



# Research Week 2020

## Resilience-Building in a Residential Aftercare Facility for Young Women Rescued from Commercial Sex Trafficking in Indonesia

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### Keywords

Resilience, Adverse Childhood Events, PTSD

### Abstract

#### Background

Adverse Childhood Events (ACE) are associated with poor health outcomes. ACE scores are consistently elevated in those who have been sexually trafficked. Resilience, or the ability to overcome hardships, is associated with positive outcomes such as lower rates of depression, improved self-rated health, and lower mortality risk in the elderly. This study examines the effects of a resilience-building program (RBP) on resilience scores in a cohort of young women rescued from sexual trafficking.

#### Methods

This is a prospective cohort study analyzing surveys collected over 18 months. Study participants are female, Indonesian citizens under the age of 18, survivors of sexual trafficking, who reside in a residential treatment facility. Surveys were collected by facility staff to assess ACE scores, baseline and follow-up symptoms of PTSD, and resilience scores using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale. Data was analyzed by descriptive summary statistics and Mann-Whitney U test.

#### Results

18 participants were analyzed with a mean age of 14.4 years. The average self-reported ACE score was 5.4 (SD 1.7). For those enrolled in the RBP for at least 1 year, 8 of the 9 participants showed an increase in resilience score with an average increase of 5.5 (SD 5.9). Study participants that entered the RBP upon intake took on average 21 less days to complete the stabilization phase compared to participants without the RBP, although this was an insignificant difference ( $p=0.28$ ).

#### Conclusions

Study participants consistently had ACE scores high enough to put them at risk of long-term negative outcomes. The RBP demonstrated early success, with nearly all participants showing an increase in resilience score after one year in the program. The decrease in days spent in the stabilization phase did not reach statistical significance, but this trend could indicate increased stability secondary to the Resilience-Building Program. Data collection will continue in the coming years.

