

Life Experiences Index

(Hamby et al., 2018, partially adapted from Turner et al., 2013)

The Life Experiences Index, divided into the Childhood Experiences Index and Lifetime Experiences Index, includes items that assess exposure to common adversities in a rural, low-income population. While these adverse experiences may result in trauma or negative affect, we have found that they are very common experiences, and inquiring about them allows for a more complete picture of individuals' resilience to emerge.

Development and validation of measure: To establish reliability and validity for scale items across a range of ages, we conducted a study with 440 youth (ages 10-21), and a separate sample of 357 adults (ages 18 and older) from rural areas of the Southeast, recruited through word-of-mouth and local community events. Because experiencing a given adversity does not necessarily presuppose experiencing other events asked about on the index, no internal consistency is reported. Construct validity was established using bivariate correlations with other measures of adversity, including the Juvenile Victimization Questionnaire (youth $r = .17$, adult $r = .37$), the Financial Strain Index (adult $r = .40$), as well as measures of well-being, such as family well-being (youth $r = -.135$, adult $r = -.20$).

Scoring: Each answer category was assigned a value of 1 or 0. Items with 4 responses can be dichotomized as follows: 3-4 = 1, 1-2 = 0. The total score can be a sum or mean of all the items. Participant's raw scores on each item were standardized into z-scores. The scale-level mean was calculated from the item-level z-scores for participants who responded to at least half of the items on the scale. Higher scores indicate more life experiences of adversity.

Citation:

Hamby, S., Taylor, E., Smith, A., & Blount, Z. (2018). *Resilience Portfolio Questionnaire manual: Scales for youth*. Sewanee, TN: Life Paths Research Center.

[Note: items asking about childhood should be put in past-tense for surveying adult populations]

1. I think my parents worry about money a lot.
Mostly true..... 4
Somewhat true..... 3
A little true..... 2
Not true..... 1
2. Discipline problems take up a lot of class time.
Mostly true..... 4
Somewhat true..... 3
A little true..... 2
Not true..... 1
3. Bullying and fighting are big problems at my school.
Mostly true..... 4
Somewhat true..... 3
A little true..... 2

Youth

Not true..... 1

4. Did you ever get free or reduced lunches at school?

Yes.....1

No.....0

5. At any time in your life, have you ever lived with foster parents or been placed with relatives?

Yes.....1

No.....0

6. At any time in your life, has a family member or close friend died?

Yes.....1

No.....0

7. At any time in your life, has a family member become seriously ill, injured, or had to spend the night in the hospital?

Yes.....1

No.....0

8. At any time in your life, has someone in your family separated or divorced?

Yes.....1

No.....0