

A Comparative Study Of Psychological Resilience And Quality Of Life Among Male And Female Street Vendors In Lucknow City

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Abstract

In urban India, street vending is a crucial kind of informal economic activity that helps underprivileged groups including women and migrants. This study compares the quality of life and psychological resiliency of Lucknow's street sellers. It highlight the disparities between genders. Data was gathered from 150 vendors using a descriptive research methodology and standardized instruments such the WHOQOL-BREF and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC). The results show a notable gender disparity, with most vendors being men. But when it came to resilience or quality of life in the social, psychological, physical, and environmental areas, there were no statistically significant differences between male and female vendors. Rather than gender, resilience differed greatly by the kind of items supplied; mobile cover merchants were more resilient than vegetable vendors.

For both sexes, resilience and every aspect of quality of life were found to be positively correlated. These findings demonstrate that occupational characteristics and common difficulties are more important determinants of psychological resilience and well-being among street vendors than gender alone. The study emphasizes the necessity of inclusive support programs that improve the quality of life and resilience of all street sellers, irrespective of gender.

Keywords: *quality of life, psychological resilience, gender disparities, street sellers, informal economy, and economic vulnerability*

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I. Introduction

As the primary distributors of a wide range of everyday products, such as fruits, vegetables, ready-made clothing, shoes, household gadgets, toys, stationery, newspapers, and magazines, street vendors are individuals with low levels of education who are unable to obtain regular jobs in the lucrative formal sector. According to Kashyap P (2023), their removal from urban markets would cause a serious crisis for fruit and vegetable farmers as well as small-scale businesses that cannot afford to retail their goods through costly distribution networks in the formal sector. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the idea of an informal sector was developed through the existence of street vendors.

With the second largest population in the world, India is a developing nation, and as such, our government is unable to offer jobs to all of its inhabitants. To sustain their families, the bulk of people have moved from rural to urban areas. Under these circumstances, urban locations offer all the career prospects and abilities. A lot of intelligent people choose white-collar jobs in urban areas. Along with the informal sector, self-employment is crucial for both educated and unskilled people in a variety of circumstances (Karthikeyan et al., 2013). Street vendors are frequently disregarded in urban settings, while playing a crucial role in offering different communities reasonably priced goods and services. These merchants suffer ongoing difficulties that go beyond the financial realm, despite being at the center of local economies. Psycho-social stressors like social isolation, anxiety, and restricted access to institutional support networks are all part of their everyday struggles, which exacerbate their financial problems. Due to their restricted access to healthcare, lack of social security, and unstable finances, street vendors and other informal laborers have elevated levels of stress and anxiety, according to studies. According to research, street sellers in particular deal with ongoing uncertainty, which aggravates their mental health issues. This includes anything from harassment by authorities to inconsistent income (Kumari et al, 2024). Additionally, street sellers' social networks—which have been demonstrated to offer crucial emotional and financial support—are frequently fragmented or underdeveloped, which exacerbates their economic vulnerability and sense of loneliness. Although earlier studies have demonstrated how these unorganized laborers manage a precarious existence, there is still a need to investigate how their everyday experiences are shaped by the intersections

of mental health, social support systems, and financial resilience.

Street Vendors

According to the National Policy on Urban Street Vendors of the Department of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, a street vendor is a person who sells goods or services to the public without a permanent built structure. They can use a mobile stall, also known as a head load, or a temporary static setup. These vendors may choose to set up shop on sidewalks or in other public or private areas, or they may choose to be mobile, pulling carts, riding bicycles, carrying baskets on their heads, or even selling while moving, as on buses.

Street vendors in cities like Lucknow support the livelihoods of marginalized groups including women, migrants, and economically challenged organizations by acting as both an economic activity and a significant social institution (Singh, A. P. 2021). Gender has a big impact on the lived realities of street vendors. India's informal work force is largely composed of women, however they face unique challenges that set their experiences apart from men's (Kabeer, 2022). Making money from their peddling and taking care of unpaid household duties including parenting, cooking, and housework are common dual responsibilities for female street vendors. Because of this balancing act, their workload increases and they have less time for rest or medical care.

Furthermore, women sellers are more susceptible to societal stigma, gender-based violence, and harassment, all of which compromise their safety and mental health (Banerjee et al., 2022). According to Saradhamani et al. (2024), cultural and societal standards often limit women's mobility and access to resources like finance or training, which exacerbates their economic marginalization. Because of these interlocking constraints, women street sellers are more likely than men to experience poor mental health outcomes and a lower quality of life.

There is also a dearth of research explicitly examining the relative psychological resilience and standard of living of male and female street vendors. Few research have empirically investigated gender differences in coping mechanisms, mental health, or life satisfaction, despite the fact that studies have recognized the economic relevance of street selling and the difficulties faced by vendors (McKay & Osborne, 2022).

Street vendors may be able to endure and bounce back from such shocks thanks to psychological resilience. According to research conducted in analogous circumstances, social support, individual coping mechanisms, and resource accessibility all have an impact on resilience (Luthar et al., 2021). Distinct patterns of resilience and quality of life among male and female vendors may be shaped by gender differences in these parameters. For example, women might derive resilience from community networks or familial ties, while men may rely more on economic or social capital (Banerjee et al., 2022). Identifying these nuances is vital for designing gender-sensitive policies and programs that strengthen informal workers' mental health and economic security.

Standardized tools like the WHOQOL-BREF measure quality of life, which offers a multifaceted evaluation of well-being that encompasses social relationships, psychological status, physical health, and environmental context (WHO, 2020). Poor living and working circumstances, a lack of access to healthcare, and ongoing stress frequently lower the quality of life for street vendors. Analyzing gender-specific disparities in quality of life might highlight certain issues that men and women encounter differently, allowing for more focused remedies. Anxiety, sleep deprivation, and a decline in productivity are among the issues that negatively impact street vendors' overall quality of life due to high noise levels and the stress they cause. Traffic and market activity are often the source of this noise, which exacerbates issues including long workdays, inconsistent income, and restricted access to necessary amenities worse.

Additionally, due to the gendered division of labor, women street vendors usually balance a variety of duties, including childcare, cooking, and household administration, in addition to earning a living (Patel & Jain, 2022). This dual burden hinders their capacity to work long hours or move vending locations, which has an influence on their ability to make a living and expand their business. Women vendors are less in control of their financial resources than men are, and they also have trouble getting financing and joining vendor associations or decision-making forums (Sharma, S. 2024). They have less negotiating power and ability to enhance working conditions as a result of their economic marginalization. The mental health of working women is affected by a variety of internal and external influences. The views of reality, personality integration, group-oriented attitude, and general mental health of working women were all positively and significantly connected with age.

Lucknow is one of the largest cities in Uttar Pradesh. Most street vendors sell fruits, vegetables, meats, cereals, flowers, and other items. Roadside sales, open-air sales, walking, bicycling, sitting, and door-to-door sales are some of their sales techniques. They market their products while working 12 or 14 hours a day (8 am to 9 pm). Vendors encounter many difficulties interacting with public officials and the physical environment as a result of inadequate amenities. The weather in their place of employment can be hazardous. In areas undergoing unplanned urbanization, occupational health risks and hazards linked to polluted regions have

emerged as a significant public health concern (Gangwar and Kiran, 2017).

The gendered experience of street vending is also defined by worries about safety and potential for harassment. Customers, rivals, and local officials have been known to verbally abuse, sexually harass, and physically threaten female merchants (Singh et al., 2021). In addition to endangering their physical safety, these hazards also cause psychological suffering, which weakens women's self-esteem and fortitude. Street vending occurs in public areas that are frequently male-dominated and dangerous for women, which results in limited mobility and vending hours (Banerjee & Chatterjee, 2021). In contrast, men are more likely to be harassed by the police and evicted, but they also typically have fewer safety concerns.

II. Methodology

Research Design

A research design is a strategy or framework that specifies how a study will be carried out in order to answer a particular research topic. It includes the methods and techniques for gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data, guaranteeing that the study is coherent and in line with the goals of the investigation. The research design adopted in this study was descriptive. Instead than focusing on the why of the research challenge, it mostly helps with the what, when, where, and how concerns.

The current study was conducted in the following main stages:

Phase 1: Gathering information from secondary sources.

Phase 2: Primary data collection.

Phase 3: Documentation, interpretation, analysis, and tabulation.

Locale of the study: - The present study was conducted in urban areas of the Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh, as it is convenient for the researcher to conduct the study.

Sampling procedure: - For the present research, multistage random sampling technique was used to collect the data.

Method of Data Collection

150 street vendors were selected based on a determined sample size with a 95% confidence level, and their psychological resilience and quality of life were assessed using a structured technique. Important variables included independent variables like age and gender, and dependent variables like psychological resilience and quality of life. A work profile, a demographic sheet, the WHOQOL-BREF for quality of life, and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale for resilience were among the instruments used to gather data. Questionnaires and interviews were used in the data collecting procedure, which was then followed by methodical coding, editing, and classification. In order to reach pertinent results, the study employed statistical analysis using SPSS (version 20), utilizing frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, F-test, and correlation.

III. Result

The sociodemographic profile of Lucknow's street vendors, as revealed by this survey, reveals a gender disparity in the industry, with the bulk of respondents (83.3%) being men and only 16.7% being women. The majority of vendors (55.3%) were between the ages of 26 and 44, with 26 percent being between the ages of 18 and 25. In terms of education, 10% lacked formal schooling, a sizable portion had higher secondary (34.7%) or secondary education (20%), and a small percentage had postgraduate degrees (only 0.7%). The majority worked all day (54.7%) with fixed stalls (64.7%), and 63.3% were married. Just 1.3% of the vendors made ₹5000 or more a month, while 44% of them made less than ₹3000, indicating low and irregular incomes. Given that male and female vendors frequently have different levels of education, income, and working conditions, these sociodemographic characteristics are essential for comprehending disparities in resilience and quality of life.

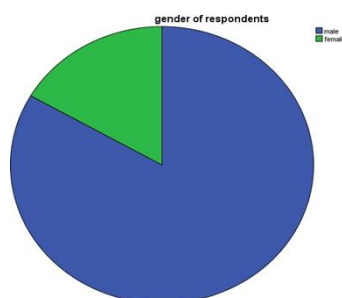


Figure: 1 Distribution of sample according to gender

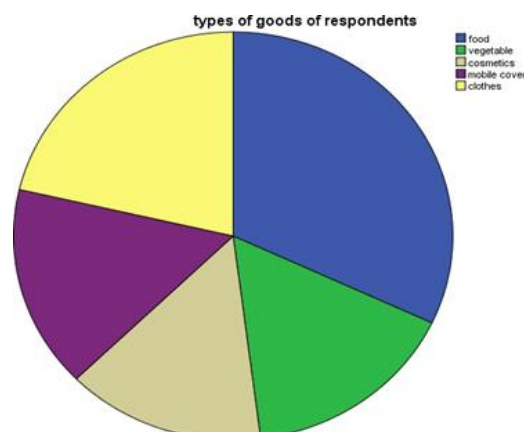


Figure: 2 Distribution of sample according to types of goods

Table 1. Assessment of Resilience According to Gender and Types of Goods

Variables	Group	Mean $\pm$ SD	Test	Statistics	p-value
Gender	Male	80.68 $\pm$ 7.83	t-test	-1.248	0.214
	Female	80.72 $\pm$ 5.11			
Types of goods	Food	80.16 $\pm$ 6.74	Anova	3.200	0.015
	Vegetable	78.04 $\pm$ 7.47			
	Cosmetics	82.86 $\pm$ 5.24			
	Mobile cover	84.79 $\pm$ 4.24			
	Clothes	80.43 $\pm$ 10.20			

Resilience by Gender:

Street vendors who were male (80.68 $\pm$ 7.83) and female (80.72 $\pm$ 5.11) had nearly identical mean resilience scores. Resilience among vendors is not significantly influenced by gender, according to the t-test result ($t = -1.248$, $p = 0.214$), which revealed no significant difference.

Resilience by Types of Goods:

Mobile cover merchants scored the highest (84.79 $\pm$ 4.24) and vegetable dealers the lowest (78.04 $\pm$ 7.47) in terms of resilience, depending on the kind of items they offered. Product type has a considerable impact on vendor resilience, according to the ANOVA test, which showed a significant difference ($F = 3.200$, $p = 0.015$).

Table 2. Assessment of Physical Domain According to Gender and types of goods

Variables	Group	Mean $\pm$ SD	Test	Statistics	p-value
Gender	Male	83.63 $\pm$ 18.46	t-test	0.612	0.360
	Female	80.66 $\pm$ 9.07			
Types of goods	Food	83.24 $\pm$ 11.38	Anova	0.682	0.606
	Vegetable	79.68 $\pm$ 11.28			
	Cosmetics	83.33 $\pm$ 9.79			
	Mobile cover	87.67 $\pm$ 34.63			
	Clothes	82.03 $\pm$ 12.67			

Physical Well-Being by Gender:

The mean physical well-being score of male street vendors was slightly higher (83.63 $\pm$ 18.46) than that of females (80.66 $\pm$ 9.07). Gender does not significantly affect physical well-being, according to the fact that the difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.612$, $p = 0.360$).

Physical Well-Being By Types of Goods:

Vegetable vendors reported the lowest physical well-being (79.68 $\pm$ 11.28), while mobile cover vendors had the best (87.67 $\pm$ 34.63). Notwithstanding these variations, the ANOVA result ($F = 0.682$, $p = 0.606$) indicates that product type has no discernible effect on physical well-being.

Table 3. Assessment of Psychological Domain According to Gender and types of goods

Variables	Group	Mean $\pm$ SD	Test	Statistics	p-value
Gender	Male	83.63 $\pm$ 18.46	t-test	0.783	0.231
	Female	80.66 $\pm$ 9.07			
	Food	79.37 $\pm$ 10.65			
	Vegetable	72.91 $\pm$ 12.50			
Types of goods	Cosmetics	76.36 $\pm$ 10.59	anova	1.733	0.146
	Mobile cover	78.95 $\pm$ 7.65			
	Clothes	75.15 $\pm$ 13.64			

Psychological Well-being by Gender:

Street vendors who were male reported slightly better psychological well-being scores (83.63 $\pm$ 18.46) than those who were female (80.66 $\pm$ 9.07). Gender had no discernible impact on psychological well-being, according to the t-test ($t = 0.783$, $p = 0.231$), which revealed no significant.

Psychological Well-Being by Types of Goods:

The ANOVA result ($F = 1.733$, $p = 0.146$) revealed no statistically significant difference, despite the fact that food merchants had the highest mean score (79.37 $\pm$ 10.65) and vegetable dealers the lowest (72.91 $\pm$ 12.50). This indicates that street sellers' psychological wellbeing is not greatly impacted by the kind of things they sell.

Table 4. Assessment of Social Domain According to Gender and types of goods

Variables	Group	Mean $\pm$ SD	Test	Statistics	p-value
Gender	Male	92.30 $\pm$ 15.61	t-test	-0.526	0.456
	Female	94.00 $\pm$ 8.92			
	Food	93.75 $\pm$ 10.31			
Types of goods	Vegetable	86.97 $\pm$ 21.95	anova	1.248	0.293
	Cosmetics	92.61 $\pm$ 9.95			
	Mobile cover	95.83 $\pm$ 8.77			
	Clothes	92.57 $\pm$ 19.01			

Social Well-Being by Gender:

Female vendors had slightly higher social well-being scores (94.00 $\pm$ 8.92) than males (92.30 $\pm$ 15.61), but the difference was not statistically significant ($t = -0.526$, $p = 0.456$). This suggests that gender does not significantly influence social well-being among street vendors.

Social Well-Being by types of goods:

Vegetable vendors scored the lowest on social well-being (86.97 $\pm$ 21.95), while mobile cover dealers scored the highest (95.83 $\pm$ 8.77). The differences, however, were not statistically significant ($F = 1.248$, $p = 0.293$), suggesting that the social well-being of vendors is not substantially impacted by the kind of commodities they sell.

Table: 5 Assessment of Environmental Well-being by Age and Types of Goods

Variable	Group	Mean $\pm$ SD	Test	Statistics	p-value
Age	18-25	69.12 $\pm$ 10.92	anova	0.794	0.454
	26-44	66.81 $\pm$ 9.98			
	45-59	66.66 $\pm$ 8.63			
Types of goods		67.53 $\pm$ 10.31	anova	1.295	0.275
	Food				
	Vegetable	63.54 $\pm$ 7.29			
	Cosmetics	67.04 $\pm$ 8.90			
	Mobile cover	68.92 $\pm$ 6.83			
	Clothes	69.14 $\pm$ 13.21			

Environmental Well-Being by Age:

Age-related decreases in environmental well-being scores were marginal, with the highest values (69.12 ± 10.92) occurring in the 18–25 age range. However, there is no statistically significant difference in the ANOVA result ($F = 0.794$, $p = 0.454$), suggesting that age has no discernible effect on street sellers' environmental well-being.

Environmental Health by types of goods:

While vegetable vendors reported the lowest environmental scores and clothing and mobile cover dealers marginally higher, the differences were not statistically significant ($F = 1.295$, $p = 0.275$). This implies that neither gender's environmental well-being is substantially impacted by the kind of products sold.

Table 11. Correlation of Resilience and Quality of Life in terms of male and female street vendors

Re_Total_1		Physical_Domain_total	Psycho_Domain_total	Social_Domain_total	Enviro_Domain_total
Re_Total_1	1				*
Physical_Domain_total	0.284**	1			
Psycho_Domain_total	0.408**	0.415**	1		
Social_Domain_total	0.498**	0.305**	0.397**	1	
Enviro_Domain_total	0.439**	0.343**	0.570**	0.422**	1

All aspects of quality of life (QOL)—physical, psychological, social, and environmental— have favorable correlations with resilience, according to the correlation table. Higher resilience is highly linked to better psychological ($r = 0.408^{**}$), social ($r = 0.498^{**}$), environmental ($r = 0.439^{**}$), and physical ($r = 0.284^{**}$) health for both male and female street sellers. There is no evidence of substantial variations between male and female vendors in the relationship between resilience and their well-being across these dimensions, indicating that resilience plays an equally vital role in improving overall quality of life for both genders.

IV. Discussion

Recent research from India highlights that social and occupational settings have a greater influence on street vendors' resilience than gender alone. Male and female tribal merchants in Mizoram used comparable coping mechanisms during the COVID-19 lockdowns, according to Lyngwa and Sahoo (2024), demonstrating gender-neutral adaptive resilience. According to Saxena (2024), caste and the dynamics of the vending space have a greater impact on urban street sellers' well-being and access to resources than gender. Furthermore, in an ICRW and IDS study, Vyas et al. (2023) emphasized the value of inclusive vendor groups that provide equal support to all genders, implying that gender-neutral policy interventions might be more successful in tackling common structural issues in the informal economy.

A comparison of male and female street vendors in Lucknow is presented in this study, demonstrating that both sexes exhibit approximately equal levels of resilience and quality of life in the physical, psychological, social, and environmental domains, despite a gender imbalance that favors men. It appears that gender is not a decisive factor in resilience because differences in education, wealth, and working conditions had no discernible impact on their capacity to handle difficulties. The resilience of mobile cover dealers was higher than that of vegetable vendors, indicating that the type of commodities offered had a greater impact on resilience than gender. All quality of life dimensions showed a strong link with resilience in both genders, highlighting resilience as a critical component of wellbeing.

Instead of gender-specific legislation, these findings highlight the necessity for inclusive support measures that tackle the common issues faced by street sellers.

V. Conclusion

The study concludes that although there is a glaring gender disparity among Lucknow's street sellers, both male and female vendors exhibit comparable resilience and quality of life in the social, psychological, physical, and environmental spheres. Gender has no discernible impact on these results; resilience is more strongly shaped by variables like the kind of products supplied. Resilience and quality of life are strongly positively correlated for both genders, which emphasizes how crucial it is to cultivate resilience in order to enhance general wellbeing. According to these results, interventions meant to assist street sellers ought to concentrate on the difficulties that all of them encounter rather than on distinctions based on gender.

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