The Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) measure

Manual

v1.1 December 2018

Resilience Research Centre

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

AVERT RESEARCH NETWORK
ADDRESSING VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION TO TERRORISM

ADI
ALFRED DEAKIN INSTITUTE FOR CITIZENSHIP AND GLOBALISATION

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1. What is the BRAVE measure?

The Building Resilience Against Violent Extremism (BRAVE) is a measure of risk and protective factors for young people's resilience to violent extremism. It consists of 14 items which are responded to using a 5-point scale.

Based on the work of the Resilience Research Centre, we understand resilience to be a social ecological construct, defined as follows:

> In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to *navigate* their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and their capacity individually and collectively to *negotiate* for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008, p. 225).

For further reading about resilience, please see:

- Ungar, M. (2008). Resilience across cultures. *British Journal of Social Work, 38*(2), 218-235.
- Ungar, M. (2011). The social ecology of resilience: addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 81*(1), 1-17.

In contexts where the BRAVE measure will typically be used, adversity will often be associated with structural and social disadvantage - the drivers of violent extremism.

2. Uses for the BRAVE measure

The BRAVE can be used by researchers, government agencies, policy makers, and community stakeholders to:

- Facilitate the comparison of risk and protective factors for young people's resilience to violent extremism;
- Contextualize the ways in which young people are able to resist violent extremism, as well as why they may become vulnerable to using violent extremism as a solution to problems;
- Systematically identify and strengthen existing resilience resources;
- Help to identify current vulnerabilities in youth resilience to violent extremism through community partnerships and program development;
- Support efforts of communities and agencies to develop effective and meaningful youth-focused policies and programs that can identify both what communities already possess as

resilience resources (but which may be unrecognized or under-used), and what vulnerabilities or gaps need to be addressed, and how;

- Support evaluations of strategies and programs for strengthening resilience to violent extremism amongst young people, helping to show the effectiveness of innovative, culturally and contextually sensitive interventions.

Components of the BRAVE have already been used in a published paper investigating how gender and discrimination influence violent behaviours and violent beliefs (Ungar, Hadfield, Amarasingam, Morgan, & Grossman, 2017).

3. Development of the BRAVE measure

The BRAVE measure was developed and validated as part of a collaborative research initiative between the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University (Australia) and the Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University (Canada).

It was originally developed using findings from a government-funded research project in Australia ('Harnessing Resilience Capital', CVESC/ANZ CTC, 2013-14) and a research project in Canada ('Barriers to Violent Radicalisation: Understanding Pathways to Resilience among Canadian Youth', Kanishka Project, 2014-15). A subsequent study trialled and validated the measure with 475 young people (18 to 30 years old) from a wide range of culturally diverse backgrounds in Australia and Canada (Grossman et al., 2017).

Grossman et al. (2014) theorised that resilience to violent extremism would be comprised of 13 factors within four overarching factors: 1) *cultural identity and connectedness* (made up of cultural knowledge, cultural continuity, cultural security, and cultural adaptability); 2) *relationships and networks* (made up of bonding capital, bridging capital, linking capital); 3) *community norms, behaviours, attitudes, and values* (made up of coping with adversity, problem behaviours, and resources for problem solving); and 4) fr*aming, preventing, and responding to violence* (made up of beliefs, values, and resources/strategies for non-violent conflict resolution). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses showed the structure that fit the data and theory most closely was a five-factor, 14-item measure of resilience to violent extremism. The five factors are: 1) *cultural identity and connectedness*; 2) *bridging capital*; 3) *linking capital*; 4) *violence-related behaviours*; and 5) *violence-related beliefs*.

Table 1. *Sample items from each subscale*

Item	Factor
It's important to me to maintain cultural traditions.	Cultural identity and connectedness
Being violent helps show how strong I am.	Violence-related beliefs
In general, I trust people from other communities.	Bridging capital
I am willing to speak out publicly against violence in my community.	Violence-related behaviours
I feel confident when dealing with government and authorities.	Linking capital

You can read more about the development of the measure in Grossman, Ungar, Brisson, Gerrand, Hadfield, and Jefferies (2017).

4. Modifying the BRAVE measure

The BRAVE can be used as it is provided, but we strongly advise that meetings be held with select members of the local community in which the BRAVE will be used to provide input into culturally relevant ways of administering the scale (e.g., adding site-specific items and translating the measure into the local language). For more information please see the section below on implementing the BRAVE.

5. Translating the BRAVE measure

Although the BRAVE is not currently offered in any language other than English, no special authorization is required to translate the BRAVE. If you create a translation, we would ask that you share it with us so your translation can be shared with others. We suggest that you conduct a *back translation* into English to enhance the validity of the translation process (see Brislin, 1970; van Ommeren et al., 1999).

6. Implementing the BRAVE measure

Recommended components for preparing the BRAVE for implementation are summarized below. Given the cross-cultural nature of the measure, we recommend following these guidelines to help ensure that the measure remains contextually relevant to the community where your research is taking place.

6a. Contextualising the measure

We strongly advise that researchers hold meetings with selected members of the community in which the research is being conducted. A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) can provide valuable input, such as suggestions on contextually relevant ways of conducting the study, ensuring that items are phrased in a way that makes sense to participants, and helping to develop additional site-specific items to add to the BRAVE.

Members of a LAC can also comment on findings and help ensure that interpretations of the data are made meaningful in terms of local context. It works well to consult with a group of about five local key informants who have something important to say about the people in their community. The group could include youth, professionals, service providers and/or elders.

Sessions with your LAC can provide useful directions to assist with the implementation and interpretation of the BRAVE, but can also provide good qualitative data on the topic of resilience to violent extremism in your research setting.

6b. Administering the measure

The BRAVE can be administered to participants in groups or individually. It is important to decide whether the items should be read out loud to participants, or whether participants should complete the measure on their own. If you are unsure about levels of literacy or comprehension, reading aloud may be a better option. If participants have the measure read to them, their responses should still be self-completed to encourage truthfulness.

Administration of the BRAVE takes approximately 5 minutes, if administered in the participant's native language and if the participant does not have literacy/comprehension challenges.

7. Scoring and interpreting the BRAVE measure

Responses are on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1-5, as follows:

Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5).

Three of the 14 items are reverse-scored: items 2, 4, and 8.

The scale can be scored by summing the point values of the responses from a participant. Remember to reverse-score the three items prior to summing. The minimum score for the scale is 14 and the maximum score is 70. Higher scores indicate greater levels of characteristics associated with resilience to violent extremism.

All items of the measure should be completed. If a participant skips or misses an item, scores should not be calculated as their overall score will be lower. If you are a researcher with a dataset containing many missing values and do not wish to discard these participants from your analyses, you may wish to consider methods of handling missing data (e.g., http://www.stat.columbia.edu/~gelman/arm/missing.pdf).

At present, we do not prescribe cut-offs/thresholds for what constitutes high or low resilience to violent extremism, as this is likely to vary between contexts. It may instead be more useful to consider individuals who score high vs. low on the measure.

In addition to an overall score, five subscale scores can also be calculated:

- *cultural identity and connectedness* (items 1, 3, 5),
- *bridging capital* (items 7, 10, 11),
- *linking capital* (items 6, 13, 14),
- *violence-related behaviours* (items 9, 12),
- and *violent-related beliefs* (items 2, 4, 8; reverse scored).

Each subscale is comprised of three items except for the violent-related behaviours subscale. For each subscale, the score is calculated by summing the point values of the responses from a participant. The three-item subscale scores range from 3-15. The violence-related behaviours subscale scores range from 2-10.

7a. Managing additional items

During contextualization, if new items were created and administered to participants with the regular or modified 14 items, then your overall scale score range will be larger. It may be

important to consider this if you plan to directly compare scores from different projects that have used the BRAVE.

Additionally, you may be able to identify which of the factors/subscales your new items fit best with (e.g., a new item relating to cultural identity would likely best fit with the first factor), and so the score range for these subscales/factors will also be larger.

We recommend that prior to involving new items in analyses, that you check whether the new items work well with the overall scale and with any factors/subscales they have been added to. This involves a reliability analysis, which can be easily performed in statistical analysis programs such as SPSS (https://statistics.laerd.com/spss-tutorials/cronbachs-alpha-using-spss-statistics.php) or JASP (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qPCj2aabm8). Sometimes, these analyses indicate that new or modified items do not work well with other items in the scale or subscale(s). If this is the case, consider leaving these items out of your main analyses.

7b. Additional validation analyses

The BRAVE has been developed and validated in Canada and Australia. However, we recommend that researchers consider conducting their own validation analyses to understand nuances in how the measure works in their particular context.

You can read more about the initial exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses that were conducted in the development of the measure in Grossman, Ungar, Brisson, Gerrand, Hadfield, and Jefferies (2017).

8. Accessing the BRAVE measure

To request a copy and obtain permission to reproduce the BRAVE please see our website at http://www.resilienceresearch.org/.

9. FAQs

- Do I need permission to use the measure?
  No. It can be downloaded from www.resilienceresearch.org.
- Does it cost anything to use the measure?
  No, but we ask that any work that includes the measure also includes the appropriate citation: Grossman, Ungar, Brisson, Gerrand, Hadfield, and Jefferies (2017).
- Who can use the measure?
  Anyone can use the measure provided they have read this manual carefully.
- How long does the measure take to administer?
  5 minutes, if administered in the participant's native language and if the participant does not have literacy/comprehension difficulties.
- How do I score the measure?
  Sum the scores of respondents. See the above section on scoring for more information.
- Are there subscales?
  Yes, 5. See the section on scoring for more information.
- Are there cut-offs/thresholds?
  We do not currently recommend cut-off/thresholds for the measure.
- What is the internal reliability of the measure?
  Grossman et al., (2017) determined that the overall scale had an alpha of .76.
- I want to modify the measure. Can I do this?
  Yes, but you should describe and justify any changes you make and note that any modifications challenge the validity of the measure and you should be prepared to investigate this yourself.
- Is the measure available in other languages?
  At present, the measure is only available in English. You are welcome to translate the measure and if you do, please send us a copy so we can share this with others. We recommend any translations undergo back-translation to ensure accuracy. See the translation section above for further information.
- What age range is the measure suitable for?
  We developed the measure with participants that were 18-30. Therefore, the measure is good to use with this group. If you plan to use the measure with older or younger individuals, please get in touch with us.
- I have a question that hasn't been answered. Where can I get help?
  Our staff are committed to offering tools and services for research and evaluation. Although the measure will always be available to researchers at no cost, we are no longer able to offer consultation for free. Due to the high volume of requests, any

further help will be offered for a fee in order to recover the cost of staff time. To have our staff consult on one of your projects, please fill out the form on this page.

10. References

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