

Psychological Hardiness in the Work Environment in Light of Gender and Years of Experience Variables — A Field Study on a Sample of Primary Education Teachers

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the differences in psychological hardiness levels in the work environment in light of the variables of gender and years of experience among primary education teachers. The sample consisted of 70 male and female teachers (22 males, 48 females), selected using a simple random sampling method from schools in the Wilaya of Médéa. The psychological hardiness scale developed by Mukhaimer (2002) and modified by Al-Shammari (2015) was used. The descriptive method was also adopted due to its appropriateness for the nature of the study. After applying the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the results were as follows:

- There are no differences in psychological hardiness levels among primary education teachers attributable to gender.
- There are also no differences attributable to years of experience.

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1. Problem Statement:

Psychological stress in the work environment has become a major concern for many managers and organizations due to the illnesses it may cause and the financial cost resulting from employees' exposure to it. Many studies on work-related stress indicate that repeated stress may lead to dissatisfaction with work and the development of psychosomatic illnesses (Haiba & Al-Harbi, 2009).

An employee's psychological health can deteriorate due to many factors, especially repeated stress. Many studies suggest a correlation between psychological stress and mental health issues. Serri (2000) defines mental health as:

"A state in which the individual is psychologically adjusted, feels happiness, competence, and mental comfort, and is able to achieve self-fulfillment, utilize their abilities and energies, face life's demands, and manage psychological crises. Their personality is integrated and their behavior is normal."

In education, teaching is considered one of the most stressful professions. Miftah Mohamed Abdelaziz (2010) confirms that teaching, along with medicine, nursing, and policing, is among the professions most exposed to stress (Hansali, 2014, p. 10).

Teaching is a socially demanding job due to its responsibilities and workload, in addition to societal expectations regarding the role of teachers. Most researchers agree that it causes psychological pressure (Jouadi, 2006, p. 4).

This necessitates high levels of psychological hardiness in teachers. Psychological hardiness is one of the psychological factors that help individuals cope with life situations, especially in the workplace. Mohamed (2002) defines it as:

"An integrated set of personality traits of a psychosocial nature, including the sub-traits of (commitment – challenge – control), which the individual considers important in confronting difficult or stressful situations and successfully coping with them." (p. 35)

Psychological hardiness is an internal strength that drives the individual to take responsibility for events they experience and to view them as necessary for growth and development. This highlights the need to focus on this psychological variable, which enhances the individual's ability to effectively deal with problems and stressful circumstances.

Hence, the study aims to examine psychological hardiness differences among a vital societal group—primary school teachers—based on two main factors: gender (male–female) and years of experience. The main research question can be formulated as follows:

Do statistically significant differences exist in psychological hardiness levels among primary education teachers based on gender and years of experience?

Study Hypotheses:

The study attempts to test the following hypotheses:

1. There are statistically significant differences in psychological hardiness scores among primary education teachers attributable to gender (male–female) in favor of males.

2. There are statistically significant differences in psychological hardiness scores among teachers in Médéa based on years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more), in favor of those with 10 years or more experience.

Study Objectives:

- Measure the level of psychological hardiness among the sample.
- Identify differences in psychological hardiness based on gender.
- Identify differences in psychological hardiness based on years of experience.

Significance of the Study:

A. Theoretical Importance:

- Psychological hardiness is one of the main personality factors. Any impairment in it may hinder an individual's psychological adjustment.
- The study focuses on a category that is heavily exposed to work stress throughout their careers: teachers.

B. Practical Importance:

- The study provides insights into the psychological hardiness levels of primary education teachers.
- It offers suggestions and recommendations to reduce the negative effects of weak coping ability with pressures and frustrations experienced during their professional lives.

2. Theoretical and Operational Definitions of Study Concepts:

2.1 Psychological Hardiness:

Defined by Kobasa as:

“A general belief in one's effectiveness and ability to use all available psychological and social resources to perceive, interpret, and confront stressful life events.”

Kobasa identifies three dimensions of psychological hardiness:

- Commitment: A psychological contract whereby the individual commits to personal goals, values, and others around them, viewing stressful situations as potentially enjoyable.
- Control: The belief that one can influence events and take personal responsibility, recognizing that events are changeable. It involves decision-making ability, event interpretation, and effective stress management.

- Challenge: The belief that life changes are opportunities for growth rather than threats, enabling the individual to initiate, explore, and identify helpful psychological and social resources (Mukhaimer, 2002, p. 6).

Operational Definition:

Psychological hardiness is the total score a primary education teacher obtains on the psychological hardiness scale used in this study, developed by Mukhaimer (2002) and standardized by Al-Shammari (2015).

2.2 Primary Education Teacher:

Defined by Adly Suleiman (1999) as:

“The foundation of the educational process, directly connected with students and school administration, performing both teaching and administrative tasks, and participating in school activities.” (p. 28)

Operational Definition:

A graduate of the Higher Teachers’ College, responsible for teaching students from first to fifth grade in primary school, aiming to bring about desired behavioral changes in learners.

3. Previous Studies:

Study by Kristopher (1996):

Topic: Psychological Hardiness, Effectiveness, Locus of Control, and Their Relationship with Work Motivation in Teachers.

The study aimed to explore the relationship between psychological hardiness, effectiveness, and locus of control with work motivation among 149 teachers (17 males, 132 females). Instruments used included the Work Motivation Questionnaire by Hall & Williams (1973), the Psychological Hardiness Scale by Maddi & Kobasa (1984), a Teacher Effectiveness Scale, and the Locus of Control Scale by Levenson.

Results:

- A positive correlation was found between internal locus of control and work motivation.
- Psychological hardiness was linked with adopting an internal locus of control.
- The findings emphasized the importance of hardiness in enhancing motivation and that psychologically hardy individuals believe their resilience improves their behavioral effectiveness (Al-Shammari, 2015, p. 55).

Study of Taakermi (2013):

The effect of psychological hardiness on burnout among special needs educators. The study aimed to identify the effect of psychological hardiness on burnout among special needs educators, through examining the levels of psychological hardiness and burnout and the relationship between

them, and the impact of the dimensions of hardiness on burnout. To achieve this goal, the psychological hardiness scale by "Kobasa" and the burnout scale by "Maslach" were applied, along with an information form that included gender, age, marital status, and specialization, on a sample consisting of (105) educators, with (20) male and (85) female educators. The study followed the descriptive method, and after statistically processing the data using (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, t-test, regression coefficient), the study concluded:

- Special needs educators suffer from moderate or above-average levels of burnout, with the supposed average estimated at 66.
- Special needs educators possess high or above-average levels of psychological hardiness, with the supposed average estimated at 94.
- There is a significant inverse correlation between each dimension of hardiness (commitment - control - challenge) and burnout.
- There are no statistically significant differences between males and females in burnout.
- There are no statistically significant differences between males and females in psychological hardiness.

Study of Al-Qasbi (2014):

The extent of university youth's psychological hardiness in facing some contemporary life stresses. The study aimed to identify the relationship between psychological hardiness and life stresses among students of Al-Zawiya University. To achieve this goal, the life stresses scale was prepared by the researcher, and the psychological hardiness scale prepared by Tanheed Al-Bidqadar (2010) in the Iraqi environment was applied, on a sample consisting of (127) male and female students, with (32) male and female students specializing in Arabic language, and (95) male and female students specializing in English language. The study followed the descriptive correlational method, and after statistically processing the data using (percentages, arithmetic mean, Pearson correlation coefficient, independent samples t-test), the study concluded:

- No differences in the degree of psychological hardiness depending on the variable of gender and the variable of academic level.
- No differences in the level of life stresses according to the gender variable.
- There are differences in the level of life stresses according to the academic level variable.
- There is no correlational relationship between the variables of psychological hardiness and life stresses in all dimensions.

Study of Al-Shammari (2015):

Psychological hardiness and its relationship to job satisfaction among teachers in special education schools in the Hail region. The study aimed to identify the relationship between psychological hardiness and job satisfaction, and the differences in the degree of psychological hardiness and the degree of job satisfaction attributable to the following variables: experience, the educational level at which they work, the amount of monthly income, and the specialization of special education teachers. It also aimed to identify the differences between special education teachers with high psychological hardiness and those with low psychological hardiness in the degree of job satisfaction, and to identify the extent to which psychological hardiness contributes to predicting job satisfaction among teachers of special education schools. To achieve this goal, the psychological hardiness scale by Mukhaimer (2002) and the job satisfaction scale prepared by Lester, P., and translated by Moussa (2006), were applied to a sample consisting of (236) teachers of special education. The study followed the descriptive correlational comparative method, and after statistically processing the data using (frequencies, percentages, arithmetic mean, Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, t-test, regression coefficient, one-way analysis of variance test, Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney test, regression analysis), the study concluded:

- There is a positive correlation between the average scores of special education teachers on the total score of the psychological hardiness scale and some of its dimensions, and their average scores on the total score of the job satisfaction scale and some of its dimensions.
- There are no differences in the degree of psychological hardiness attributable to the variable of years of experience.
- There are differences in the degree of psychological hardiness between elementary and middle school teachers in favor of middle school teachers.
- There are no differences in the degree of psychological hardiness between elementary and secondary school teachers.
- There are no differences in the degree of psychological hardiness between middle and secondary school teachers.
- There are no differences in the degree of psychological hardiness attributable to the amount of monthly income.
- There are no differences in the degree of job satisfaction attributable to the variable of years of experience, except in the dimensions: working conditions – the work itself.
- There were differences in the degree of salary satisfaction between elementary and middle school teachers in favor of elementary school teachers.
- There are no differences in salary satisfaction between elementary and secondary school teachers.

- There are differences between teachers with high and low psychological hardiness in job satisfaction and all its dimensions, except the salary dimension, and the differences are in favor of those with high psychological hardiness.

- Psychological hardiness contributes significantly to predicting job satisfaction.

Study of Boumehres (2022):

Attitudes of primary education teachers toward the integration of children with autism and their relationship to psychological hardiness – A field study on a sample of primary education teachers in the city of Metlili, Ghardaia province. The study aimed to try to identify the relationship between the attitudes of primary education teachers toward the integration of children with autism and psychological hardiness. The sample consisted of 150 teachers, selected randomly from primary education teachers. The descriptive method appropriate to the nature of the study was used. The study concluded:

- The nature of the attitudes of primary education teachers toward integrating children with autism was negative.
- They had a high level of psychological hardiness.
- There were no differences in the attitudes of primary education teachers toward the integration of children with autism and psychological hardiness according to the variable of years of experience.

Study of Maiter and Abdellawi (2023):

Psychological hardiness and its relationship to coping strategies with psychological stress among female teachers in the education sector. The study aimed to uncover the relationship between psychological hardiness and methods of coping with psychological stress, the level of psychological hardiness, and the most used strategies for coping with psychological stress among female teachers in the education sector. To achieve this goal, the researchers applied the psychological hardiness scale of Mukhaimer (2002), standardized for the Algerian environment by Professor Bachir Maamriya, and the coping strategies scale for psychological stress prepared by Carver, Scheier, and Weintraub. The descriptive method was used on a sample of 102 female teachers in the education sector. The study concluded:

- There is a relationship between psychological hardiness and coping strategies in some strategy dimensions (positive rethinking, active coping, behavioral disengagement, mental disengagement or daydreaming).
- There is a high level of psychological hardiness among female teachers in the education sector.
- The most commonly used strategy in coping with psychological stress is religious coping.

4. Applied Aspect:

4.1 Study Method:

In this study, we relied on the descriptive method, which is:

“A method of research that studies the phenomenon qualitatively to clarify its characteristics, and quantitatively to show its size, variables, and the degree of its correlation with other phenomena.” (Abdulahadi, 2000, p. 173)

4.2 Study Tool:

To collect information, the study tool consisted of the psychological hardiness scale, prepared by Mukhaimer Emad Mohamed in 2002, and modified by the researcher Badr bin Ouda bin Nahar Al-Shammari (2015). The modified version of the scale consists of (47) items, measuring three basic components of psychological hardiness:

- Commitment: This dimension consists of (16) statements, numbered in the questionnaire as: (1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, 46), and a high score in this dimension indicates that the individual is more committed to themselves, their goals, values, and others.
- Control: This dimension consists of (15) items with the following numbers in the questionnaire: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44), and a high score on this dimension indicates that the individual has control and believes in their personal responsibility for what happens to them.
- Challenge: This dimension consists of (16) items with the following numbers: (3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 47), and a high score on this dimension indicates that the individual believes that changes occurring in their life are something exciting and necessary for growth more than being a threat to them, which helps them initiate, explore, and challenge.

Each item is scored on a scale from one to three, where there are three options in front of each item: (Always applies, Sometimes applies, Never applies). The positive items of the scale receive the following scores: (3, 2, 1) respectively, and these are the items numbered as follows: (1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 12 - 13 - 14 - 15 - 18 - 19 - 20 - 22 - 24 - 26 - 27 - 29 - 30 - 31 - 33 - 34 - 39 - 40 - 41 - 43 - 44 - 45).

As for the negative items, the opposite grading is followed (1, 2, 3), and the negative items are the following numbers:

(7 - 11 - 16 - 17 - 21 - 23 - 25 - 28 - 32 - 35 - 36 - 37 - 38 - 42 - 46 - 47)

Thus, the total score obtained by the examinee can be extracted by summing the scores of the items together, and the scale's total scores can range from (47) as the minimum to (141) as the maximum.

- If the total score ranges between (47 – 78), it indicates a low level of psychological hardiness.
- If the total score ranges between (79 – 109), it indicates a medium level of psychological hardiness.
- If the total score ranges between (110 – 141), it indicates a high level of psychological hardiness.

4.3. Pilot Study:

A pilot study was conducted on an initial sample of (30) individuals, including (09) male teachers at a rate of (30%) and (21) female teachers at a rate of (70%). We selected the individuals using a non-probability sample, which is the accidental sample (convenience sample), in order to verify the validity and reliability of the two scales on the pilot sample before using and applying them to the actual study sample.

4.4 Psychometric Properties of the Study Tool:

4.4.1 Scale Validity:

- First: Face Validity

The scale used in Al-Shammari's (2015) study was presented to a group of arbitrators (professors) in psychology and education sciences. The experts (professors) agreed to retain all items with some modifications in the wording of the items. It is worth noting that the scale in its final form does not differ much in essence from the one used in Al-Shammari's (2015) study, as no item was deleted, and the modifications were limited only to the linguistic aspect.

- Second: Discriminant Validity

The validity of the psychological hardiness scale in the current study was verified using discriminant validity, through the extreme group comparison method. We selected 27% from each end of the distribution of the scores obtained by the sample members from the psychological hardiness scale after arranging them from the lowest to the highest score. We obtained (8) individuals from each end, then calculated the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the two groups, followed by calculating the "t" value for the significance of differences between the two extreme groups.

Table (01): Significance of differences between the means of the upper and lower samples on the psychological hardiness scale.

| Variable | Upper Sample n = 8 | Lower Sample n = 8 | "t" Calculated | "t" Tabulated | Signifi cance |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Mean | Standard Deviation | | | |

| Variable | Upper Sample n = 8 | Lower Sample n = 8 | "t" Calculated | "t" Tabulated | Signifi cance |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Psychological Hardiness | 115 | 4.25 | 98.30 | 5 | 8.60 |

It is clear from Table (01) that the tabulated "t" value is less than the calculated "t" value for the difference between the means at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), with a degree of freedom ($n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 24$), meaning the calculated "t" is statistically significant at the level ($\alpha = 0.05$) for two-tailed significance. This indicates that the scale has the ability to differentiate between the two extreme groups, proving the validity of the scale.

4.4.2 Scale Reliability:

- First: Split-half Method

The reliability of the psychological hardiness scale in the current study was calculated using the split-half method, where Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the two halves of the scale, then the Spearman-Brown correction coefficient was applied. The following table illustrates this.

Table (02): Reliability coefficient of the psychological hardiness scale using the split-half method.

| Scale | Number of Items | Pearson Coefficient | Spearman-Brown Coefficient |
|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Psychological Hardiness | 47 | 0.68 | 0.81 |

It is evident from Table (02) that the reliability coefficient using the split-half method for the scale reached (0.68), and after adjusting for length using the Spearman-Brown equation, a value of (0.81) was obtained, which is a very acceptable value and indicates the reliability of the scale.

- Second: Internal Consistency Method

The reliability of the scale using this method was determined based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each dimension and for the whole scale.

Table (03): Reliability coefficient of the psychological hardiness scale and its dimensions using Cronbach's alpha.

| Dimensions | Commit ment | C ontrol | Chal lenge | Whole Scale |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| Number of Items | 16 | 1 6 | 15 | 47 |

| Dimensions | | Commitment | Control | Challenge | Whole Scale |
|----------------------------------|--|------------|---------|-----------|-------------|
| Internal Consistency Coefficient | | 0.55 | 0.54 | 0.66 | 0.80 |

It is evident from Table (03) that the reliability coefficients using Cronbach's alpha for the dimensions of the scale ranged between (0.54) and (0.66), which are somewhat acceptable values, while the reliability result of the whole scale was (0.80), which is a very acceptable value and indicates that the scale has high reliability.

4.4.3 Population and Main Study Sample:

- First: Study Population:

The original population from which the study sample was drawn includes all primary school teachers working in primary schools located within the geographical boundaries of the Amaria district, with a total of (213) male and female teachers distributed across 25 schools. The number of male teachers was (67), representing (31%), and female teachers were (146), representing (69%). This data was obtained from the Primary Education Inspectorate of the Amaria district – Wilaya of Médéa.

- Second: Main Study Sample:

There are many ways to select a study sample. In this study, we relied on the simple random sample since the study population is homogeneous (primary education teachers). The study sample represented (38%) of the original population of (213) primary education teachers, after excluding the pilot study sample of (30), resulting in a sample consisting of (70) male and female teachers from the total teachers in the primary schools located in the Amaria district of Médéa province, with (48) females and (22) males.

- Third: Study Implementation Field:

The study required fieldwork in order to test the formulated hypotheses. Accordingly, the main study was conducted in the primary schools located within the boundaries of the Amaria district of Médéa province. We distributed the study tool, the psychological hardiness scale, to the individuals in the main study sample at the beginning of April 2024 until the end of May 2024.

- Fourth: Statistical Methods Used:

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used, which includes many common statistical procedures that enable the researcher to analyze the relationship between two or more variables. The program allowed us to analyze the study data using the following statistical tools: Pearson correlation coefficient, "T" test for the differences between two independent samples, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages.

4.4.4 Presentation of Study Results

First: Presentation of the results related to the Psychological Hardiness Scale:

The mean scores for the individuals in the main study sample were estimated at (112.40), indicating that the sample members have a high level of psychological hardiness. This is in comparison with the total scores of the Psychological Hardiness Scale, which range between (95 and 129). As for the standard deviation, it was estimated at (7.72), and this is considered a small value, indicating that the nature of the data or the values is close together; based on this, they are homogeneous. This result is consistent with the findings of the studies of Taakermi (2013), Boumehraz (2022), and Maitar and Abdellawi (2023).

Second: Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of the Results of the First Hypothesis:

This hypothesis states the following:

There are statistically significant differences in the scores of the Psychological Hardiness Scale attributable to the gender variable (male – female), in favor of males among primary school teachers.

Presentation of the results of the first hypothesis:

Table No. (04): Results of the "T" test for differences between males and females in the psychological hardiness variable.

| Specialization | Sample | Mean | Standard Deviation | "t" Value | Calculated Significance Value | Adopted Significance Level | Significance |
|-------------------------|---------|------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Psychological Hardiness | Males | 22 | 114.81 | 7.10 | 1.80 | 0.93 | 0.05 |
| | Females | 48 | 111.29 | 7.80 | | | |

It is clear from Table No. (04) that the value ($t = 1.80$) is not statistically significant because the calculated significance value is (0.93), which is greater than the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, which states that there are no differences between genders attributable to the psychological hardiness variable.

Although there are differences in the mean scores of psychological hardiness according to the gender variable — where the mean for males (114.81) is higher than that for females (111.29) — these differences did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Interpretation and discussion of the results of the first hypothesis:

It is evident from the previous table that there are no differences in the psychological hardiness variable attributable to gender (male – female), as the differences were not statistically

significant at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, it can be said that the first hypothesis was not confirmed, despite the presence of differences in the mean scores of psychological hardiness according to gender, but those differences did not reach the level of statistical significance.

This result is consistent with what was found in the study of Taakermi (2013) and the study of Al-Qasabi (2014), which both concluded that there were no statistically significant differences based on gender. This may explain the results of our study aligning with those of Taakermi (2013), which reached the same conclusion.

The absence of differences in the level of psychological hardiness between males and females can be explained by the nature of family upbringing, especially the upbringing of females in the Algerian environment. The modern family no longer differentiates between boys and girls in their upbringing, education, and in meeting their needs. Social norms and prevailing customs have become more tolerant of both genders.

It is no longer imposed on females to avoid expressing their feelings or emotions or to act independently. This leads us to believe in the equal level of psychological hardiness between male and female primary school teachers.

What is observed in the field is that both genders are subjected to the same work conditions and pressures, perform the same tasks, and have the same rights and duties. This naturally contributes to cooperation and solidarity between the sexes by making each aware of their responsibilities, without relying on the other or making negative comparisons. This makes them bear responsibility equally in terms of commitment, emotional and impulse control, and having the same degree of challenge in facing pressures and difficulties during the performance of their tasks. Even if there are slight differences in scores in favor of males, this may be due to the biological and psychological nature of women, represented in the delicacy of their feelings and sensitivity. However, these differences remain statistically insignificant.

Third: Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of the Results of the Second Hypothesis:

This hypothesis states the following:

There are statistically significant differences in the scores of the Psychological Hardiness Scale attributable to the variable of years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more), in favor of those with 10 years or more of experience among primary school teachers.

Presentation of the results of the second hypothesis:

Table No. (05): Results of the "T" test for differences between years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more) in the psychological hardiness variable.

| Specialization | Sample | Mean | Standard Deviation | "t" Value | Calculated Significance Value | Adopted Significance Level | Significance |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------|--------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| Psychological Hardiness | Less than 10 years | 58 | 111.84 | 7.82 | -1.33 | 0.63 | 0.05 |
| | 10 years or more | 12 | 115.08 | 6.85 | | | |

It is clear from Table No. (05) that the value ($t = -1.33$) is not statistically significant because the calculated significance value is (0.63), which is greater than the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted, which states that there are no statistically significant differences between years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more) in the psychological hardiness variable.

Although there are differences in the mean scores of psychological hardiness based on the variable of years of experience — with the mean score for individuals with 10 years or more of experience (115.08) being higher than that of individuals with less than 10 years of experience (111.84) — these differences did not reach the level of statistical significance.

Interpretation and discussion of the results of the second hypothesis:

It is evident from the previous table that there are no differences in the psychological hardiness variable attributable to years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more), as the differences were not statistically significant at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$). Accordingly, it can be said that the second hypothesis was not confirmed, despite the presence of differences in the mean scores of psychological hardiness according to the variable of years of experience, but those differences did not reach the level of statistical significance.

This result is consistent with what was found in the study of Al-Shammari (2015) and the study of Boumehraz (2022), which both concluded that there were no statistically significant differences based on years of experience. This may explain the results of our study being in agreement with the findings of Al-Shammari (2015) and Boumehraz (2022), as they reached the same conclusion.

The absence of differences in the level of psychological hardiness according to the variable of years of experience (less than 10 years – 10 years or more) among primary school teachers may be attributed to the fact that all primary school teachers, before assuming their positions, receive pedagogical training within specialized institutes and higher schools. This training prepares primary school teachers in various scientific, professional, educational, and cultural aspects. More importantly, it prepares them to acquire sound personal traits and characteristics that enable

the teacher to use their capabilities to the maximum in facing crises and the stressful events of professional life, and to exert maximum effort to achieve the desired goals through the belief that any changes that occur are necessary for their professional growth more than being a threat to them.

This helps them take initiative, be proactive, and excel in the way they think and perceive educational and teaching situations from the start of their employment until retirement. As for the slight differences recorded in the level of hardiness in favor of teachers with more than 10 years of experience, they may be due to individual differences between teachers in their traits, personality types, and ways of utilizing their capabilities, but they remain statistically insignificant.

5. Conclusion:

Based on the results of the study, it can be said that the hypotheses of our research were not confirmed, as neither gender nor years of experience have an effect on psychological hardiness among primary school teachers. These results remain relative to the limits of the study sample, its tools, as well as the time and place of its conduct.

In addition to the above, we recommend the following:

- Investigating the variable of *self-differentiation* in a sample other than primary school teachers, such as primary school students or even preschool children.
- Studying the variable of self-differentiation in relation to other variables such as:
 - Psychological hardiness and psychological disorders.
 - Psychological hardiness and level of ambition.
- Emphasizing the importance of encouraging families to foster psychological hardiness in individuals from childhood.
- Developing guidance programs aimed at enhancing psychological hardiness among primary school teachers and preparing a teacher who is differentiated in how they deal with stressful situations.

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