



# A Comparative Study of Psychological Hardiness of Men and Women of Slums during the Pandemic Period

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## 1.0 Introduction

It has widely reported that the social change is a process by which social groups and societies alter their structure and culture over time. However, this time duration often is large enough wherein the resistance to this change is very low. Moreover, the changes that take place in a society are also many a times are necessary for development. Yes, there appears a time like the one the world experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic period, when the society has to undergo rapid change and at times the members of society are not ready for it. In such challenging times, the first and foremost impact is experienced by the brain as the bad news makes everyone think about their sustenance as well as survival. Thus, at this point the psychological hardiness of an individual plays a big role in the subsequent actions each person takes (in the challenging times). Hardiness is defined as a personality construct composed of three traits – control, commitment, and challenge – that are theorized to make one resilient in the face of stress.

Often, the head of the house or the senior most person of the house has to take most of the tough decisions and hence, here the leadership ability also plays a role. It has been seen and reported that a group often takes on the personality of their leader; hence, a leader who exudes the components of hardiness will positively influence fellow group members to embrace hardiness and lead to a positive social change. However, if the leader is weak, the followers will also express their inability to do many things. Moreover, most of the time the living conditions and other situations are quite tough in areas like slums, where people have to make adjustments to their routines regularly. In view of the above, this study was carried out to determine the psychological hardiness of men and women living in the slum areas. The study was carried out in Nagpur city of Maharashtra.

## 2.0 Research Methodology

### 2.1 Selection of Subjects

The subjects were selected from the slum areas of Nagpur city for the purpose of the study. A total of 300 men (150) and women (150) living in the slums for more than 5 yrs. were selected randomly.

## 2.2 Research Design

The study was performed using a descriptive research design to collect data pertaining to the psychological hardiness of the men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city.

## 2.3 Tool for data collection

In order to determine the psychological hardiness of the men and women residing in the slum areas, the Psychological Hardiness Scale developed by Arun Kumar Singh was used. This scale consists 30 items and determines three components of psychological hardiness i.e. commitment, control and challenge and it is a standardized test.

## 2.4 Secondary Sources

Various dailies, weeklies, magazines, books, texts, periodicals and other published materials were referred as source for data collection.

## 2.5 Statistical analysis of the data

In the present study various statistical techniques were used to analyze the collected data. From the information obtained, mean and standard deviation, etc. were determined and for the purpose of comparative assessment student's 't' test was used. All the data analysis was carried out using SPSS 18.0 software. Significance Level was chosen to be 0.05.

## 3.0 Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Psychological Hardiness – Commitment Factor

**Table 1:** Comparative assessment of the commitment aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

Study participant	N	Mean	SD	MD	t	p
Men	150	33.1	2.3	5.2	2.965	<0.05
Women	150	38.3	3.1			

SD: Standard Deviation; MD: Mean Difference; t: 't' value; p: Probability

Above **Table 1** presents results obtained for the commitment aspect of psychological hardiness of the study participants. The results show that the mean score of men pertaining to the commitment factor of psychological hardiness is  $33.1 \pm 2.3$ , whereas for the women of slum area is  $38.3 \pm 3.1$ . The comparative assessment showed that there is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference in the test scores for commitment factor of psychological hardiness and specifically, the score of women was higher than that recorded for the men.

### 3.2 Psychological Hardiness – Control Factor

**Table 2:** Comparative assessment of the control aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

Study participant	N	Mean	SD	MD	T	p
Men	150	30.8	4.2	4.4	2.859	<0.05
Women	150	26.4	3.7			

**SD:** Standard Deviation; **MD:** Mean Difference; **t:** 't' value; **p:** Probability

Above **Table 2** presents results obtained for the control aspect of psychological hardiness of the study participants. The results show that the mean score of men pertaining to the control factor of psychological hardiness is  $30.8 \pm 4.2$ , whereas for the women of slum area is  $26.4 \pm 3.7$ . The comparative assessment showed that there is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference in the test scores for control factor of psychological hardiness and specifically, the score of men was higher than that recorded for the women.

### 3.3 Psychological Hardiness – Challenge Factor

**Table 3:** Comparative assessment of the challenge aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

Study participant	N	Mean	SD	MD	t	p
Men	150	28.5	3.8	7.6	4.228	<0.05
Women	150	36.1	4.3			

**SD:** Standard Deviation; **MD:** Mean Difference; **t:** 't' value; **p:** Probability

Above **Table 3** presents results obtained for the challenge aspect of psychological hardiness of the study participants. The results show that the mean score of men pertaining to the challenge factor of psychological hardiness is  $28.5 \pm 3.8$ , whereas for the women of slum area is  $36.1 \pm 4.3$ . The comparative assessment showed that there is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference in the test scores for challenge factor of psychological hardiness and specifically, the score of women was higher than that recorded for the men.

### 3.4 Overall Psychological Hardiness/Toughness

**Table 4:** Comparative assessment of the overall psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

Study participant	N	Mean	SD	MD	t	p
Men	150	112.4	9.8	16.1	4.698	<0.05
Women	150	128.5	10.4			

**SD:** Standard Deviation; **MD:** Mean Difference; **t:** 't' value; **p:** Probability

Above **Table 4** presents results obtained for the overall psychological hardiness of the study participants. The results show that the mean score of men pertaining to the overall psychological hardiness is  $112.4 \pm 9.8$ , whereas for the women of slum area is  $128.5 \pm 10.4$ . The comparative assessment showed that there is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) difference in the test scores for overall psychological hardiness and specifically, the score of women was higher than that recorded for the men.

## 4.0 Conclusions

### 4.1 Comparative assessment of the commitment aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

- Based on the study results, it is concluded that the women of slum areas of Nagpur city are more committed in their resolve when experience severe stress like situation presented by the pandemic period.

### 4.2 Comparative assessment of the control aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

- In view of the study results, it is concluded that the men of slum areas of Nagpur city have more control in their response to severe stress like situation as experienced during the pandemic period.

### 4.3 Comparative assessment of the challenge aspect of psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

- On the basis of study results, it is concluded that comparatively the women of slum areas of Nagpur city are better with respect to hardiness factor like challenge than the men during the pandemic period.

### 4.4 Comparative assessment of the overall psychological hardiness of men and women residing in the slums of Nagpur city

- Based on the study results, it is concluded that the women of slum areas of Nagpur city are psychologically more tough than the men in their resolve when experience severe stress like situation presented by the pandemic period.

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