

## Psychological Hardiness among College Students

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to know the differences of gender on psychological hardiness among college students. The random sampling method was used in this study. The total sample consisted of 240 subjects out of which 120 were boys and 120 were girls. Students were from the various colleges of Rajkot District. Dispositional Resilience Scale (DRS) developed by Bartone (1995), Bartone et al., (1989) used to measure psychological hardiness. The data were analyzed using t-test. The result showed that there is significant gender difference on psychological hardiness among college students.

**Keywords:** *psychological Hardiness, Gender, College Students*

Psychological hardiness, alternatively referred to as personality hardiness, or cognitive hardiness in the literature, is a personality style first introduced by Suzanne C. Kobasa in 1979 (Kobasa, S.C., 1979). In the early days of hardiness research, it was usually defined as a personality structure comprising the three related general dispositions of commitment, control, and challenge that functions as a resistance resource in the encounter with stressful conditions (Kobasa, S.C., 1979; Kobasa, S.C., et al., 1982). Lately, Maddi has characterized hardiness as a combination of three attitudes (commitment, control, and challenge) that together provide the courage and motivation needed to turn stressful circumstances from potential calamities into opportunities for personal growth (Maddi, S.R., 2004, 2006). While acknowledging the importance of the three core dimensions, Barton considers hardiness as something more global than mere attitudes (Bartone, P.T., 2006). Hardiness is often considered an important factor in psychological resilience or an individual-level pathway leading to resilient outcomes (Bartone, P.T., Hystad, S.W., 2010; Bonanno, G.A., 2004). Although early studies relied almost exclusively on male business executives, over the years this buffer-effect has been demonstrated in a large variety of occupational groups as well as non-professionals, including military groups (Bartone, P.T., 2000; Westman, M., 1990), teachers and university staff (Klag, S., et al., 2004; Nishizaka, S., 2002), firefighters (Jimenez, B.M., et al., 2006), and students (Hystad, S.W., et al., 2009). Still, not every investigation has been able to demonstrate such moderating, or buffering, effects and

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there is a debate whether the effects of hardiness are interactive or primarily independent of levels of stress. (Klag, S., et al., 2004; Funk, S.C., 1992; Sinclair, R.R., et al., 2000).

Klag and Bradley (2004) found that hardiness buffered the effects of stress on illness in adult males but not in females. They also found evidence that relative coping mediated the hardiness-illness relationship in females but not in males. A study by Kobrynowicz & Branscombe (1997) on college students found that 20% of women reported feeling personally discriminated against in a college setting, based on gender, compared with just 8.5% of men. They also noted in this study that the experiences college men report as gender discrimination were significantly less severe than what college women reported (Kobrynowicz & Branscombe, 1997). A previous study found that high school females were harder than high school males (Hannah & Morrissey, 1988). Yet, a different study on an older, adult population found no significant gender differences in hardiness (Hannah & Morrissey, 1988).

### OBJECTIVES

- The objective of present research was to study the gender differences on psychological hardiness among college students.

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Sample*

The sample consisted of 240 subjects out of which were 120 boys and 120 were girls selected from various colleges of Rajkot District. All the subjects were randomly selected keeping in view the control variables of the study.

#### *Instruments*

##### **1. Personal Data Sheet**

A personal data sheet developed by the investigator was used to collect information about gender (boys/ girls) as well as to collect some other demographic information.

##### **2. Dispositional Resilience Scale (DRS)**

As a measure of hardiness *Dispositional Resilience Scale* (DRS; Bartone, 1995; Bartone et al., 1989) was used. This scale belongs to the third generation of hardiness measures that have better psychometric characteristics than previous ones and contain also positively oriented items, meaning that they do not measure lack of hardiness, which was the case with the majority of the previous measures (Funk, 1992). The scale contains 15 items, with each component of hardiness (commitment, control and challenge) measured by 5 items. Previous research shows that it has good psychometric characteristics. Coefficients of internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) for hardiness components ranged from .70 to .77, while for the whole scale is .83 (Bartone, 1995). Also, the results obtained on the various samples of participants confirm the criterion and predictive validity of this scale (Bartone, 1995). The participants assessed the degree to which each item describes them on a 4 point rating scale (0 - completely not true, 3 – completely true).

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### *Procedure*

The testing was done on a group of boys and girls. The whole procedure was explained to them clearly. Obtained data were analyzing using t-test for comparing boys and girls on psychological hardiness.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The main objective of present study was to know the differences of gender on psychological hardiness among college students. The t-test was used to find out whether gender (boys/ girls) has an impact on psychological hardiness significant difference was found between boys and girls on psychological hardiness ( $t=2.91$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

*Table 1 Showing the Mean, SD and t-value of psychological hardiness among boys and girls*

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t
Boys	120	31.58	4.49	2.91*
Girls	120	29.82	4.90	

\* $p < 0.01$

Results of the study showed a significant gender difference on psychological hardiness among college students. A t-test was used to determine the differences between psychological hardiness of boys and girls. The results showed that there is meaningful difference between the psychological hardiness of boys and girls ( $t=2.91$ ) and men have more psychological hardiness than women. The findings are in parallel with the ones conducted by Moradi (2010), Vali Nezhad Khorrami (2007), Veisi and et al (2001), and Kiamarsi (1999). Wang and Miao (2007) agree that women and men are different aspects of psychological health because different resources and facilities are available for each gender, hence; different health situations. Kiamarsi (1999) showed that have more hardiness compared to women since they are less excited in problematic situations and act more reasonably, but women have more excitements. However, Sheard (2009) presented totally different results. He showed that psychological hardiness is much higher in school girls than school boys. Some other studies such as Hosseinpour et al. (2008) showed no meaningful difference between these genders.

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### *Conflict of Interests*

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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