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Psychological Resilience and Reintegration of Trafficking Victims: Challenges in European and Romanian Policy Frameworks

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Abstract

This study examines the psychological resilience and social reintegration of human trafficking victims within the framework of European and Romanian policies. The objective of the research is to analyze how current legal and psychosocial systems support or hinder victims' recovery and reintegration, emphasizing the role of resilience as a mediating factor between trauma and social adaptation. Human trafficking remains one of the most complex forms of human rights violations, generating deep psychological scars that extend beyond the cessation of exploitation. The paper adopts a qualitative and interdisciplinary approach, combining psychological, legal, and policy analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of trauma-informed interventions and victim-centered rehabilitation programs. Drawing on European Union directives—particularly Directive 2011/36/EU—and Romanian national strategies, the study investigates the alignment between policy frameworks and psychological needs identified in clinical and social practice. Findings indicate that while European standards promote comprehensive assistance and empowerment, practical implementation in Romania often faces challenges such as limited interinstitutional coordination, insufficient mental health resources, and societal stigma. The research highlights resilience not as an innate trait but as a dynamic process fostered through supportive environments, access to psychological care, and community inclusion. It concludes that sustainable reintegration requires a multidimensional approach that integrates legal protection with long-term psychological and social support. By linking policy evaluation with psychological theory, this study contributes to strengthening victim-centered practices and the human rights dimension of anti-trafficking policies in Europe and Romania.

Keywords: Psychological Resilience, Human Trafficking, Victim Reintegration, European Policy, Romanian Framework, Trauma Recovery, Human Rights.