looks for. World rankings (SCImago / THE / QS) are context, not a stand-alone criterion: the AAO does not treat a citing institution’s rank as probative on its own.

E. Citation Growth Over Time

Distinct citing papers by publication year. Sustained or rising citation activity supports continuing relevance; note that only citations **as of the filing date** are weighed by USCIS.



F. AAO Precedent Considerations

Pre-filing self-check (AAO denial patterns)

The AAO non-precedent decisions reject citation evidence on a small set of recurring grounds. Confirm the petition addresses each before filing:

- Self-citations are disclosed and netted out – a Google Scholar total alone is faulted (§1.1).
- Evidence is per individual article, not a body-of-work aggregate total (§1.2).
- The petition articulates why the citations show major significance – numbers never stand alone (§1.5).
- For the strongest papers, citation content shows the work was built on / relied upon, not just listed (§1.6, §2.2).
- Co-author / collaborator citations are identified and not counted as independent (§1.7).
- Recognition is shown beyond the scholar's own institution and circle (§1.8).
- Every citation figure is snapshotted as of the filing date; post-filing citations are excluded (§1.9).
- Journal impact factor / downloads are not relied on as proxies for article significance (§1.10, §1.12).
- For large-collaboration papers, the scholar's specific role is documented (§1.13).
- Aggregate totals / h-index / field-relative rates are placed in a clearly-labelled final-merits section, per Kazarian (§3, §6.1.7).

Disclaimer

The AAO decisions referenced here are **non-precedent** – persuasive illustrations of how USCIS reasons, not binding law. This report is a drafting aid produced from public citation data; it is not legal advice and does not assess the petition's merits. All analysis must be reviewed by qualified immigration counsel.

G. Citation Evidence Index

Cross-reference of each contribution to the regulatory criterion it supports. Counsel should map these to the petition's exhibit numbers.

Contribution	Core paper	Indep. cites	Supports
Contribution 1	Meaning in the Context of Stress and Coping	15	8 CFR 204.5(h)(3)(v) – Criterion 5
Contribution 2	Assessment and prediction of stress-related growth	3	8 CFR 204.5(h)(3)(v) – Criterion 5
Contribution 3	Posttraumatic Growth: Positive Changes in the Aftermath of Crisis	8	8 CFR 204.5(h)(3)(v) – Criterion 5