

# Exploring Indicators of Child Resilience in Early Childhood with the Taiwan Birth Cohort Study

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The Known: Resilience, in a contemporary definition, refers to the capacity of a dynamic system to withstand or recover from significant challenges that threatens its stability, viability or development. As a subset of health potential, resilience can also be defined as an attribute that predicts such aforementioned capacity to adapt to achieving relatively normal health and developmental outcomes despite exposure to social adversity.

The Unknown: The definition of resilience has continually evolved as scientific knowledge expands, but still lacks consensus on an operational definition. Because of the evolving and complex definition, it remains unknown whether early attributes can reliably predict later resilience capacity. Moreover, literature on resilience has been predominantly confined to westernized countries. Since resilience depends, at least in part, on culture-specific definitions of successful outcomes and normal functioning, we offer a different perspective via a unique dataset as part of the Taiwan Birth Cohort Study (TBCS). TBCS is a large-scale longitudinal study currently conducted by the Taiwanese government, following more than 20,000 children with a nationally-representative sample in Taiwan. It provides a unique opportunity to assess resilience in the context of traditionally Eastern culture.

Resilience Capacity is a construct we termed that is measured with a composite scale using validated instruments. Relevant indicators from the same age range were added to the scale based on clinical relevance, fit to conceptual model, psychometric test and exploratory factor analysis. With resilience capacity, we created a composite scale for resilience capacity, and utilized it to identify indicators in early childhood that potentially influences resilience capacity (e.g. child's gender, poverty, urban vs. rural, mother from China or foreign country).