In-service training and its relationship to psychological hardiness among teachers of students with special needs in the integration classes in the northern governorates of Palestine

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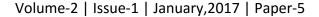
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Abstract

The current study aimed to identify in-service teacher training and its relationship to psychological hardiness among special education teachers in the integration classes in the Tulkarm Governorate. The sample of the study consisted of 70 special education teachers who worked in the Tulkarm Directorate of Education. The two researchers used the study tool of in-service training (IST) as well as the Psychological Hardiness Scale. The results of the study revealed that score of in-service training was very high, and that score of the psychological hardiness was also very high. In addition, there was a direct correlation between in-service training and the psychological hardiness, i.e. the in-service training increased the psychological hardiness. There were yet no statistically significant differences due to the variables of gender and years of experience. On other hand, there were significant differences due to the variable of educational qualification in favor of the holders of the bachelor degrees or below. The study recommended the need to develop a comprehensive plan for teachers so that they could effectively deal with students with special needs in public schools, and the need to provide them with an intensive in-service training for special education.

Key words: in-service training, psychological hardiness, people with special needs

Introduction

The teacher is the cornerstone of the educational process. He is deemed as the most important and influential foundation underlying the whole process of educational curricula and its organizations. To generate the best organizational learning outputs, effective processes and efforts must be dedicated and invested for the development of teaching staff, especially those who work with students with special needs. Al-Qaryouti and Al-Khatib (2006, 135) stresses that there is a growing worldwide attitude towards the students with special needs in terms of their learning and teacher training. However, the majority of teachers in regular education environments hold non-specialized qualifications. Yet they sometimes find themselves forced to work in learning settings with students with special needs without adequate qualifications in the field of special education. They also lack the adequate training needed for dealing with challenges resulting from such type of students. Al-Khatib (2004, 153-154) argues that teachers in the inclusion classes face many challenges when it comes to deal with students with special needs. Regular education teachers believe they fail to make necessary adjustments in the curricula and in their methods. They also have difficulty recognizing learning of ordinary students and the learning of disabled students in the integration classes in terms of homework, teaching methods and correcting exams. The researchers purport that the special education teacher, as one of the central components of the educational process, should be supported so that he can fulfil his duties without any obstacles that may hinder his educational performance.

A lot of studies underlined the importance of the training of teacher of students with special needs. Consequently, defining the characteristics of students with special needs is very significant for the development of pertinent therapeutic plans and methods. Abdulaziz Al Shakhs (2004:179) defines children with special needs as the children who are different from their peers in one or more of the characteristics that affect their learning process and hinder their abilities to gain academic skills (reading, writing – calculation) at effective as their peers. He divides students with special needs into various types: talent and superiority, mental disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical disability, learning disabilities, behavior disorders, and communication disorders. Since the teacher is an essential element in the educational development process, there are a lot of points that should be considered in the in-service teacher training programme, including (, 1999; Laffey 2-13):

1. Lack of adequate conditions and potentials for in-service teacher training.

2. Improving educational quality along with the most recent educational trends.

Zahrani (2008) maintains that special education teacher' performance and competence worsen as a result of dealing with students with special needs. Certainly, each student of them needs special form of service, education, training and support. In addition, disabled students' low capacities and diverse problems generate a sense of frustration and stress among their teachers, which affect their psychological hardiness.

Psychological hardiness is an important factor in mental health and psychological resilience. It consists of a set of psychological characteristics which include the variables of commitment, clarity of purpose, control and challenge. These features maintain mental, physical, psychological health, and protect us from stressful events. Suzanne Kobasa, who introduced the term psychological hardiness for the first time, describes a pattern of personality characteristics that distinguish managers and executives who remain healthy under life stress. These personality characteristics include commitment, control and challenge. Many studies point to the importance of the psychological hardiness among the elderly as one of the factors of psychological resilience against life stressors. In fact, these factors act as barriers between the individual and mental and physical illness as well as other related stressors. An individual with a strong character may well deal with stress seriously, effectively and directly. Thus, a person can convert a stressful situation into a less threatening one, which would, therefore, minimize his exposure to adverse stressful effects (Lai & Lenenko, 2007).

Al-Zahrani (2008) argued that philosophy of teaching students with special needs changed gradually from mere seclusion in special institutions and conditions into integration in regular schools and classes. This main shift was based on the number of features and advantages, including:

- Integration focuses on helping persons with special needs in their natural settings – instead of being protected in isolated environments – after making the necessary modifications on them to meet their academic, social and emotional needs.

- Integration protects children with special needs and their families from feelings of guilt, frustration and stigma resulted from rehabilitation in private centers.

In-service training (IST)

There are various definitions of the term 'in-service training' based on different approaches. Al Laqqani & Al-Jamal (1999:62) define in-service training as a wide range of courses, practices and workshops and other procedures, which aim to provide a range of cognitive and affective experiences and skills required for elevating teacher's education and academic performance in theory and in practice. Hargreaves and Michael Fullan argue that the US Board of Education indicated that the primary objective of training focused on the changes recommended by the educational bodies

and authorities. For example, based on the recommendations of the US Ministry of Education, the Board of Education introduced a new program. Besides, Dunkin said British official commission define the objectives of the in-service teacher education as follows:

1. Development of teachers' professional competence.

2. Development of teachers' content knowledge.

3. Development of teachers' self-confidence as well as assessment of their work and attitudes in other settings. (1987 Dunkin)

1. Psychological Hardiness:

The term *Psychological Hardiness* refers to the psychological perseverance and hardiness which include minor traits of commitment, control, challenge, which are deemed important for successfully dealing with problematic situations or psychological hardships (Nofal Radi, 2008:21). Abbas (2010:174) argues that the psychological hardiness refers to the individual's actions that help him to cope with stressors that may adversely affect his health. In other words, the components of the psychological hardiness can benefit a person in coping with life stressors by making them less threatening and by changing his views towards himself as a more competent person. In a sense, he may rely on a strategy that focuses on problem and support, rather than relying on a strategy that focuses on feelings and evasion. Previous literature and studies reveal that the psychological hardiness consists of three elements: commitment, control and challenge.

Commitment: According to Abu Nada (2007:19), commitment is the individual's tendency to recognize himself, achieve objectives and values and bear responsibility.

Control: Hamdan and Mohamad (2002) argue that control is the individual's tendency to perceive himself as being able to manage life-changing events and psychological contingencies, whether they are behavioral or cognitive.

Challenge: Challenge is the tendency to face threats, look for solutions, persevere and mobilize resources to deal with problems. Othman (2001:210) says that challenge is the individual's ability to adapt to the new life situations and accept all inevitable events whether they are pleasant or harmful as a normal part of life. This trait helps the individual to be flexible in the face of change and confront any traumatic events and stressful life events, as it generates the feelings of optimism necessary for acceptance of new experiences.

2.1. Teachers of children with special needs

Zaidan Sartawi and Kamal Sesalem (1987:96) define teachers of students with special needs as those teachers who teach irregular students in public schools. On the other hand, the researcher defines teacher of students with special needs as the one who is qualified in special education and is directly involved in teaching students with learning difficulties and disabilities who learn in the regular classes with ordinary children.

Ali Mohamad (2002:35) defines characteristics of effective special education teacher as follows:

1. Desire and willingness

2. Social skills

3. Experience and awareness of the methods of educational, psychological and social care.

2.2 Teaching competences needed for special education teacher:

Ali Muhamad (2002:40) defines the most important criteria of the teaching competencies required by the special education teacher according to the Radden & Blakhurst's model as follows:

1. Identifying the necessary strategic guidelines to achieve the integration of students with special needs with ordinary students.

2. Identifying training needs of teachers with special needs, and key objectives for teaching students with special needs.

3. Planning of teaching strategies and using learning resources for students with special needs.

4. Implementation of learning facilitation strategies.

5. Learning evaluation.

2. 3 Objectives of teachers with special needs:

Al-Najjar (2004:222) sets the objectives that special education teachers seek to achieve as follows:

1. Identify abnormal children through appropriate measurement and diagnosis instruments.

2. Identify teaching methods for each group of special education and achieve the objectives of the educational programs based on an individual education plan.

3. Prepare teaching methods and technological activities for each category of special education students.

4. Develop disability prevention programmes to thwart occurrence of disability.

5. Consider individual differences among students through guidance and development according to individual capacities, aptitudes and preferences.

6. Provide scientific research tools to develop skills of talented students.

2. 3 The reality of integration of the disabled students in Palestine:

The development of special education worldwide shifted from isolation of the disabled students in special institutes to inclusion and integration within the mainstream education system. Integration of students with special needs is the most important parameter of the increasing global tendency for safeguarding rights of the disabled. The UNESCO conference on this issue indicated that most states started to practice the idea of integration in gradual and partial manner. However, the scope of integration should be expanded to include all groups of students (Haroun, 1996:63). Turkistani (2008) points that the inclusion of the disabled students with ordinary students can help them to imitate positive behavioral models which enhance their social maturity. Moreover, these students can acquire knowledge and experience from ordinary students, develop communication skills as well as basic skills in reading and math, and gain better self-esteem and motivation.

In 1997, the Palestinian Ministry of Education inaugurated the all-inclusive education – no child is left behind. A total of 5500 students with special needs have been integrated into regular public schools, which were equipped with the necessary facilities. However, the rate of the integrated students did not exceed 30% (age group 5-24), with a rate of illiteracy of 49.1%, and the rate of females reached 66.2%. Therefore, based on the ministry's principles, the Palestinian disability law No 4 was issued for the year 1999 on the rights of the disabled, advocating for inclusive education and social integration. It adopted the definition of the disabled as 'Any individual suffering from a permanent partial or total disability whether congenital or not in his/her senses or in his/her physical, psychological, or mental capabilities to the extent that it restricts the fulfillment of his/her normal living requirements in a manner not usually faced by those without disabilities'.

Due to the limited number of special education teachers who could deal with various types of disabled students, the Palestinian Ministry of Education has decided to develop the ordinary teachers to deal with students with special needs in the mixed classrooms. Thus, it has founded the 'Resource Room', a regular school equipped with the necessary instruments, educational games and furniture, which has been the most important source for the inclusion education.

Many previous studies have addressed the variables of this study. Zaidan's study (2010) aimed to investigate the psychological structure that distinguished students with high altruism from students with low altruism, defined the correlation between high and low and altruism, psychological hardiness and personality traits, and clarified the differences between average scores of students with high and low altruism in terms of personality traits and psychological hardiness. The study found that the psychological structure was different between students with high altruism and students with low altruism. The t-test results showed that there were significant differences at the level of 0.1% between both groups in terms of high altruism in favor of the psychological hardiness (achievement). There were also statistically significant differences in terms of the psychological hardiness and some personality traits in favor both groups (low and high altruism).

Melenez et al (2008) analyzed the effects of psychological well-being, physical functioning and socio-demographic factors on life satisfaction. There was an evidence of significant positive relations between psychological well-being dimensions and life satisfaction and between physical conditions and life satisfaction as well. Also, as age increased, there was a slow decrease in life satisfaction. The study of Duhkan and Al-Hajjar (2006) identified the level of stress and its resources among Islamic university students and its relationship to their psychological hardiness. It addressed the effects of some demographic variables on the level of stress and hardiness. The results revealed that there were no statistically significant differences among students in the level of stress except financial and total stress - due to monthly income in favor of the least income. Also, the study showed there was significant negative correlation between stress and psychological hardiness among Islamic university students. Lazuras study (2006) explored effects of professional stress on physical health among schoolteachers who did not teach students with special educational needs and teachers who taught students with special educational needs. It was found that teachers who taught students with special educational needs reported higher levels of stress than those who did not teach students with special educational needs.

3.1 The study problem

If the training of teachers of ordinary students is important, the training of teachers of students with special needs should receive greater attention. Undeniably, the disabled children need specialized teachers who can understand their needs, realize their aptitudes, and can find the best ways to develop them. This study seeks to find an answer for the main question, '*What is the relationship between the in-service training and the psychological hardiness among the teachers of students with special needs in the northern governorates of Palestine*?'

The Study hypotheses

1. There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level of (α = 0.05) in terms of the two main study variables due to the variable of gender.

2. There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level of (α = 0.05) in terms of the two main study variables due to the variable of education.

3. There are no statistically significant differences at the significance level of (α = 0.05) in terms of the two main study variables due to the variable of years of experience.

4. 1. The objectives of the study

1. Identify the level of in-service training and psychological hardiness among teachers of students with special needs in the northern governorates of Palestine.

2. Identify the relationship between in-service training and psychological hardiness among teachers of students with special needs in the northern governorates of Palestine.

3. Identify the impact of the variables of gender, qualifications, and experience on the psychological hardiness among teachers of students with special needs in the northern governorates of Palestine.

5.1 The significance of the study

1. Determine the relationship between in-service training and psychological hardiness among teachers of students with special needs in terms of professional development and teaching methods.

2. Assist curriculum planners and decision makers of teacher training programmes for teachers of the disabled students for the development of solutions to raise their level of scientific and find objective solutions to their problems.

3. Reinforce psychological hardiness of teachers of students with special needs by equipping them with the best methods of dealing with this group. Indeed, teachers may well be able to recognize this group's characteristics and needs, and gain the appropriate teaching methods.

6.1 The research limits

The present study is restricted to the teachers of students with special needs in the inclusion classes during the first semester of the school year (2016/2017).

1.7 The study terms

Psychological hardiness: an individual's general belief of his ability to use available psychological and environmental sources effectively so that he can effectively recognize and cope with stressful life events (Al Hajjar & Dukhan, 2005, 373)

The researcher defines the psychological hardiness as the teacher's ability to cope with students with special needs in the integration classes measured by his score in the Psychological Hardiness Scale in the current study.

In-service training: it is the long or short training programs and/ or workshops and other courses which end with a qualification with the aim of raising the level of teachers' performance in one or more of performance key areas. (Abu Atwan, 2008:12)

Al-Ta'ani (2007:14) defines it as the organized and planned efforts to develop teacher's teaching knowledge and experience, and performance.

The current study defines it as "previously-planned, meaningful and structured training programme aiming at providing special education teachers with necessary information and behavioral values, leading to enhanced scientific advancement and educational and academic performance".

Teacher of students with special needs: a teacher who teaches and deals with students with learning disabilities who demonstrate a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more of the areas of learning in the regular classes at the elementary levels.

Integration: integration (mainstreaming) refers to the placement of students with special needs in the mainstream classrooms along with non-disabled students. Such group of students are usually provided with natural environments, special education services and supplementary aids and services, thereby protecting them from isolation in private schools.

8. 1 Methodology and procedures:

8. 2 **Methodology of the study**: the researchers used the descriptive analytical approach for the objectives of the study.

8. 3 **Population and sample of the study:** the sample of the study consisted of 70 special education teachers the integration classrooms in Tulkarm during the first semester of the academic year 2016/2017. Table 1 shows characteristics of the study sample.

Table 1: characteristics of the study sample

variable	category	recurrence	percentage
Gender	Male	25	35.7
	Female	45	64.3
	BA & below	58	82.9
	Master & above	12	17.1
Work experience	Less than 5 yrs	28	40
	6-10 years	20	28.6
	11 years & more	22	31.4
Total		70	100 %

8.4 The research tools:

In-service training questionnaire

The researchers developed an in-service training questionnaire by reference to educational literature and relevant previous studies, as well as interviews with teachers of students with special needs in the integration classrooms. The final version of this research instrument consisted of two parts. The first part included initial data on the respondents such as gender, qualifications, and years of experience. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 26 items.

8. 5 Psychological Hardiness Scale

The researchers used the Psychological Hardiness Scale which consisted of 42 items (Mekhemar, 1997).

8. 6 Validity and reliability of the measurement instrument:

The validity of the measurement instrument was verified by a panel of 6 competent and experienced arbitrators who were in effect part of the teaching faculties at the educational sciences departments in the Palestinian universities, and held positions of assistant professors and co-professors. The arbitrators verified the validity of the measurement tool after omitting and modifying some items in it. The In-service Training Scale (questionnaire) initially consisted of 32 items, then 6 of them were removed. However, the final version consisted of 26 items based on the consensus of 70% of the arbitrators. The Psychological Hardiness Scale was originally prepared by Mikhaimar (1997). The researchers verified the internal consistency of the measurement instrument by processing the Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient, where the reliability coefficient of the In-service Training Scale was (0.98) and scale of methods of confronting psychological stress was (0.84). This high value confirmed the internal consistency of the measurement instrument.

8. 7 Study procedures:

The researchers conducted the study in coordination with, and a permission from, the Palestinian Ministry of Education. After defining the validity and reliability of the measurement instrument and the population and the sample of the study, the researchers conducted the study in the first semester of the school year (2016/2017). The collected data were then processed and analyzed using the statistical packages for the social science (SPSS).

8. 8 Statistical processing

The researchers used the descriptive, statistical and analytical approaches, including arithmetic means, percentages, recurrences, t-test, and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

8. 9 Results of the study

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between in-service training and the psychological hardiness among special education teachers in the integration classrooms in public schools in the area of the Tulkarm Directorate of Education. Also, it aimed to determine the effect of each of the variables of gender, qualifications and years of experience. The collected data were statistically processed and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Below is an overview of the outcomes of the study.

1. Results related to the first question:

What is the relationship between the in-service training and the psychological hardiness among the teachers of students with special needs in the northern governorates of Palestine?

To answer this question, arithmetic means and percentages of each item and total score of the measurement tool were used (tables 2, 3, 4). To analyze the results, the following percentages were used:

Score	Percentage
Very low	0 - 50%
low	50 – 59.9
Average	60 – 69.9
High	70 – 79.9
Very high	80 - 100

Table 2: Averages, Percentages and Scores of In-service Training

No	Item	Average	Percentage	score
8	Service training makes me able to deal with poor performance of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.53	90.57	Very high
17	In-service training introduces me to modern teaching methods of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.47	89.43	Very high
20	In-service training develops teacher's capacity and efficiency of dealing with students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.39	87.71	Very high
16	In-service training promotes my classroom management and solving problems of students in the integration classrooms.	4.39	87.71	Very high
26	In-service training develops my classroom organisation in a way that reinforces learning and teaching process in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
25	In-service training improves my practice of information, educational concepts and theories and helps me determine their applicability in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
22	In-service training develops the teacher's capacity to cope with modern educational developments.	4.30	86.00	Very high
21	In-service training promotes the teacher's sense of self-responsibility toward his discipline.	4.30	86.00	Very high
15	In-service training introduces me to the modern methods of valuation of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
11	In-service training improves my ability to use (simple, compound, complex) utterances of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high

7	In-service training improves my ability to use feedback from students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
6	In-service training helps me to diversify my evaluation methods when dealing with students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
1	In-service training helps me to plan for educational activities for students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.30	86.00	Very high
3	In-service training helps me to liaise with others in the implementation of subjects of the students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.23	84.57	Very high
2	In-service training helps me to prepare educational lesson plans for students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.23	84.57	Very high
23	In-service training develops my writing skills of special reporting on students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.21	84.29	Very high
4	In-service training helps me to set specific educational goals for students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.21	84.29	Very high
24	In-service training helps me in the process of Assessment, diagnosis and referral of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.20	84.00	Very high
13	In-service training helps me to become aware of the current trends in special education.	4.20	84.00	Very high
14	In-service training helps me benefit from eLearning technology in the integration classrooms.	4.16	83.14	Very high
12	In-service training helps me to keep up with the educational and technological changes.	4.16	83.14	Very high
9	In-service training help me to interpret and analyze the students' outcomes.	4.13	82.57	Very high

19	In-service training employs e-learning technology programs and distance learning in the service of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.04	80.86	Very high
10	In-service training employs the writing skill in teaching vocabulary and structures to students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	4.04	80.86	Very high
5	In-service training develops teacher's effective content analysis.	4.04	80.86	Very high
18	In-service training develops teachers' methods of valuation of students with special needs in the integration classrooms.	3.99	79.71	High
	Total score	4.24	84.86	Very high

The table 2 above showed that the score of the items in general was very high (80%). Also, the score of item 8 was very high (79.71). The total score was very high (84.86).

Table 3: PHS Averages and Percentages.

No	Item	Average	Percentage	score
3	I think life's pleasure comes from the person's ability to cope with its challenges	4.74	94.86	Very high
13	I have certain values and principles that I am committed to.	4.69	93.71	Very high
19	I never hesitate to participate in any activity that serves my community.	4.66	93.14	Very high
15	I have the ability to take an initiative after I end a problem.	4.66	93.14	Very high
31	I take the initiative to do anything that serves my family and/or my community.	4.64	92.86	Very high
10	I think that my life has a meaning and goal that I live for.	4.63	92.57	Very high
5	When I determine my future plans, I am often sure I can accomplish them.	4.61	92.29	Very high
9	I have a curiosity and a desire to know what I don't know.	4.51	90.29	Very high

1	No matter what the obstacles are, I can always achieve my ambitions.	4.47	89.43	Very high
41	I think that I have strong influence on what is going on around me.	4.41	88.29	Very high
42	I care about my country's issues and I participate in them whenever possible.	4.39	87.71	Very high
4	Values of life lie in the individual's loyalty to some of its principles.	4.39	87.71	Very high
2	I take my decisions by myself without any external influence.	4.37	87.43	Very high
22	I always support others when they face any problems.	4.36	87.14	Very high
34	I am interested in issues and events around me.	4.29	85.71	Very high
14	I think that failure is due to personal reasons.	4.21	84.29	Very high
33	I face problems boldly because I am confident I can solve them.	4.17	83.43	Very high
8	My success in things (study, work) depends on my effort, not luck or chance.	4.16	83.14	Very high
40	I feel responsible for helping others.	3.99	79.71	High
39	I think that life without change is boring.	3.99	79.71	High
27	I think that problem solving proves my endurance and perseverance.	3.94	78.86	High
26	I can control everything in my life.	3.80	76.00	High
30	I crave for adventure, and discovery of things around me.	3.71	74.29	High
32	I think I have weak influence on events that happen in my life.	3.71	74.29	High
18	Problems boost my strengths and abilities.	3.70	74.00	High
12	I think that life becomes exciting when it involves problems I can cope with.	3.70	74.00	High
21	I worry about unstable circumstances and	3.69	73.71	High

	events in my life.			
24	When I solve a problem, I feel like I want to solve another.	3.66	73.14	High
35	I think that an individual's life is controlled by unrestrained external forces.	3.61	72.29	High
20	I think there is no such thing as luck.	3.59	71.71	High
6	I tackle problems and solve them even before they occur.	3.44	68.86	Average
23	I think that luck plays an important role in my life.	3.44	68.86	Average
29	I think that misfortune results from poor planning.	3.26	65.14	Average
17	I think that what happens to me is often the consequence of my plans.	3.26	65.14	Average
25	I think that you should distance yourself from others (be unsociable).	3.16	63.14	Average
28	My huge interest in my own life does not give me a chance to care about others.	2.87	57.43	Low
16	I have no objectives that I may desire to uphold or fend of.	2.79	55.71	Low
11	Life is opportunities – no hard work and no struggle.	2.71	54.29	Low
7	Most life is wasted in meaningless and useless activities.	2.49	49.71	Very low
38	I believe in the common " A bit of luck is better than loads of hard work."	2.36	47.14	Very low
36	Life interesting is the stable and restful life.	2.23	44.57	Very low
37	Life with all its gifts is not worth living.	1.77	35.43	Very low
	Total score	3.79	75.82	high

Table (3) showed that scores of items 3, 13, 19, 15, 13, 10, 5, 9, 1, 41, 42, 4, 2, 22, 34, 14, 33, 8) were very high (more than 80%); scores of items (40, 39, 27, 26, 30, 32, 18, 12, 21, 24, 35, 20) was high (70 -79.9%); scores of items (6, 23, 29, 17, 25) were average (60 -69.9%); scores of items (28, 16, 11) were low (50-59.9%); scores of

items (7, 38, 36, 37) were very low (less than 50%). However, the results of this results were not consistent with Lazarus' study (2006), which investigated the psychological stress of special education teachers.

The researcher used the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to find out the relationship between the both parameters of the study. Table (4) showed the results of the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient analysis.

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient of Relationship between In-service Training and Psychological Hardiness

item	Psychological Hardiness	N	Significance level
In-service Training	**0.69**	**70**	**0.000 ***

* Significance level less than 0.01

The table above showed that there was a statistically positive significant correlation at the level of significance of (0.01 or less) between the in-service training and teachers performance (improved in-service training led to better psychological hardiness. The researchers attributed this inference to fact that in-service training maintained the special education process in an orderly and thoughtful way through profound theories, which developed the teachers' psychological hardiness.

2. Results related to the hypothesis of the study

'There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance of (α = 0.05) in the respondents' attitudes in-service training and psychological hardiness in terms of the variables of gender, education, and years of service.'

The variable of gender

The t-test was used for the independent samples to reveal whether there were statistically significant differences at the level of significance of (α = 0.05) in the relationship between in-service training and psychological hardiness due to variable of gender (Table 5).

Table 5: T-test Results for In-service Training and Psychological Hardiness due to Variable of Gender

Core	Male (N=25)	Female (N=45)	T	Significance

	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Value	
In-service Training	4.22	0.44	4.24	0.51	0.15-	0.12
Psychological Hardiness	3.77	3.80	0.32	0.34	0.37-	0.90

* level of significance at (α = 0.05)

Table (5) showed that differences between in-service training and psychological hardiness were not statistically significant (their significance levels were (0.12 & 0.90) respectively, which were greater than (0.05)). There were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance of (α = 0.05) for role of in-service training due to the variable of gender. The researchers attributed this result to the fact that the in-service training equally improved the psychological hardiness for both male and female teachers. However, this finding study (Rodewalt and Zone, 1989) which revealed significant differences due to the variable of gender in favor of males.

The variable of qualification

The t-test was used for the independent samples to reveal whether there were statistically significant differences at the level of significance of (α = 0.05) in the relationship between in-service training and psychological hardiness due to variable of qualification (Table 6).

Table 6: T-test Results for In-service Training and Psychological Hardiness due to Variable of Qualification

Core	Less than BA (N=58)		MA or higher (N=12)		T Value	Significance
	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation	Arithmetic mean	standard deviation		
In-service Training	4.26	0.50	4.13	0.40	0.82	0.00
Psychological Hardiness	3.77	0.32	3.84	0.39	0.65-	0.14

Table (6) showed the differences in the relationship the in-service training and psychological hardiness were significant for the core of in-service training whose level of significance was (0.00), which was less than (0.05) in favour of the BA holders. The researchers argued that this result referred to the fact that low-qualified staff received more training than highly-qualified staff. However, the level of significance of the psychological hardiness was (0.14) which was higher than (0.05). Thus, there were no statistically significant differences at the level of significance of (α = 0.05) for in-service training due to the variable of qualification. The researchers attributed this result to the fact that psychological hardiness improved by training as well as academic qualifications, which increased the individual's confidence by providing him with the necessary skills for the special education teaching.

The variable of years of experience

The one-way ANOVA was used for the independent samples to reveal whether there were statistically significant differences at the level of significance of ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the relationship between in-service training and psychological hardiness due to variable of years of experience (Tables 7 & 8).

Table 7: Average Means for In-service Training and Psychological Hardiness due to Variable of Years of Experience

Core	Less than 5 years N = 28	6 – 10 years N =20	11 years or more N = 22
In-service Training	4.26	4.23	4.21
Psychological Hardiness	3.78	3.87	3.72

Table 8: ANOVA Results for In-service Training and Psychological Hardiness due to Variable of Years of Experience

Core	Source	SS	DF	MS	F	P
In-service Training	Between groups	0.03	2	0.01	0.07	0.92
	Within groups	16.33	67	0.24		
	Total	16.37	69			
Psychological Hardiness	Between groups	0.25	2	0.12		0.32
	Within groups	7.51	67	0.11	1.13	
	Total	7.77	69			

* level of significance at ($\alpha = 0.05$)

Table 8 pointed out that the impacts of the in-service training on the psychological hardiness were not significant since the significance levels of the two main cores of the study were (0.92, 0.32) respectively, which were higher than (0.05). Indeed, there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level of ($\alpha = 0.05$) for impact of in-service training on psychological fluency due to the variable of years of experience. The researchers attributed this result to the fact that all levels were subjected to in-service training to cope with various changes and developments, which

required the introduction of new ways to deal with students with special needs. These results were consistent with Sayed El-Bahas study (2002).

9. 1 The recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive plan for dealing with students with special needs in public schools.

2. Provide intensive training for teachers of students with special needs so that they can meet their students' needs.

3. Organize programs that support psychological hardiness of teachers of students with special needs.

4. Provide the necessary means for teaching students with special needs.

5. Conduct research on contemporary curricula and teaching methods for students with special needs.

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