

## Ego Resilience in Women: The Influence of Caste on Psychological Adaptability

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### ABSTRACT

Ego resilience refers to a person's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, effectively manage stress and adversity, and recover from setbacks. This psychological concept reflects a person's capacity to maintain mental well-being and flexibility, even in the face of life's challenges. Ego resilience enables individuals to handle emotional distress and successfully navigate a variety of life situations, particularly those that are stressful or difficult. 720 women randomly selected from city and rural areas of Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. Ego Resiliency Scale developed by Block and Kremen. Descriptive statistics, Mean, SD, and Tukey HSD analysis were calculated to test the hypothesis. Result showed the significant difference between the cast categories. There was significant difference between General, OBC & SC/ST caste category. The result showed that OBC Caste high on ego resilience in comparison to general and SC/St. Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that factors such as caste significantly influence the incidence of ego resilience among women, highlighting their importance in understanding this issue. Ego resilience is an essential psychological quality that enables individuals to cope with stress and adversity effectively. It is influenced by a variety of factors, including personality, coping strategies, social support, early life experiences, and cultural influences. Understanding these factors can provide valuable insights into how different groups (e.g., women of different castes, socioeconomic statuses, or cultural backgrounds) navigate challenges and maintain psychological well-being.

**Keywords:** *Ego-resilience, Caste, Age and married women*

**E**go Resilience is a psychological construct that refers to an individual's ability to adapt to stress, adversity, and challenging life circumstances. It describes the capacity to recover from setbacks, maintain emotional stability, and manage emotions effectively under pressure. Individuals with high ego resilience are able to persevere through hardships, stay optimistic, and continue functioning productively despite difficulties.

**Inman, A., & Rao, K. (2017).** Culture is fundamental to human experiences, shaping distinct realities and lived experiences across different contexts. Psychological insights and

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experiences are influenced by socio-cultural systems, historical events, the distribution of economic and political power, and the privileged positions individuals hold within those systems.

**Lei Wu, Young Huang, Yiyuan Gao et.al. (2022)**, This research explored the life experiences of domestic violence survivors in China, focusing on their actions, experiences, and the meanings they assigned to becoming anti-domestic violence volunteers. This participation provided effective avenues for recovery, fostering resilience and facilitating posttraumatic growth.

**Tobi Faith Oloyede (2020)**, Female survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria face severe and traumatic experiences that impact their rights and overall well-being. The ongoing issue of IPV in Nigeria is not merely a family concern; it is a significant social and psychological challenge. This study explores the hidden strengths, agency, and resilience of Nigerian female survivors, shifting the focus from their perceived powerlessness and vulnerability.

**Johnson & Britto et al. (2018)** investigated "Resilience in Wives of Persons with Alcoholism: An Indian Exploration." The aim of this study was to assess the resilience of wives of individuals with alcoholism

### *Key Dimensions of Ego Resilience:*

- **Adaptability:** The ability to adjust to changing environments or life conditions, demonstrating flexibility and resourcefulness in response to challenges.
- **Emotional Stability:** The capacity to maintain emotional equilibrium during stressful or difficult situations. People with high ego resilience are less likely to be overwhelmed by negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, or sadness.
- **Optimism and Hope:** Resilient individuals tend to maintain a hopeful outlook, even in the face of adversity. This positive mindset enables them to view challenges as temporary and surmountable.
- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** People with high ego resilience are adept at identifying solutions to challenges, rather than becoming fixated on problems or giving up when faced with obstacles.
- **Self-Confidence:** High ego resilience is often accompanied by a strong sense of self-confidence, enabling individuals to trust in their own abilities and coping strategies to navigate difficulties.
- **Social Support:** Although resilience involves an individual's internal coping capacity, it is often enhanced by the presence of a supportive social network. Engaging with others for emotional support can facilitate recovery from setbacks.

### *Factors Influencing Ego Resilience:*

- **Personality Traits:** Traits such as optimism, self-esteem, and a sense of control over one's life are important contributors to resilience.
- **Early Life Experiences:** Early childhood experiences, particularly those involving supportive caregivers, play a significant role in shaping ego resilience.
- **Coping Mechanisms:** The use of healthy coping strategies, such as emotional regulation, problem-solving, and seeking social support, is crucial in fostering resilience.

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- **Social and Environmental Contexts:** A stable social environment, access to resources, and a strong support network can further enhance resilience.

### **Ego Resilience vs. General Resilience:**

While resilience broadly refers to the ability to overcome adversity, **ego resilience** specifically focuses on psychological and emotional adaptation, especially in response to stress. Unlike general resilience, which emphasizes survival, ego resilience underscores personal growth, emotional regulation, and the capacity to thrive in challenging circumstances.

### **Enhancing Ego Resilience:**

- **Developing Emotional Regulation:** Learning to manage and express emotions in healthy ways is central to building ego resilience.
- **Building a Support System:** Establishing and maintaining supportive relationships with family, friends, and the community can offer the emotional resources needed during times of stress.
- **Fostering Self-Reflection and Mindfulness:** Practices like mindfulness and self-reflection help individuals remain grounded, enhance emotional awareness, and strengthen resilience.
- **Cultivating Optimism and Problem-Solving Skills:** Promoting positive thinking and developing effective problem-solving strategies can further bolster resilience and enable individuals to navigate life's challenges.

In conclusion, ego resilience plays a critical role in mental well-being and is essential for thriving amid life's inevitable difficulties. It is a dynamic quality that can be cultivated and strengthened through self-awareness, practice, and external support systems.

### **Objective**

In the light of above description objective has been proposed

- The main objective of the present research investigation was to find out ego resilience behaviour among married women.

### **Hypothesis:**

Following hypothesis were formulated to achieve the above mention objective.

- Caste would significantly affecting the ego resilience of married women.

### **Research design**

It is a cross-sectional study comparison between General, OBC and SC cast category. In the present research work there are one independent variable is caste and one is dependent variable as ego resilience. The present researcher is interested to find out significant interaction between independent variable and impact on the resilience among married women. In this situation, the present researcher is interested to find out the effect of caste and their impact on the resilience among married women.

### **Variables**

- **IV's (i)** Caste category (General, OBC and SC)
- **DV's (i)** Resilience

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### Sample

The sample of the present study was collected from the district Meerut (U.P.). The sample of 720 married women was selected from the one stop center, pariwar parmarsh kendra, District Probation office, and different police station in ease of urban locale. While for rural areas, it was collected from Block level and Aaganwadi Center and the inclusion criteria for inclusion in the sample were they were survivor of domestic violence. They were from rural and urban areas belonging to General, OBC & SC categories. They all know to read Hindi language. In this respect the nature of selecting sample was somehow stratified random sample. From 901 subjects 181 subjects were not fit for the criteria so they were excluded from the study. Finally for sample only 720 married women were selected for the present research work.

### Tools Used

- **Ego- Resiliency Scale developed by Block and Kremen in 1996**, it is a psychological tool used to measure the personality trait of ego-resiliency, which refers to an individual's ability to adapt to stressful situations and bounce back from adversity. The ERS has demonstrated **good internal consistency** (reliability), with the most commonly reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from **0.80 to 0.90**. The scale assesses how well an individual can flexibly adjust to changing circumstances and remain psychologically stable. the **Ego-Resiliency Scale (ERS)** is a reliable and valid measure of ego-resiliency. It has demonstrated **high internal consistency and test-retest reliability**, as well as **strong construct and predictive validity**. The scale is to assess an individual's ability to adapt to challenges and maintain psychological stability
- **Personal Data Schedule (PDS)**: For demographic variables such as Age, education, urban, rural, caste etc. PDS was used for the study.

### Statistical Analysis:

Multiple comparison is a statistical test used to evaluate the difference between the means of more than two groups. At its core allows us to simultaneously compare arithmetic means across group. In the present research investigation there one independent variable Caste was divided into three categories (General, OBC, SC). In this customary it was useful to t test and multiple comparison for data analysis are given below.

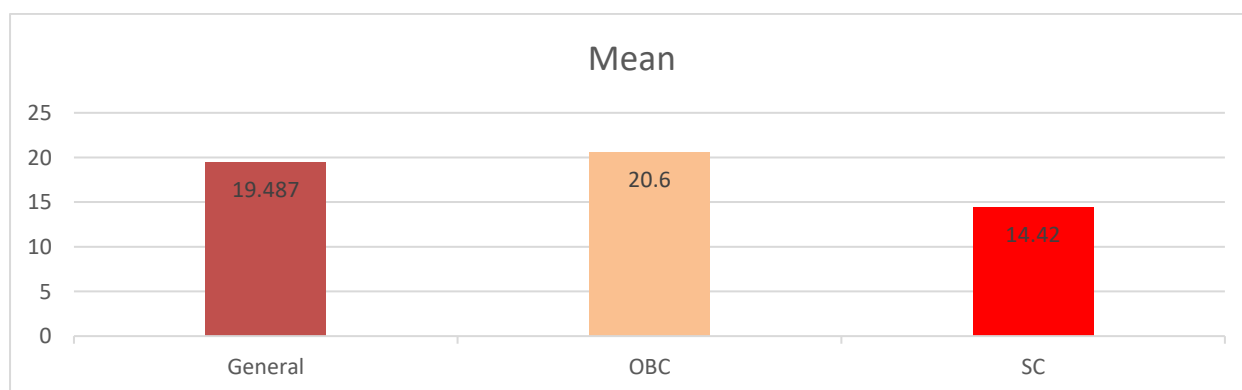
*Table-1 Multiple comparison among caste groups with t -value*

Caste	Mean	SD	N	CR
General	19.487	4.95	240	
OBC	20.60	4.95	240	2.467*
General	19.487	4.95	240	
SC	14.422	4.95	240	11.23**
OBC	20.60	4.95	240	
SC	14.42	4.95	240	13.70**

Table 1 showed Mean = 19.487: This indicated the average score of participants in the General caste on the variable being measured and sd 4.95 And **Mean = 20.60**: Participants from the OBC category have a slightly higher average score (20.60), suggesting that, on average, this group performs better on the variable being measured (possibly related to psychological resilience). Here studies supported by some previously conducted studies found that this study "Caste, Class, and Inequality: The Social Stratification of the Indian

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"Social System" discusses how caste-based distinctions influence various aspects of life, including mental health and social mobility. Lower-caste groups (such as OBC) often experience more significant social stigma, discrimination, and economic disadvantage, which could affect their psychological resilience and other measures of well-being (Dasgupta, S. 2010). The Mean 19.487, this represents the average score for individuals in the General caste group on the resilience measure being used. And the average score for the SC group is 14.422, which is significantly lower than the General caste group. This suggests that, on average, individuals from the SC category exhibit lower resilience, indicating a significant difference between the General caste and SC groups in terms of their resilience scores. Here studies supported by some previously conducted studies found that "Caste Discrimination and Psychological Outcomes in India: A Study of Social Exclusion" explores the psychological impact of caste-based discrimination on individuals, particularly those from marginalized castes like SCs. The study found that SC individuals, due to social exclusion, poverty, and discrimination, often experience lower resilience and poorer mental health outcomes (Thorat & Newman 2018). The average score for individuals from the OBC group is 20.60 on the measured resilience scale. Mean 14.42: The average score for the SC group is 14.42, which is significantly lower than the OBC group's mean (20.60). This suggests that individuals from the SC group have lower resilience. Suggests a very large difference between the OBC group and the SC group in terms of resilience. This indicates that caste is a significant factor in determining resilience levels. Here study supported by some previously conducted study found that "Caste Discrimination and Psychological Outcomes in India" explores how caste-based discrimination affects mental health and resilience, particularly for individuals in marginalized castes like SC. This study shows that systemic exclusion leads to poorer mental health outcomes and lower resilience, which aligns with the lower resilience score for the SC group in your data (Thorat & Newman 2018). The result of caste mean value can be represented in graphical representation.



### Multiple Comparison of Caste on Resilience by HSD Tukey Method

Caste(I)	Caste(J)	Mean Differences (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
General	OBC	-1.07	.453	.018
	SC	5.12	.453	.000
OBC	General	1.07	.453	.018
	SC	6.19	.453	.000
SC	General	-5.12	.453	.000
	OBC	-6.19	.453	.000

The mean difference is significant at the .05 level. The results are as follows Post Hoc Analysis showed significant differences between General to OBC & SC groups. While there

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was a significant difference between OBC to General & SC group. There was a significant difference at .05 level between SC to General & OBC caste category. The higher value of scores or mean showed the difference in the resilience among married women. So, our result showed, Caste also plays a significant role in resilience among married women. Because the lower scores of married women on the Ego Resilience Scale can be attributed to several factors, often rooted in social, psychological, and cultural influences.

### ***Interpretation:***

Ego resilience refers to an individual's ability to adapt to challenges, bounce back from adversity, and maintain psychological stability in the face of stress or hardship. If married women score lower on this scale, several factors may be at play. In sum, married women may score lower on the Ego Resilience Scale due to the cumulative stressors and pressures they face in their roles as wives, mothers, and caregivers, combined with societal expectations, marital conflict, intimate partner violence, potential lack of support, mental load, burnout and other relational or economic factors and limited economy. These factors can challenge their emotional and psychological resources, leading to lower resilience in the face of adversity. Addressing these challenges may require societal and structural changes, such as better support systems, economic independence, and a re-evaluation of traditional gender roles. Here are some researches which supports our finding the study "Caste, Class, and Inequality: The Social Stratification of the Indian Social System" discusses how caste-based distinctions influence various aspects of life, including mental health and social mobility. Lower-caste groups (such as OBC) often experience more significant social stigma, discrimination, and economic disadvantage, which could affect their psychological resilience and other measures of well-being. However, OBC individuals also often benefit from affirmative action and other support programs aimed at mitigating caste-based inequality while the OBC group may face societal challenges, the higher mean score could indicate resilience arising from support structures like affirmative action or community solidarity, which could buffer the negative effects of caste-based discrimination also.: Their research, "Gender, Caste, and Health: A Study on Psychological Well-Being of Dalit Women in Rural India," emphasizes how caste and gender intersect to affect health outcomes, including mental health and resilience. While caste-related disadvantage often correlates with lower mental health outcomes, OBC women and individuals may display resilience due to cultural resilience factors, which could explain the higher mean scores in this data. Their study "The Role of Social and Economic Factors in Mental Health Resilience in India" analyzed how caste-based social and economic inequalities impact resilience. They observed that individuals from historically disadvantaged castes (like OBC) often develop coping mechanisms to adapt to systemic disadvantages. This may explain why OBC individuals show higher resilience scores, as their ability to adapt and overcome social and economic challenges may be a key factor contributing to higher mean scores *Socioeconomic Status and Psychological Resilience in India: The Role of Caste and Class*. This study examines the relationship between socio-economic status, caste, and psychological resilience. It suggests that individuals from lower castes, particularly SC groups, are more likely to experience mental health challenges due to economic pressures and discrimination. The lower mean for SC individuals in your data may be partly attributed to the cumulative effects of economic and social disadvantage, which hinder their ability to adapt to and overcome life challenges. The lower resilience or psychological scores for SC individuals could be a direct result of caste-based stigma, which diminishes their ability to cope effectively with stress and adversity. *Gender, Caste, and Health: Resilience among Dalit Women in Rural India*. This study examines resilience among Dalit women (a group within the SC category) and highlights the importance of community ties and collective

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resilience in coping with caste-based discrimination. While the SC group in your data has lower mean scores, they may still exhibit resilience through social and community networks that help buffer the psychological impact of discrimination. However, the overall systemic barriers still limit their overall resilience. This study "Caste Discrimination and Psychological Outcomes in India: A Study of Social Exclusion" explores the psychological impact of caste-based discrimination on individuals, particularly those from marginalized castes like SCs. The study found that SC individuals, due to social exclusion, poverty, and discrimination, often experience lower resilience and poorer mental health outcomes. These findings align with the lower mean resilience score for the SC group in your table. The lower resilience score in the SC group is likely due to the compounded stressors of caste-based discrimination, social exclusion, and economic disadvantage, which can undermine an individual's ability to cope with adversity and challenges. In their study "Gender, Caste, and Health: Resilience among Dalit Women in Rural India", the researchers explore how Dalit women (a group within SC) build resilience through community support systems and cultural coping mechanisms despite facing caste-based stigma and discrimination. While these women demonstrate resilience in some contexts, their overall mental health and coping capacities are still shaped by caste-based inequalities. The study "*Socioeconomic Status and Psychological Resilience in India: The Role of Caste and Class*" investigates how lower caste status (such as SC) is associated with psychological challenges like anxiety, depression, and lower resilience. The study highlights that lower caste individuals, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged, are more vulnerable to mental health issues due to systemic discrimination and lack of opportunities. The data indicates a significant difference in resilience scores between General and SC caste groups, with the General caste exhibiting higher resilience. This disparity can be attributed to systemic factors such as caste-based discrimination, socio-economic disadvantages, and limited access to resources that affect the SC group more severely. **Dasgupta, S. 2010, Sharma & Mishra (2014), Srinivasan & Lande (2014), Thorat & Newman (2018), and Tiwari, S., & Mishra, R. 2019:** Relevant studies confirm that caste-based exclusion and socio-economic inequality are key factors influencing the resilience of individuals in marginalized communities like SCs.

### **Implication:**

Ego resilience refers to a person's ability to adapt to changing circumstances, effectively manage stress and adversity, and recover from setbacks. This psychological concept reflects a person's capacity to maintain mental well-being and flexibility, even in the face of life's challenges. Ego resilience enables individuals to handle emotional distress and successfully navigate a variety of life situations, particularly those that are stressful or difficult. Because of adaptability, emotional stability, optimism and hope, problem solving abilities, self-confidence and social support are the assessing areas of resilience.

### **Limitation:**

1. Only married women were included.
2. Limited to Meerut (Urban & Rural area)
3. Age criteria was 20-49 included.
4. Limited to caste General, OBC & SC.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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