

## Resilience process of a victim sexual violence in women: Transformation from victim to activist

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### ABSTRACT

Humans face numerous life challenges and phenomena that could cause traumatic feelings, such as violent cases. Amid these challenges, resilience was an essential psychological ability for individuals, including victims of sexual violence. Thus, this study aimed to determine the resilience process, factors that influenced and the meaning of the resilience process traversed by women victims of sexual violence. This research involved three informants who were victims of sexual violence. A qualitative method with a phenomenological approach was applied in this study. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in data collection. The data were analyzed with interpretative phenomenological analysis. Based on the analysis of transcribed interviews, three themes emerged: experienced various unpleasant emotions, coped and adapted with the situation, experienced several changes in herself and became resilient. Participants also have their meaning of the resilience process. Furthermore, the new finding is the pain victims experience, and their coping forces them to become resilient and join the organization that focuses on against sexual violence. Internal and external factors affect the resilience of victims, including empathy, social concern, and goals to be achieved. The implication of this study is to enhance the current literature on resilience and as additional knowledge to understand the resilience process and factors that influence victims of sexual violence to become resilient.

### Introduction

Humans are faced with life's ever-increasing challenges and events that can lead to traumatic conditions, such as natural disasters, loss, and sexual violence. Sexual violence is a common problem across nations. It is estimated that one out of three women in the world has ever experienced physical or sexual violence (Devries et al., 2013). Sexual violence is violence of human rights that affects millions of people worldwide. One in four women had experienced at least one incident of sexual violence during their lifetime (Bows, 2018). Empirical evidence from 21 regions and 81 countries, the study revealed that 30% of women aged 15 and over had experienced physical and or sexual violence during their lifetime (Devries et al., 2013). Moreover, recent data published reported that about 1 in 3 (30%) women had been subjected to physical and or sexual violence (World Health Organization, 2021). This fact indicated that sexual violence problems are experienced across the nation, both in developing and developed countries, including Indonesia.

Sexual violence is excessively extreme restrictions on women's sexual and reproductive autonomy (Blake et al., 2014). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines sexual

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violence as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (World Health Organization, 2021). Sexual violence might affect victims, both physically and psychologically. Physically, the impact is genital trauma, death, unwanted pregnancy, sexual dysfunction, and sexually transmitted diseases (Blake et al., 2014). Psychologically, the impacts include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), phobias, fear of sexual intercourse, fear of pregnancy due to rape, and suicidal thoughts (Devries et al., 2018; Fu'ady, 2011; Scott et al., 2017). Women who have been sexually abused may face specific barriers to developing healthy relationships, such as an inability to trust themselves and members of the offending gender (Newsom & Myers-Bowman, 2017). Sexual violence victims might also obtain social stigma, exclusion, and rejection (Leon et al., 2008).

Previous research found that women who became victims of violence tend to develop PTSD (Post-Traumatic Syndrome Disorder) in the future (Fu'ady, 2011). Among the victims of sexual violence who experienced PTSD, they have not reached the appropriate level of resilience (Muhid et al., 2017). However, not all victims experience the wholly negative impact of and experience PTSD. Some victims can adapt, get up, and recover from the traumatic events they experienced. They can accept themselves positively (Muhid et al., 2017). This ability to adapt and take positive aspects from unpleasant experiences is referred to as resilience (Dewi & Hendriani, 2014). Resilience is one of the most critical psychological abilities for individuals (Hendriani, 2013). Moreover, resilience has more and more commonly been mentioned as another psychological resource (Tsirigotis & Luczak, 2018).

Resilience is an important aspect of recovering from traumatic events (Lee et al., 2013). Resilience is a dynamic process that focuses on recovery and adaptation to difficult circumstances so that individuals can return to their healthy mental state (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000; Reich et al., 2010). Moreover, resilience is an individual's ability to be strong to gain new experiences and have positive emotions when undergoing unusual conditions and traumatic events (Bonanno et al., 2011).

The resilience of the sexual violence victims formed gradually. People have different processes for forming resilience. There are four phases of the resilience forming process (Hendriani, 2013). First is the stress phase, in which the individual is dominated by attitudes and behaviors that discover an increase in the amount of pressure experienced. The second phase, self-reconstruction, begins when the stress experienced slowly decreases due to the number of factors that strengthen psychological conditions both from within and outside. Individuals perform coping strategies as the key to adaptation. Third, the strengthening phase is passed by individuals with various activities that strengthen psychological conditions, observing emotions that sometimes fluctuate. The coping and adaptation strategies carried out in the previous phase continue to be carried out by individuals to face new problems. Fourth resilience phase, in which the individual is in a stable psychological condition and continues to improve in managing emotions. Individuals accept suffering from all its consequences as part of the whole self. Although individuals experience difficulties, individuals can still discover empathy, do not dissolve in the difficulties they face, are more enthusiastic in facing life's challenges. Individuals show great effort to stay productive (Hendriani, 2013).

Two factors influence the resilience forming process, internal and external factors (Choi et al., 2019). Internal factors come from within the individual, which is used to deal with stressful situations and internal control, for example, self-efficacy, self-esteem, positive affect, self-worth, optimism (Lee et al., 2013). In contrast, external factors are sources that come outside the individual, for example, support systems and clinical settings (Domhardt et al., 2014; Manomenidis et al., 2019).

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The interaction between risk and protective factors might affect resilience. Risk factors directly increase the likelihood of an individual having negative behavior. For example, people who have depressive symptoms and severe anxiety-related impairments had a lower level of resilience (Lee et al., 2013). Protective factors may facilitate an individual's adjustment and increase resilience (Choi et al., 2019; Dewi & Hendriani, 2014). A literature review study found the main protective factors that increase resilience are family and social support, education, optimism, ability to overcome problems, the focus of control, and self-efficacy (Domhardt et al., 2014).

Previous quantitative research on the resilience of victims of sexual harassment suggested that qualitative research is necessary for considerably deeper research data (Izzaturohmah & Khaerani, 2018). Several studies have also discussed resilience (Fajrina, 2012; Naufaliasari, 2013; Newsom & Myers-Bowman, 2017). Previous research focused on adolescents who experienced pregnancy due to sexual violence (Fajrina, 2012), other research focused on women who experienced sexual violence in their childhood (Domhardt et al., 2014; Newsom & Myers-Bowman, 2017), and research focused on the resilience of African American Women survivors of child sexual abuse (Singh et al., 2013). However, the specific topic about achieving resilience in the victims of sexual violence in Indonesia has not been studied yet. Thus, this study will examine how resilience was forming in the victims of sexual violence. This study focuses on young adult women who have experienced sexual violence as teenagers and become women activists.

## Method

In this study, the qualitative method with the phenomenological approach was applied. The data collection process mainly uses interviews. The observation was also be conducted as supporting data. The data used in this research is primary data that directly comes from the participants.

### Participants

Purposive sampling was applied in this study. Before recruiting process, information about this research was disseminated on social media. Prospective participants who were willing to participate in the study and met the inclusion criteria were contacted. The authors explain the description of the data collection process that will be carried out, the possible losses experienced, and provide informed consent. The informed consent also depicted information about the use of pseudonyms in reporting the research. The authors schedule the interview when the participant has agreed to participate in the interview process. The participants in this study were three women who had experienced sexual violence, lived in Yogyakarta, and then became women activists for a minimum of two years. They are active in organizations that focus on against women's violence. Table 1 shows the demographic data of the participants.

Table 1  
*Participant Information*

| No. | Name | Age | Activist* | Sexual Violence Experience   |
|-----|------|-----|-----------|--|
| 1   | ZA   | 22  | 3         | Being exposed to the genital area of men (exhibitionism), get her breast squeezed without consent. |
| 2   | NA   | 24  | 3         | Attempted rape, get her breast squeezed without consent  |
| 3   | AL   | 21  | 5         | Attempted rape, sexual harassment  |

Note: \*Total year of participant become an activist in women sexual violence

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### **Data collection**

The author collected the data with a semi-structured interview method, one-on-one interviews at a private location selected by each participant, a total of three times for each participant. Before the interview, the questions were arranged based on Reivich & Shatte's (2002) resilience theory. Each participant was asked the same question but did not rule out other flexible questions to explore unanticipated topics that appeared during interviews. The author recorded the interview and then transcribed it verbatim. The research questions revolve around three main things. The experience of sexual violence experienced, the process of resilience, the factors that influence and the participant's meaning of her experience as a woman, and the process she has gone through. All interviews were conducted by the first author and lasted from 1 to 2 hours.

### **Data analysis**

The data were analyzed using the theory of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith, 2015), which consists of four steps. First, write and read the full description. The author wrote the entire interview transcript and reread the interview results in this step. The second step is compiling or making parts of the description to find units of meaning. At this step, authors begin to understand interview transcripts, then do coding and record meaningful, important, or interesting texts in the interview process. Furthermore, the authors conducted a reduction to focus on highlighting the important things conveyed by the resource persons.

Third, develop themes or meanings. At this step, authors develop and discover appropriate themes and record them. Authors read and reread the results of the reduction and coding that have been carried out in the previous process and group them into similar themes. This process aims to find an appropriate theme to represent what the resource person conveys. The last step is connecting between themes and writing. At this step, authors reread, analyze and relate similar themes to become a broad theme. The first author then discusses the results of the theme with the second author to determine whether the theme used is representative of the entire interview.

Professional checking and member checking were applied as the data triangulation techniques. After the entire process of data analysis and research results is complete, the authors carry out professional checking by conveying the process that has been passed and the research results. The professional then provided input so that the authors make improvements.

## **Results**

The results show themes on the resilience process, the factors influencing the resilience, and the participant's meaning of their experience. Each participant who experienced sexual violence went through several phases to achieve resilience and had their meaning. We used pseudonymous initials AL, ZA, and NA.

The participants experienced sexual violence more than one time. The first participant, AL, has experienced attempted rape by someone she knew. The second participant is ZA, that experienced sexual harassment when she was in a vocational school. The sexual harassment experienced by ZA was the perpetrator showed his genitals (exhibitionism) and squeezed her breasts when she was cycling. The last NA had experienced sexual harassment and attempted rape.

### **The resilience process**

***Experienced a variety of unpleasant emotions.*** After being sexually assaulted, participants felt very afraid, angry, withdrew from society for a few days, and traumatized. Participants

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are also experiencing a sleeping problem. As a result, the participant experienced an inability to carry out the activities and plans that she had previously arranged.

*It was the first time for me to be traumatized, afraid to go to school, afraid to be alone; I was disgusted at that time (ZA)*

*That is all I am traumatized; in September, I had a plan, so it was ruined because I could not do anything, I could not think anything (AL)*

*Mmmm, I feel like I have not come to terms with it..a few times, I dream about it, several times because of that dream, I woke up with irregular breath (NA)*

Besides, almost all participants except NA blamed herself and negatively viewed herself. Both AL and ZA thought that she was dirty because of that incident. They also felt guilty towards herself and blamed herself.

*I felt dirty; what the hell I am weak, why I unable to refuse at the time? If I might have to dodge, I am not going through this.. I feel so wrong at myself, it is true, because why I can not give firmness to myself (AL)*

**Coped and adapted to the situation.** To overcome stress and unpleasant emotions, all participants have coping strategies and adapt to the situation. The participants told their experiences to their friends and seniors in the organization. By telling their experience, participants got support and were motivated to survive. They also feel not alone.

*I realized at the beginning that what motivated me to survive was from outside myself, the seniors, they reminded me (AL)*

*I told my best friends about the incident, and I got support. I felt not alone (ZA)*

Even though she got support from her friend, ZA was still traumatized and anxious. She was afraid that the experience would happen one day. ZA attempted to keep herself busy, to forget the bad experience. She kept herself busy with drawing and joined the organization. ZA also received education from the school about exhibitionism. This education made ZA feel better and understand her experiences and the conditions of the perpetrator herself. Then, ZA empathized with the perpetrator and encouraged her to forgive the offender. Forgiving the offender for her was an attempt to heal herself so that the burden that she felt was lessened.

*Apart from empathy etc., the most influential thing is to forgive the perpetrator, forgive her for me, to heal myself (ZA)*

The incident encouraged NA to find out more about her experience. Then, NA joined the organization and read many books related to gender and feminism. NA's thinking concept about her experiences changed drastically, so she did not have harmful stereotypes against her, such as feeling guilty and seeing herself as unclean. In this organization, NA first talked about her experiences and felt accepted. Many of her friends have experienced the same thing not to feel alone. Continuing from here, NA joined an NGO working on anti-violence issues against women. NA was in progress and continues to reflect. NA hopefully understands her state and the causes and effects of the experience. NA had also learned to come to terms with herself and her experiences of abuse.

*Yeah, as a justification, as part of the recovery process, I was in an NGO, I learned so much about myself, reflected on myself and my experience (NA)*

While at the organization, NA also told about her experience of harassment to one of her organizational friends. The acceptance without judgment that she got from her friends made NA feel better and not feel alone. She realized that many others shared her experience.

***Experienced several changes in herself and became resilient.*** After some coping strategies, all participants have several influences and changes. For example, in participant AL, she had started to accept the incident compared to 2-3 weeks after the incident. The progress she has made so far is that she has been able to talk more openly about her experiences without feeling overly sad. In fact, at this time, AL can be grateful for her better condition. AL was more cautious about trusting others. She became more socially distant and worried about new people she met. She feels this is important to avoid a bad experience. One of the admirable things is that the experience of sexual harassment she experienced often makes all the participants involved in the movement and women's issues. For the AL participant, her experience prompted her to join several organizations advocating violence against women. AL did this because she had felt how to be a victim; she did not want other people to feel it. She then felt the need to become a stronger person. AL has often spoken about taboo issues, including the sexual harassment she had experienced. AL wants other women to have the courage to speak up.

*Okay, I cannot keep being weak, I cannot be like this, I try to be normal, this is a supporter for me being more enthusiastic about voicing and campaigning for taboo things not to become taboo (AL)*

ZA also has progressed. Although she cannot fully accept it, ZA feels that she is now better and braver than initially. Although she said she had accepted the incident, ZA felt that she could not fully accept it in her deepest heart.

*In the deepest heart, it is not necessarily able to accept, which I really accept that when I have been through it long enough until I can talk to my friends that I am okay (ZA)*

NA also has progressed after doing some coped. NA was grateful for this experience because she could discover gender issues, join organizations, read many books, and become a volunteer to help women in violence. NA saw the experience of sexual violence as a fire that encouraged her to obtain involved and continue the process until today. For NA, the process she is currently undergoing will continue to obtain a natural recovery. NA is still afraid if she has to go alone or gather with friends in an organization who are all male. The valuable experience that NA experienced made her could empathize with people who experienced the same thing. NA also understood the cause and effect of these experiences. In addition, NA was also able to manage emotions better.

### **External Factors that Influence Resilience**

***Support from friends and parents.*** One factor that affects a person's resilience is the social support system. All participants got support from friends. ER has friends who provide support after being sexually harassed. AL had the support of a female activist friend. NA feels that her boyfriend and her seniors in the organization can understand her situation and fully support her. NA also often discusses and tells stories with her boyfriend and senior, so this is special healing for NA. Feeling understood and supported helps NA obtain through it.

*In my boyfriend now I tell my situation, I tell the situation, I don't bear the burden alone (NA)*

***Join The Women's Movement Organization or Community.*** The participants joined several organizations working on the issue of violence against women. In this organization,

participants feel that they have a supportive environment and understand several things related to victims of sexual violence. By following the organization, participants realize that many other people have also experienced their experiences, and many cases are much more significant. They are increasingly aware that other women experience so many similar cases that they are not even aware they have been harassed.

*Mm, I joined organization X. I became a person who moved to support survivors, and I joined anti-sexual violence movements (ZA)*

**Education from Schools and Organizations.** ZA received education from school about how to respond when seeing people with exhibitionism. This activity made ZA realize that her sexual harassment experience was carried out by someone asking for help and getting sick.

*In the end, the activity made me see what I was going through, educating myself and from school; at that time, I realized that there are so many people like this, and the victim is not just me; it means I feel like I have friends (ZA).*

Participant NA also receives education from their organizations. NA becomes acquainted with gender issues by joining an organization and does not feel alone. NA also read many books related to gender and feminism to influence her mindset on women's issues, including the abuse she has experienced.

*After that incident, I went to Jogja and continued to get an education. I started to dare to tell stories about myself, and they listened well and didn't judge me like that; they also told me about their experiences that were the same as mine (NA).*

### Internal Factors that Influence Resilience

**Have Goals to Achieve.** One thing that makes participants resilient is their goals to achieve. ZA doesn't like to see her pitiful self, even though she has goals to pursue and make come true. The goals encourage ZA to be more excited and feel better. NA also has many targets that she must achieve. Therefore, the experience of sexual harassment could not be an obstacle to achieving the target she had set. The target that has been set is the driving force for the NA to continue to rise and become strong so that what she has done so far is not in vain.

*Because I have academic, social, organizational, and career targets that affect me, yes, my wish list, I'll use it to motivate myself to rise (NA).*

**Empathy and Social Concern.** One thing that affects the AL's resilience process is its high empathy and social concern. When feeling down, AL felt that she should not be broken and stopped because of one person's behavior. AL feels that many people are experiencing difficulties and must be helped to remain strong and survive through various problems in her life.

*Why because of this one disgusting thing I keep breaking, and when I'm broken, I'll lose it all, out there I remember this father, this mother, this mother whom I helped at that time, this is one of the things that has made me strong to this day (AL)*

### The Meaning of Resilience Process

Three participants have similar interpretations of the process that has been passed. AL participant interprets the process she goes through as a learning process full of challenges, encouraging her to become more mature. This process is challenging because it collides with complete self-acceptance, making it more mature. AL felt that she had to make it through

this. AL feels that there will be more severe challenges in the future than this; therefore, AL is trying to overcome this challenge. Another meaning of the resilience process that AL goes through is that she is grateful for her experience. AL felt grateful for being given more strength by God to go through this painful experience. AL believes that Allah will not give trials beyond her limits. She believes that she is strong and capable of getting through this. AL believed in the power of God and felt that she could not be weak.

*Grateful for being given more strength, you cannot be weak; you have to believe in the power of God (AL)*

ZA also interpreted that the experience of sexual harassment has led her to become more sensitive to women's issues. ZA also realizes that what she has experienced is only a small part of cases of sexual violence that are still very rampant. ZA, at this time, was finished with the experience she had.

*I see this case as a case that happens a lot. If I have never been a survivor. I might do anti-violence movements because I have never experienced violence (ZA)*

Also, ZA saw herself as someone lucky to be through the process with a positive and obtain support from their surroundings. She feels lucky because many other people are not as lucky as she is; they still have a prolonged trauma. After all, they are unable to manage the trauma they have.

NA also viewed the experience of harassment as an experience that prompted her to be active in women's organizations. At this time, NA has been grateful for this valuable experience because the experience led her to know and be active in women's organizations. In addition, she can empathize more with fellow victims and process with herself.

*The point is that I am grateful that I went through those events; I am fortunate that I had that experience, with this experience it is valuable for me (NA)*

NA also assumed that achieving resilience is a learning process that will continue and will not stop here. NA feels that she still has to continue the process and learn many things to fully recover from everything related to her experience.

## Discussion

In line with the research objectives, the results of this study provide data on the resilience process of the participants, factors that influenced them, and their meaning of the resilience process. After experiencing sexual violence, all participants went through was feeling various unpleasant emotions. Participants felt angry, shocked, guilty, afraid to travel alone, had nightmares, withdrew from society, self-harming, and worried if the violence might happen again. These results indicated that the experience provides heavy pressure on the participants. Previous research shows that sexual violence has a psychological impact on feelings of fear (Blake et al., 2014; Tsirigotis & Łuczak, 2018), anxiety, low self-esteem, distrust, hatred of the opposite sex, and nightmares (Lee et al., 2013). The unpleasant feelings indicate participants were experiencing the first stage of the resilience theory, which is a stress phase. In a stress phase, individuals usually show sadness, anxiety, difficulty accepting reality, and other responses that indicate emotional instability (Hendriani, 2013). The participants also questioned their experiences, ashamed and blaming themselves for what has happened, and developed negative views. These findings align with previous research that sexual violence victims have negative self-images, shame, guilt, helplessness, and anxiety (Anggreiny & Sulistyarningsih, 2013; Lee et al., 2013). Feelings of shock, anger, guilt and other feelings lead participants to self-harm.

All participants attempted to cope and adapt to their unpleasant emotions, indicating they were in the second phase of resilience, that is, self-reconstruction (Hendriani, 2013). Participant tried to cope with the unpleasant emotions by taking up her hobbies and keeping herself busy. Besides, telling the violence to the closest friend is also a way to cope with their unpleasant emotions. Previous research found that telling stories is an effort to recover (Illenia & Handadari, 2011). Moreover, social support from local friends and having friends who experience the same thing helps in the victims' recovery process (Muhid et al., 2017). Social support is a predicted factor in becoming resilient (Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012). Sharing what participants have experienced and letting people learn from it made them feel joy. Participants felt it was as the burden in their shoulder had lifted, their expressed.

Internal strength supports the resilience process in victims (Newsom & Myers-Bowman, 2017). In this study, participants attempted to understand the perpetrator. Participants attempted to give empathy and forgiveness to the perpetrator. The knowledge participants had learned before made them understand the perpetrator's background. This understanding encourages participants to empathize and attempt to forgive the perpetrator for the sake of her mental health. Participants initiated their coping strategies to feel better and learn to accept themselves. Sometimes participants still feel anxious or have other unpleasant emotions, especially when triggers remind them of the experience. Resilience is a dynamic process of responding to new vulnerabilities and adapting to changing circumstances (Pulvirenti & Mason, 2018). All participants kept doing all the coping and attempted to heal themselves. Studies showed traumatic experiences require time in the healing process (Dewi & Hendriani, 2014).

These study findings show that being a victim of violence encourages participants to obtain more information about sexual harassment and sexual violence; consequently, participants are curious to understand why they experienced sexual violence. Previous research found that information and reinforcement from the surrounding environment would help victims of sexual violence to accept themselves more (Muhid et al., 2017). Therefore, participants understood that other people are also experiencing violence. By joining an organization, the participants were more aware of their experiences. Being in an organization enables participants to get a support group that plays a role in the resilience forming process. As mentioned before, support groups are essential for violence victims (Domhardt et al., 2014; Muhid et al., 2017; Pulvirenti & Mason, 2018; Williams & Nelson-Gardell, 2012). In turn, the participants became more empathetic and supported the other sexual violence victims. At the end of their resilience process, participants were more grateful and became more resilient. All of the participants felt grateful because that experienced brought them to know more about women's issues and have social support. Gratitude has an essential role in increasing resilience (Zuanny et al., 2013). Participants also became more solid, motivated, and spoke up for the other victims of sexual violence, as they believe sharing stories is a healing process. The study also found that solid motivation from within makes victims of violence survive (Cecchet & Thoburn, 2014). After all coping strategies, all participants experienced several changes and became resilient.

In this study, participants shared similarities in personal meanings of the sexual violence experience that might occur anywhere and anytime. They believe that sexual violence or sexual harassment is a crime that long-term impacts the victim. Therefore, all participants also take that sexual violence experience led them to be involved in organizations or NGOs on women's issues. In achieving resilience, participants were also influenced by external and internal factors. Internal factors include participants' goals and targets to be achieved, empathy, and high social awareness. While in the previous research, no study has found empathy and deep social concern affect the resilience process. On the other hand, external factors consist of getting social support and education from the environment,

encouraging the informant to understand her experience and respond in the future. These external factors support achieving resilience among the victims of sexual violence.

Luck, more mature, and a learning process are the interpretation of resilience process among this study participants. Furthermore, the pain that victims experience and their coping forces them to become resilient and join the organization that focuses on sexual violence is a particular finding of this study. However, this study has a limitation. In this study, the forms of sexual violence experienced by victims were not the same. Therefore, further study needs to provide clear boundaries regarding the forms of sexual violence experienced by victims and perpetrators of violence. So, it can be explored whether there are differences in the degree of trauma to victims.

## Conclusion

Women with sexual violence experience withdrawing from society, various unpleasant emotions, blaming themselves and having a negative view of themselves, and self-harming in the first stage of resilience. Then they try to cope and adapt to the situation, experience several changes in themselves, and become resilient. Participants interpreted the resilience forming process as a learning process that would continue forever. They learn to become more empathic, mature, and understand more about themselves. Empathy, high social awareness, and having dreams and targets to be achieved are internal factors that affect the resilience of victims. While getting social support and getting an education from the environment are external factors influencing the resilience process in victims of violence. High empathy, social concern, and having goals to be achieved are specifically found among this study participants. Furthermore, the pain that victims experience and their coping drives the participants to become resilient and join the organization that focuses on against sexual violence.

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