

# A Study of the Correlation between Psychological Exhaustion and Psychological Hardiness among Al-Nahrain University Instructors

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## Abstract

This study aimed to point out the relationship between psychological exhaustion and psychological hardiness among Al-Nahrain University instructors. The sample of the study which consisted of 100 respondents was selected randomly. The results of psychological exhaustion were interpreted in the light of Gestalt Theory, the Bartone's (1999) model, whereas the results of psychological hardiness were analyzed in light of Kobasa's (1979), Maddi's (2002) theories. Findings of the study showed a correlation between the psychological exhaustion and psychological hardiness at the level of significance .05. The findings also revealed that the participants do not suffer from psychological exhaustion and that the calculated T-value amounted to (7.6) compared to the tabular value (8.98) at a significance level (0.01) which is not significant. Moreover, the participants were characterized by psychological hardiness; the calculated T value scored (9.8), compared to the tabular value (3.98) at a significance level of (0.01), which is significant. Accordingly, the study recommended providing the necessary protection for the university professor and combating targeting the Iraqi minds.

**Keywords:** Al-Nahrain, psychological exhaustion, hardiness, University Instructors.

## INTRODUCTION

The term 'psychological exhaustion' as a modern concept had appeared in the seventies of the past century; it is widely used in recent times among researchers and the general public due to its severe impact on the human psyche and its effects on health and performance. However, neither its properties were clear yet, nor did researchers agree on a common definition due to the shortage in resources.

Some researchers considered psychological exhaustion as an independent concept, such as Freudenberg, (1974) and Maslach, (1978), and the likes of some Arab researchers: Abdel Samie (1990), Ismail (1997), Zaidan (2004), and Radi (2008). Nevertheless, other researchers translated the term into 'psychological hardship' as in Al-Ghobashi (2001), and still others called it 'emotional stress', such as Fathi (2004), still more others

who find it as an advanced stage of 'psychological stress'. Selye Hans stated that the individual enters the stage of exhaustion if the pressure continues, and the bodily processes begin to collapse (Ibrahim Mahmoud, 2007, p. 39).

While other researchers rendered the term into 'psychological burn out', although the term burning-out refers to the effects of fire, stinging or the bad manners. Zidan (2004) indicated that the concept of burning-out closes the door to attempts at treatment, because if a person is burned-out, there is no hope for him like the ashes that were burnt from the impact of fire, nothing will benefit him. He emphasized on the term psychological exhaustion because the term exhaustion refers to the exaggeration in everything. Moreover, it opens the door to treatment programs to alleviate and treat its conditions, in addition to that, the term

'exhaustion' is closer to human nature (Zidan, 2004). In the same vein, the Japanese gave the term psychological exhaustion more paramount importance; they used the word *Kaloshi* to express exhaustion, which is a word made up of *Kalo*, which means death, and *shi*, which means fatigue at work (Canouï et al., 1998). Therefore, the current study adopts the concept of psychological exhaustion for the above-mentioned reasons.

### Research Problem

Psychological exhaustion refers to the exhaustion of energy as a result of exposure to excessive pressures. It affects the individual, their social relations, and interactions with their co-workers and friends. Rather, it affects the individual's morale, making it low, and helps the emergence of some physical disorders. It may extend to home and be a cause of crises and family conflicts (Abu Zaid, 2002). Moreover, it is a psychological state resulting from work conditions directly related to individuals, especially those who provide humanitarian and social services such as doctors, nurses, teachers, and police; it has three dimensions:

1. Emotional exhaustion: the depletion of the psychological state of the individual and his/her feelings of exhaustion, which hinders them from production.
2. Depersonalization: it is the negative feeling about others and a lack of a sense of their value.
3. Lack of personal achievement (Abdul Hamid and Saeed, 2003, p. 159)

Studies by Geiner and Eykman (2000), and Ragland and Fisher (2003) had proved that high intensity burnout is most closely associated with alcohol addiction in several professional groups of nurses, doctors, police and social workers (cited in Rascal & Bruch, 2006). Moreover, Langle (2003) pointed out that exhaustion leads to a group of psychological symptoms such as anxiety, psychological imbalance and possibly suicide in its extreme cases, as in the study of Al Murray and Ramirez (1996), which showed an increase in

the number of suicides in Finland, but the risk of drug and alcohol addiction is higher among young doctors whereas the risk of depression and suicide affects older clinicians (Langle, 2003).

If we look closely at the impact of exhaustion on the general public, we will find that some are affected by it to a large extent, so the effected person feels tired quickly as well as frustration, and others become depressed, and a third category adapts to all circumstances and does not care much about its negative effects. So, the impact of exhaustion depends on the individual differences between people and the amount of their psychological immunity especially the degree of psychological hardiness that they possess. Research has shown that psychological hardiness is a source of prevention and psychological resistance to stress, tension, frustration and feelings of anxiety as well as psycho-physical symptoms. The concept of psychological hardiness goes back to the researcher (Kobasa, 1979).

Through a number of studies and research Kobasa (1979) conducted asserting that psychological hardiness is a general belief that an individual has in his effectiveness and his ability to use all available psychological and environmental resources in order to perceive, explain and effectively confront stressful life events without distorted or distorted perception, and interpret them realistically, objectively, and logically. A person coexists with it positively and it includes three dimensions: commitment, control, and challenge (Kobasa, 1979).

Psychological hardness is the awareness of an individual and his/her acceptance to the psychological changes or pressures s/he is exposed to, and it acts as a protection against the sensory and psychological consequences of pressures, and contributes to modify the circular relationship that begins with pressure and ends with psychological exhaustion as an advanced stage of pressure (Al-Bahas, 2002). Likely, scholars like, Kobaza Volcman and Lazours agreed in that psychological characteristics such as hardiness, for example, affect the individual's cognitive assessment of the stressful event itself and the threat it entails

to his/her security, psychological health and self-esteem, and also affect the individual's assessment of the methods of confrontation, which are the methods by which the individual faces the stressful event (confronting problems - escaping). Taking responsibility - looking for support - self-control) (Mukhaimer, 1996).

Other researchers believed that individuals with high hardiness tend theoretically to use the transformational coping style, in which they change events that can generate stress into growth opportunities. As a result, we find such individual corresponding to stressful events in an optimistic and effective manner. Conversely, individuals with low hardiness obtain regressive confrontation style, or that includes regression in which they avoid or stay away from situations that could generate pressure (Radi, 2008).

Many studies have recently begun to focus on psychological hardiness as a positive aspect of personality that makes the individual maintains his/her psychological and physical health to face the pressures of daily life (e.g., Beasley, 2003; Janellen & Blany 1984; Smith 2004; Tierney & Lavelle 1997). They all indicated the role of psychological hardiness in alleviating life stresses and maintaining psychological and social compatibility. Moreover, Kobasa et al., (1985) studied the number of variables that act as a buffer, mitigate or modify the impact of psychological stress, including: the strength of the physical structure represented in the immune system (i.e., performance, good job, psychological hardiness, and others) (Hamada & Abdel Latif, 2002).

With the succession of crises on Iraq and the extremely dangerous conditions that the society lives after the American occupation. According to a study by the ORB Foundation for British Survey, it was found that 1.2 million Iraqis have died due to violence and terrorism since Bush and Cheney invaded Iraq in 2003. This is the highest number of casualties in war-related events (Iraqi Center for Strategic Studies, 2007).

University professors are now suffering from the hardship of living and the low standard of

living in comparison with their peers in neighboring countries. Such miserable situations prompted many Iraqi professors to migrate due to marginalization and lack of appreciation and work in an environment that lacks the minimum elements of academic work and the spread of the partisan phenomenon, as well as the continuous targeting of the Iraqi minds. Many Iraqi professors and specialist doctors have had their share of attempts of terrorism, liquidation and assassination, and the documented cases of targeting since April 2003 until April 2006 only amounted to more than 380 cases of targeting, as shown in Figure (1) ([www.iraqis.org.uk/content/hk/pio](http://www.iraqis.org.uk/content/hk/pio)).

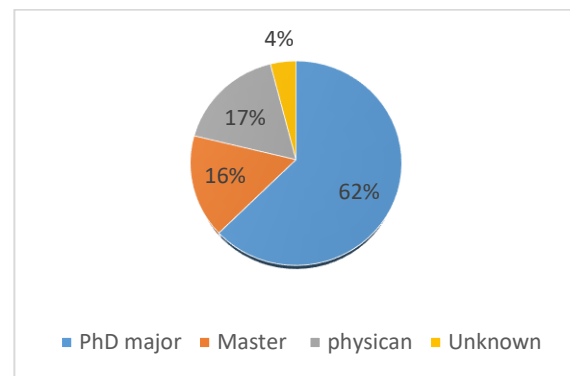


Figure 1: Iraqi minds affected by terrorism (O'Hanlon & Campbell, p. 28).

Such incidents drew the researcher's attention to studying the level of psychological exhaustion for those men- without women instructors- who were targeted, and its relationship to their psychological hardiness. Furthermore, the researcher did not find an Iraqi study that focused on these two variables for this important group and what they encounter while performing their academic and educational duties with many challenges and hardships.

#### Significance of the study

Cook (2008) stated that he found more than 1000 studies and articles that dealt with the concept of psychological exhaustion in the twenty-first century. He stressed that it is a complex concept linked to the awareness of psychological influences pressing on the entity of physical, psychological and emotional workers, and its impact extends to the family environment where complaints of feelings of

distress, fatigue, anger and frustration are frequent (Cook 2008). Furthermore, the Journal of Doctors of Belgium published in 2000 that 37% of doctors in Belgium suffered from occupational exhaustion (Abdul Hamid, 2012).

In a study by Al-Sharnoubi (2001) on teachers showed that 5%-20% of teachers had psychological exhaustion. Psychological exhaustion is a disorder response to stress, which not makes it negatively affects the life of the teacher, but it rather affects the entire educational process (Al-Sharnoubi, 2001). Despite of that, solutions to treat psychological exhaustion are no longer impossible. The researcher believes that it is possible to develop psychological immunity or psychological hardiness for those individuals at the very least, to get positive results on the level of mental health. Hence, psychological hardiness is a key factor in promoting mental health and the extent of its reflection on physical health as well.

The key to steadfastness is not to survive only, but for what psychologists called 'progressing under psychological pressure', which undoubtedly represents one of the most important preventive positive psychological variables for the individual to resist crises, frustrations and stressful events. Bartone, (2012) released an idea based on considering psychological hardiness (a world view) rather than a personality trait, and this is a more general framework that people can fully adopt, and thus psychological hardiness is a general pattern of functions that include cognitive, emotional, and behavioral manifestations, which distinguish people who remain healthy and normal under stress (Bartone, 2012). In addition, Bartone (2009) mentioned an important idea about psychological hardiness as a protective factor against stress-related diseases, which is what scientists agreed to call psychobiology of hardiness.

#### Research Objectives

1. Identifying the psychological exhaustion of Al-Nahrain University instructors,

2. Recognizing the psychological hardiness of Al-Nahrain University instructors,

3. Finding out the correlation between psychological exhaustion and psychological hardiness between the two variables.

**Research Limitation:** The current research is limited to a research sample of male instructors at Al-Nahrain University in Baghdad governorate for the academic year 2020/2021.

#### Definitions of terms

Psychological exhaustion is defined by Maslach, (1976) as a psychological state characterized by a set of negative characteristics such as tension, instability, tendency towards isolation and negative attitudes towards work and colleagues (Maslach, 1976). Likely, Erickson et al (2000) defined it as an emotional reaction to the stress of working with humans and it is presented as job dissatisfaction.

Psychological hardiness is defined as a major feature of personality. It is a general belief in the individual in his effectiveness and ability to benefit from all available psychological and environmental resources in order to effectively perceive stressful and arduous life events without distorted or distorted perceptions, and interpret them realistically, objectively and logically and coexist with them in a positive manner. It includes three dimensions: commitment, control, challenge (Kobasa, 1979). Moreover, Funk, (1992) viewed it as a general trait in the personality formed and developed by the various enhanced environmental experiences surrounding the individual since childhood (Funk, 1992). Likely, it is the resistance and steadfastness under pressure, and the ability to withstand difficult circumstances (Aladdin, 2016).

#### Theoretical frameworks

##### Psychological Exhaustion

The general symptom theory of adaptation by Selye Hans (1976)

This theory appeared in the wake of the studies conducted by Selye in 1976, on the psychological response to stress. He revealed that there is a continuum of predictable responses that he called the general symptoms of adaptation, stressing that psychological exhaustion does not occur suddenly, but rather after several indications and that the individual enters the stage of exhaustion after the two stages of warning and resistance. If the pressure continues, and the individual becomes unable to adapt, the bodily processes begin to weaken and collapse (Selye, 1976).

#### 1. Alarm stage

In this stage, body is aroused, as it begins to pay attention to danger, and the brain warns the individual that s/he will gradually lose his endurance.

#### 2- Alarm response and resistance phase

The individual realizes the danger and tries hard to adapt to it. S/he begins to mobilize his/her abilities and try to confront it and adapt to it, and when s/he fails to do so, s/he will enter the third stage.

#### 3- The stage of psychological exhaustion

If the individual fails to adapt to previous pressures, s/he makes his/her energy exhausted, and this stage is one of the most dangerous stages and is the highest stress stage, as negative responses and a series of psychological suffering occur. So, the person leaves work permanently, and his relationship with the family is disturbed, and a group of disorders occurs in the trends and behaviors of the individual such as harsh treatment to others, and not fulfilling the requirements and responsibilities. Nevertheless, it will be a burden on the state, as it will transform from a productive individual to a dependent individual and may suffer from some chronic diseases (Abdul Hamid, 2012).

An individual also reaches psychological exhaustion through the following stages:

A- The stage of immersion and intervention: At the beginning, the level of job satisfaction is high, but with the failure of what the individual

expects from work, and the lack of support provided to them, the low level of job satisfaction begins for the individual, and s/he enters the second stage.

B - Dullness and stagnation stage: In this stage, the level of job satisfaction gradually decreases, efficiency decreases, and the individual feels ill, and turns their attention to other aspects other than the field of work.

C- The stage of separation: The individual realizes what happened, begins to withdraw psychologically, his physical and psychological health deteriorates, and the level of psychological stress rises.

D- The stage of crisis and embarrassment: It is the highest stage of psychological exhaustion. The physical, psychological, and behavioral manifestations worsen, and the individual thinks about leaving work, and even reaches the point of explosion, and the individual may think to commit suicide (Ali, 2008).

#### Gestalt Theory

Gestalt theory plays great importance in perceptual terms in the process of perceiving and responding to stimuli and employing them in realizing the psychological pressures that the individual is exposed to in his daily life and its inconveniences. Because the general perception precedes the analysis and identification of the parts according to the process of foresight, which is considered as a process that depends on the individual's mental ability and on the degree of its maturity. It also requires a degree of previous experience, which helps to understand the situation and realize its elements. The most important characteristic of the foresight process is the possibility of using the solutions that the individual learned through foresight while new situations (Al-Anazi, 2004).

Some Gestalt psychologists believed that problems basically are perceptual that appear when the individual had tension or stress as a result of the interaction between perception and the factors of remembering when thinking with the aim of solving a problem. The correct solution emerged on the surface at some point,

closer to the sudden moment according to the principle of foresight.

They justify this point of view to the fact that the individual's awareness of the elements presents in the field in which he resides, as well as his awareness of the relationships that link the elements and parts of the field, would lead the person to reorganize the field in a whole or in a new form, and this whole or this picture is what the theorists interpret by learning that arises through the process of foresight (Al-Sharqawi, 1988).

The process of foresight can be employed in realizing psychological stress and achieving what is called foresight with the characteristics of the stressful event by trying to fully realize the stressful event and its elements or components in order to realize its causes and the circumstances of its occurrence and realize its importance, significance and meaning for the individual and what it contains of positive or negative effects and awareness of appropriate solutions and how dealing with it through what is so-called cognitive Gestalts (Al-Anazi, 2004).

### **Theories explaining psychological hardiness**

#### **Kobasa's Theory (1979)**

This theory relied on a number of theoretical and empirical principles for the views of some scholars such as Phrankel, Maslow and Rogers, which indicated that the individual has a purpose or meaning for his difficult life that depends primarily on his ability to exploit his personal and social potential in a good way (Odeh, 2010).

Kosbasa indicated that there are three basic features of the component of psychological hardiness: commitment, control and domination, and challenge. Such features distinguish the individual with a solid personality. Therefore, the real key to transforming stressful conditions into opportunities for growth is psychological hardiness, and the dependence of people with the solid personality on positive and optimistic

cognitive evaluation of stressful life events and control over them (Kosbasa & Maddi, 1999). The main assumption of Kobasa's (1979) theory was that her study focused mainly on businessmen, lawyers, and workers at the upper and middle level in mental and physical health and the shocking events came out with some results:

1- Uncovering a new positive source in the field of preventing mental and physical disorders, which is psychological hardiness with its dimensions of commitment, control, challenge.

2 - The individuals with hard personalities had lower rates of mental disorders despite being subjected to hard pressure.

This theory assumed that exposing to difficult life traumatic events is a necessary matter, but rather it is inevitable for the individual's development and emotional and social maturity. It also stated that the psychological and social resources of each individual may strengthen and increase when exposed to these traumatic events. The most prominent of these sources is the psychological hardiness. Her studies also showed that the link between hardiness and the prevention of diseases, led to her identification of the distinguishing qualities of individuals with high hardiness, as they are more active, initiative, ability, leadership and internal control, more steadfast and resistant

to the burdens of life, more realistic, achievement, control and ability to explain (Odeh, 2010).

#### **Maddi's (2002) Theory,**

Maddi (2002) relied on a number of theoretical principles while formulating his theory. They represented by the views of some scholars such as, Maslow, Rogers, and Frankel, who pointed out that when an individual has a purpose and the meaning of his life makes them bear the frustrations of life and accept it. Likely, the individual bears the frustration resulting from difficult life circumstances depending on his ability to make good use of his personal and social potentialities. Maddi (2002) ended up formulating his theory by revealing the

psychological and social variables that would help the individual maintain his physical and psychological health, despite his exposure to hardship. It is what he called it the psychological hardiness in its three dimensions, i.e., commitment, control and challenge.

Stressing the importance of physical and psychological hardiness for the individual in resistance. The most solid people are subjected to pressure and do not get sick. So, the origin of the psychological hardiness goes back to the childhood stage through living enhanced experiences that enrich the personality and strengthen its foundations and appear through feelings and behaviors that are characterized by commitment, control and challenge.

Hence, commitment is a type of psychological contract by which the individual commits himself towards himself, his goals, values and others around him. The individual views difficult situations as having meaning and calling for optimism and pleasure. Likely, control refers to the extent to which the individual believes that he has the ability to control whatever encounters him in the negative stressful events he faces, and that he is personally responsible for what happens to him, and his view of the nature of life as changing and not fixed. Finally, the challenge is the belief of the individual that what he finds in the aspects of his life of change is a challenge and a necessary opportunity for growth rather than a threat to him and that it is a natural thing in life. In conclusion, Maddi (2002) also confirmed the hypotheses of his theory, where he concluded that more solid people are more steadfast, resistant, accomplished, internally disciplined, driven and active.

#### Bartone' (2016) model

Paul Barton, a researcher at the National Center for Technology and National Security at the Institute for National Strategic Studies at the US Defense College, focused his research on understanding and measuring hard responses to psychological stress in soldiers, identifying latent vital indicators. He applied such knowledge to improving human development programs based on the theory of Cobaza and

Maddi in his military, security and organizational research. He noted that enhancing psychological hardiness leads to achieving a high level of health and performance, in addition to preventing health-related problems and stress (Bartone, 1999).

Barton launched from the start of the fact that the individuals who work in sterile and different environments are exposed to a balanced level of psychological pressure that leads to an injury as well as health and professional problems, while many suffer from health and occupational problems, while others remain healthy, strong and resilient under the same psychological pressure. The question posed here is the same question from which Cobaza was launched. Findings showed that soldiers with high level of psychological hardiness characterized by high and distinguishes abilities. This can be interpreted as the more that the psychological hardiness increases, the more that they have the ability to fight at battles and encountering the pressure without they got negative healthy impact despite of the war pressure and the fighting process (Bartone et al., 2008).

Barton confirms that psychological hardiness is a personality trait that characterizes people who maintain their health under pressure. The individuals who possess psychological hardiness have a strong sense of life, commitment and a greater sense of control, and are more open to change. They are brave in facing of new experiences as well as in the face of frustrations and disappointments. They have high efficiency and strong steadfastness when responding to stressful conditions (Sandvik et al., 2013).

Bartone believes that individuals with high levels of psychological hardiness actively engage in the events that take place around them. This means that life for them is meaningful, valuable, and worthy to be lived. They are also distinguished by their ability to control, which is the belief in the ability to choose and influence the future. In addition to challenge which is a tendency to change in life

as an exciting and enjoyable thing. They also enjoy new situations and challenges, because they have psychological characteristics that contribute to creating and enhancing psychological hardiness, in addition to individual factors, personality, mental health, personality level, in addition to factors related to training and education programs, as well as professional, organizational and societal factors (Aladdin, 2016; Bartone, 2012).

### **Psychological exhaustion studies**

#### **The Study of Samadouni and Rabia (2007)**

This study aimed to explore the psychological exhaustion of a sample of workers in the field of humanitarian services in the city of Riyadh. The researchers applied the Maslach scale of psychological exhaustion after they Arabized and administrated it on a sample of (329) male and female workers in those professions. The study reached the following results: Workers in the field of humanitarian services are subject to psychological exhaustion compared to workers in other professions, and the degree of feeling varies psychological exhaustion among workers in the field of humanitarian services, according to age and years of service (Al-Ta'i, 2014).

#### **Martinsen's (2007) study**

This study aimed to investigate psychological exhaustion among a sample of police officers in Norway, consisting of (223) officers, with an average age of (36.8) and average working hours (39.5). The findings of the study showed that psychological exhaustion increases husband violence and increases the role conflict of role of the husband in the family and work (Al-Sharafi, 2013).

### **Psychological hardiness studies**

#### **Smith and Allerd (1989)**

This study aimed to make assertion that the individuals with most hardiness are more resistant to diseases caused by stress. This happens due to their adaptive thinking, which leads to a reduction in their level of

physiological arousal. The sample consisted of 48 students. The researchers used the psychological hardiness scale, and the results of the study indicated that the more solid people use positive sentences in self-expression even under the most threatening circumstances, and they are less likely to show physiological excitement when they wait to start the practical task that is the opposite of what was shown by the less solid people. They showed negative sentences in expressing themselves characterized with high blood pressure before the beginning of the study.

#### **Gerson's (1998) study**

Gerson (1998) demonstrated the relationship between psychological hardiness and coping skills among graduate students. The study sample was 151 graduate students in the Department of Psychology from Midwestern Graduate School. The researcher used the image personality test, the questionnaire of daily stress and pressure, and the psychological hardiness scale. The study found that the students who got high degrees of hardiness were using confrontation skills more effectively and influentially than those who got low degrees of hardiness. Likely, the stress is positively related to the following coping skills: logical analysis, cognitive avoidance, emotional emptying, and surrender, as it found. The study indicated that total hardiness, avoidance, and logical analysis are important indicators of stress. The finding also indicated that there is a negative relationship between hardiness and stress, as it was found that students who obtained high degrees in hardiness were aware of the causes of stress less than students who did not get high marks in hardiness.

#### **Andre et al., (2008) study**

Andre et al., (2008) aimed to recognize the relationship between psychological hardiness and psychological distress among police officers. It also aimed to examine the relationship between the components of psychological hardiness (commitment, control, and challenge) and each of: depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and psychological



distress. The study was conducted on a sample size of (105) policemen from Buffalo Police Station in New York City, USA. The following three scales were applied: The Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (ESDS), the Impact of Events Scale (IES) and the Brief Symptoms Inventory (BSI). The results showed that both control and commitment constitute a protective factor against psychological distress, and that control was a protective factor against depressive symptoms. Likely, the results also showed a significant negative correlation between psychological hardiness, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder.

## Research Methods

### Population

The current research community consists of all the teachers of Al-Nahrain University in Baghdad. They counted (1140) for the academic year 2021.

### Sample

The sample of the current research was chosen in a stratified random way, and the researcher was keen that the sample of his research be representative of the original community, so his selection was from the nine colleges of the university and its Higher Institute, which amounted to (100) instructors, as shown in Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of the sample according to the faculties of Al-Nahrain University

College	Participants no
Faculty of medicine	10
Faculty of Pharmacy	10
College of Engineering	15
Faculty of Information Engineering	10
College of Science	10
College of Law	10
College of Business Economics	10
Faculty of Political Science	10
College of Biotechnology	10
Higher Institute of Infertility and Assisted Reproductive Technologies	5
Total	100

### Instruments

In order to measure the research variables, i.e., (psychological exhaustion, psychological hardiness), the researcher adopted the Slash scale for the first variable (psychological exhaustion) Arabized by Tawalbeh (1999) and which composed of 22 items. The questionnaire was then presented to (16) experts in the field of psychology and psychological evaluation, and it was agreed to modify some items of the scale to suit the Iraqi environment and the research sample, with the adoption of three alternatives according to Likert scale (I do not agree, neutral, and agree). Furthermore, the Younkin and Younkin scale was also adopted for the second variable (psychological hardiness), which was translated into Arabic by Abdul Latif and Hamada (2002) and it consists of 40 items, and three alternatives (I do not agree, neutral, I agree) were also placed in front of each paragraph after it was presented to the same experts and it was approved (Abdul Latif & Hamada, 2002), as the step of defining the idea of the scale and the justifications for its design is one of the most important and first steps (Ebel, 1972).

### Validity for the questionnaire

For the purpose of verifying the validity of the items for the two scales, the validity of the tools should be checked, and the preferred way to ascertain the apparent validity of the measurement tools is for a group of specialized experts to evaluate the validity of the paragraphs to measure the feature for which they were developed (Ebel, 1972) and based on the items of the tools (the two scales) were presented to a group of (16) experts specialized in psychology and psychometrics to pass their judgment on the validity or invalidity of the alternatives for each items of the two scales. After analyzing the experts' answers, the percentage of each item was extracted to find out the agreement among the referees' opinions regarding the validity of the paragraph, its rejection or amendment, the items were retained as they obtained 80% or more, as in (Appendix 1) and (Appendix 2).

### Piloting the questionnaires

The goal of this application is to ensure the clarity of the instructions, and the clarity of the items of the two scales. Therefore, both scales were piloted to a sample of (40) individuals who were randomly selected by Al-Rusafa in Baghdad. All the participants confirmed that the items of each scale and its instructions are clear and comprehensible. The researcher was assured of the integrity of the language, and that the time taken to answer the two scales ranged from (20-25) minutes.

#### Coding the two questionnaire items

The psychological exhaustion scale consisted of (28) situations, and the psychological hardness scale consisted of (40) situations. The alternatives were identified in the triple scale: (I agree, sometimes, I disagree) and their weights (1,2,3) for the positive items, corresponding to the weights (3,2,1) for negative items and each scale was corrected based on the number of items and the three alternatives.

#### Indexes Validity

Validity is a psychometric property that reveals the extent to which the scale performs the purpose for which it was prepared and which must be taken into account in constructing psychological scales (Stanly & Hopkins, 1972). Face-Validity was achieved when the paragraphs of each scale were presented to a group of experts and specialists.

#### Reliability

Reliability is defined as consistency in the results, and the test is considered stable if we obtain from it the same results when re-applied to the same individuals and in the same circumstances (Baron, 1981). A time interval, then the two scales were re-applied to a sample of the research personnel, which numbered (40) individuals, and they are the same individuals to whom the scale was applied the first time after their names were determined, and the time period between the first and second application was two weeks, according to Adams, (1964), and in order to extract the stability of the response on the items of the two scales, the researcher adopted the method of internal consistency.

#### Alpha Coefficient

This method depends on calculating the correlations between the scores of all items on the grounds that each item is a self-contained scale and that Cronbach's (Alpha) equation provides us with a good report for stability in most situations (Nunnally, 1978). To extract stability according to this method, the stability sample forms of (40) individuals were used, where the alpha coefficient of the psychological exhaustion scale was (0.83) and the psychological hardness stability coefficient (0.81).

#### Demonstrating the questionnaire

After ensuring the completion of all procedures related to building the two scales and measuring their validity and stability, the researcher applied the two questionnaires to the final sample of (100) respondents, for the purpose of knowing the results and achieving the drawn research objectives.

#### Statistical means used

The researcher used the following statistical methods:

- 1- T-TEST for a single sample
- 2- T-TEST for two independent samples
- 3- Person Correlation Coefficient
- 4- Chi-square to calculate the percentage of agreement between experts
- 5- Alfa Formula to extract scale stability factor
- 6- Spearman-Brown formula

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1- The first goal is to identify the psychological exhaustion:

- 1- The psychological exhaustion scale was applied to a sample of (100) respondents.
- 2- Extracting the general arithmetic mean of the sample, which calculated (75,4), the hypothetical mean (56), and the standard deviation (5.6).

3- The t-test was used for one sample, and it showed that the calculated t-value was (7,6), and after comparing it with the tabular value (8,98) at the significance level (0.01), it turned out that it is not significant, meaning that the sample members do not have psychological exhaustion. This can be explained according to the Gestalt theory, as Gestalt psychologists see that the problems are basically cognitive problems (tension or stress) as a result of the interaction between perception and the factors of remembering when thinking with the aim of solving a problem, as it appears on the surface at some point closer to the sudden moment, according to the correct solution according to the principle of insight.

It would lead the living being to reorganize the field in a whole or in a new form, and this whole or this form is what the theorists explain

by the learning that arises through the process of foresight, and the realization of appropriate solutions and how to deal with it through the so-called cognitive Gestalt, and it is consistent with the study of Samadouni and Rabia (2007), which asserted that the degree of psychological exhaustion among workers in the field of humanitarian services varies according to age and years of service, as it is not certain that all workers in humanitarian services suffer from psychological exhaustion.

This finding is also in line with the Bartone's (1999) model, which is based on the principle that individuals who work in complex and changing environments are exposed to increased levels of psychological stress, which in turn leads to many health problems, deafening, and occupational stress.

Table (1) *Statistical means of psychological exhaustion scale.*

Sample No	Mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	T value		Indication level 0.01
				Calculated	Tabular	
100	75.4	5.6	56	7.6	8.98	not Significant

The second goal it to recognize the psychological hardiness

1- A scale was built for this purpose, and it was applied to a sample of (100) respondents.

2- Extracting the general arithmetic mean score of the sample, which amounted to (50.8), the hypothetical mean (80), and the standard deviation (7.6)

3- The t-test was used for one sample, and it appeared that the calculated t-value (9,8), and after comparing it with the tabular value (3,98) at the level of significance (0.01), it turned out to be a significant.

This result indicates that the individuals of the research sample have psychological hardiness in the current circumstance, and this can be explained according to Kobasa's (1979) theory. This is due to the characteristics of highly hardened individuals as they are characterized by more activity, initiative, ability, leadership

and internal control, more steadfastness and resistance to the burdens of life, and more realistic, intermediate and accomplished the interpretation and the theory of Maddi, (2002), which was based on a number of theoretical foundations, for the views of some scholars such as: Phrankel, Mazlo, and Rogars who indicated that the existence of a purpose for the individual and the meaning of his life makes him bear and accept the frustrations of life, relying on his ability and exploiting his personal and social capabilities in a good way.

This finding is also in line with Bartone's (1999) model that individuals with high levels of psychological hardiness actively engage in the events that take place around them, and this means that life is meaningful and valuable for them and deserves to be consistent with it. The most solid people use positive sentences in self-expression even under the most threatening circumstances, and they are less show physiological excitement, in contrast to what

was shown by the less rigid people, which has negative sentences in self-expression, and those with high blood pressure.

It also coincides with Gerson's (1998), study which indicated that the existence of a negative

relationship between hardiness and stress, where it was found that students who obtained high degrees of hardiness were aware of the causes of stress as less stress than students who did not get high degrees of hardiness.

Table (2) *Statistical means of psychological hardiness scale.*

Sample No	Mean	Standard deviation	Hypothetical mean	T value		Indication level 0.01
				Calculated	Tabular	
100	<b>50,8</b>	<b>7,6</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>9,8</b>	<b>3,98</b>	Significant

Third goal: calculating the correlation between psychological exhaustion and psychological hardiness.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the arithmetic mean value of psychological exhaustion was (75.4) and the arithmetic mean value of psychological hardiness was (50.8), and that the value of the correlation coefficient between the two variables amounted to (0.63) and the t-test was (8.050), which is a function at the level of significance (0.05) compared with the tabular value (1.96) and the degree of freedom (98). Essential for the components of psychological hardiness are: commitment, control, and challenge, which is what distinguishes the individual with a solid personality, and that the real key to transforming stressful conditions and exhaustion into opportunities for growth is psychological hardiness, and the dependence of those with a solid personality on a positive and optimistic cognitive assessment of stressful life events. This finding corresponds with the studies (Kosbasa & Maddi, 1999) that the more solid individuals had lower rates of mental disorders despite being subjected to hard pressure. Studies of Barbara, al et. (2003), as well as Andre, McCanlies, Burchfiel, Charles, Hartley, Fekedulgen & Violanti (2008) confirmed the existence of a major impact of psychological hardiness on strategies to confront psychological stress, including psychological exhaustion.

## Conclusion

Our present age is witnessing a great complexity in the requirements of life. Events

accelerate and the course of things continues in an amazing manner along with this civilizational and technological development. In addition to these constant worrying crises and epidemics that our fathers and ancestors did not witness before. The more complex life becomes, the more requirements it needs, it adds a new burden of pressure on the individual and society due to the intense, growing and continuous competition between individuals. Such competition is a reason to exhaust one's energy as a result of exposure to excessive pressures. Anxiety and insomnia of a person increases, he becomes emotionally stressed. His feelings become dull, and his sense of personal achievement decreases, which are indications of psychological exhaustion, especially for individuals who provide humanitarian and social services such as doctors, nurses, university professors, teachers, men and the police. In addition to their low achievement motivation, their social relationships and interactions with colleagues at work and with friends are affected. Some physical disturbances appear on them, this may extend to the home and be a cause of family crises and conflicts. A matter which requires psychiatrists and psychiatrists to rush to address and develop the necessary treatments, by providing psychological care to these individuals, improving their morale, working to improve their psychological immunity, sharpening their motivation and increasing their psychological hardiness, as psychological hardiness is a key factor in promoting mental health and the extent of its reflection on health. The physical as well, and the key to steadfastness is not only for survival, but for what psychologists called (thriving under psychological pressure), which

undoubtedly represents one of the most important preventive positive psychological variables for the individual to resist crises, frustrations and stressful events.

### Recommendations:

1. Improving the standard of living of university teachers, as in other and neighboring countries.
2. Addressing the problem of emigration and emigration of professors outside Iraq, providing the ingredients for academic work,
3. Paying attention and appreciation to university instructors and providing them with the requirements for academic work
4. Combating the spread of the partisan phenomenon in the university community.
5. Providing the necessary protection for the professor, combating the targeting of the Iraqi mind.

### Suggestions for Future Studies

1. Conducting more research studies on the mental health of the university professor.
2. Studying the variable of psychological exhaustion for teachers and its relationship to some variables such as adjustment and psychological adjustment.
3. Conducting studies on the reasons for the emigration of professors outside Iraq and attracting immigrants to the country.

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