



Psychological Stress of Teachers of People with Learning Difficulties and its Relation to Some Variables: A Field Study in the United Arab Emirates

Iman Abed Rabou^a , Najeh Rajeh Al Salihi^{b,c,d*} , Abdellateef Abdelhafez Alqawasmi^e , Sami Al-Qatawneh^f , Emad Mohammad Alghazo^e 

^aCollege of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Fujairah, Fujairah, UAE

^bCollege of Humanities and Sciences, Ajman University, Ajman, UAE.

^cHumanities and Social Sciences Research Center (HSSRC), Ajman University, Ajman, UAE.
Mobile number: 00971543374987

^dDeanship of Research and Graduate Studies, Ajman University, Ajman, UAE.

^eCollege of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Al Ain University, Al Ain, UAE

^fCollege of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, University of Sharjah, Sharjah, UAE.

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Abstract

Due to the prevalence of cases of increased occupational stress and its effects on teachers' performance and mental health in particular education institutions, the importance of assessing stress levels and the factors most likely to determine it has been highlighted. Recognizing the significance of exceptional education instructors' psychological health in educational environments, this study aims to investigate the psychological stress of teachers of students with learning difficulties and its relationship to several variables. To achieve the study's objectives, a psychological stress scale was developed. A total of 63 instructors from Dubai, Sharjah, and Ajman were selected on purpose to participate in the study. The results indicated that the level of psychological stress was moderate, and the types of stress experienced by individuals in the sample were ranked in a three-tiered hierarchy. The stress associated with the relationship with students comes first, followed by material anxiety, the stress related to the relationship with parents, and the stress associated with the work environment. In addition, there are disparities between the sample individuals based on the "emirate" variable in favor of Dubai and the "marriage status" variable in favor of married individuals. In addition, there are no distinctions based on educational experience, except stress dimensions related to parental relationships. The differences between (1-5) and (11) or more years favored (1-5) years. Except for the dimension of the tension of the work environment, which favors females, no significant gender differences have been observed. Based on the findings, it is recommended that attention be paid to the psychological tension among teachers of people with learning difficulties and that efforts be made to contain it to improve their performance and preserve their physical and mental health.

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* Corresponding Author.

Email : n.alsalhi@ajman.ac.ae

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Introduction

Due to the increased psychological complexities of the twenty-first century, the workplace, individual factors, and the teaching environment pose numerous challenges for mentors and educators. The prevalence of psychological tension in the lives of individuals characterizes this era. Therefore, it becomes necessary for them to make endeavors to restore harmony with themselves and their living environment. Teaching and mentoring at the high school or college level are characterized by numerous psychological and mental challenges presented by external factors, such as students, the teaching environment, and the administration. The challenges the teachers faced during the pandemic clearly illustrate their somatic burden and emotional decline (Collie, 2021). Teachers experience psychological stress due to disturbing contextual problems that make them feel threatened and uneasy. It is well-known that a teacher is the most essential aspect of the educational process. Their role substantially impacts the cognitive, mental, and social development of their students, as well as their ability to acquire a variety of skills and behaviors. The role of the teacher influences all phases of a student's education; therefore, educators must be psychologically stable, motivated, passionate, and committed to their profession and their students.

Additionally, they must believe in the mission they are carrying out and be comfortable and content while performing their duties. This topic draws attention to the causes of psychological stress and how it can be mitigated with effective learning measures and teaching methodologies, given the prevalence of occupational stress among teachers (Lazarus, 1996). Stress negatively impacts the mental health of teachers, which in turn negatively impacts education, student performance, and practical and educational outcomes. In the case of troubled students, psychological duress in academic environments multiplies. In this regard, Bisson (2017) notes that teaching in general and teaching students with cognitive disabilities, in particular, is one of the most stressful professions for teachers. It may contribute to an increase in psychological tension.

Moreover, psychological tension jeopardizes the health and equilibrium of teachers, as well as their psychological well-being (Bisson, 2017). Psychological tension threatens teachers and their profession because it adversely affects them and leads to retention and burnout. On a broader scale, the adverse effects may manifest as job dissatisfaction, low performance, inability to be innovative in the classroom, a sense of fatigue, and low motivation to work, resulting in a decline in student achievement (Al-Enezi, 2000; Zaghoul & Khlaifat, 2003). Teachers of students with learning disabilities do not operate in isolation from the rest of the staff and the community in which they reside. Instead, they labor in an environment that is both interactive and influenceable. In other words, the educator must interact with his teacher, specialist colleagues, the school administration, and administrative employees. They must also interact with the students' guardians. These interactions affect the teacher, and the teacher's performance would improve if the school administration comprehended the teacher's role and provided adequate assistance and support. However, if they are given additional administrative responsibilities, the teacher will be under great stress, resulting in an atmosphere of unease and exhaustion. In addition, the psychological tension is caused by uncooperative parents (Parker & Tavella, 2021). Teachers experience high levels of psychological stress, resulting in a decline in student motivation to study, difficulty managing the classroom, an increasing workload, a lack of rewards, low salaries, an ambiguous role, few opportunities for promotion, low social support (being on bad terms with colleagues, administration, and supervisors and not participating in school decision-making), and emotional and physical exhaustion (Bisson, 2017). These factors impose an additional burden on teachers, requiring them to pay heightened attention to students' educational requirements while juggling administrative and mentoring responsibilities. It has been observed, however, that the prevalence of psychologically challenging environments has varying effects on the mentoring actors. The personal characteristics and stress-coping mechanisms of instructors enable them to respond differently to presented challenges and perform following prevailing trends.

Background of the Study

Psychological coercion is one of the life experiences that humans encounter. They may adapt to or surmount it, or they may be unable to tolerate it and suffer. The theoretical insights of Lazarus, Deese, and Osler (1952) demonstrate that psychological stress is directly related to behavior and performance. Stress is a predictor of poor performance and negative behavioral tendencies. A person's pessimistic outlook and heightened nervousness and anxiety result from numerous problems caused by psychological stress. Additionally, psychological stress causes individuals to reject social regulations and standards. Both children and adults are affected. Psychological tension frequently has numerous adverse effects on an individual's personality. When people are under duress, their physical, emotional, and behavioral characteristics deviate from their norms. According to Papathanasiou, Tsaras, Neroliatsiou, and Roupa (2015), when a person is under pressure, his personality is negatively impacted. Abraham (1992) defines psychological stress as a condition in which an individual experiences mental or physical strain due to inconvenient external influences, resulting in intense nervous and physiological tension. Therefore, the individual struggles to maintain self-control and emotional control (Altayyeb & Albohas, 2009). The projection of such behaviors frequently complicates both personal and professional relationships. Furthermore, suppressing these

emotions results in severe psychological conditions that leave a person permanently mentally deformed. [Taha \(1993\)](#) demonstrates that psychological stress, as a stimulus, is the condition that an individual experiences when confronted with an urgent demand beyond their control and in a situation of intense conflict or great peril. If psychological stress causes actual damage to a person, that person will become frustrated. Even if the individual suffers no real injury, they still feel threatened. [Asker \(1998\)](#) noted that treating psychological stress does not imply that it has been alleviated, prevented, or eliminated. Psychological tension in our lives is normal, and we all experience it, albeit to varying degrees. Psychological tension does not indicate illness as much as it indicates that we are living, interacting with life, and pursuing specific goals. [Rubin, Boals, and Berntsen \(2008\)](#) discovered that individuals go through several stages under duress. This is the alarm stage, in which an individual is exposed to stressors that induce uneasiness and anxiety, followed by the resistance stage, in which the individual attempts to alleviate stress directly or by devising methods that lead to positive outcomes. However, suppose stress persists, and the individual cannot manage it. In that case, they enter the stage of strain, where they experience negative emotions such as hopelessness, frustration, and physical symptoms. Sources of psychological tension are either internal, originating within the individual, or external, arising from the surrounding environment. According to [He, Turnbull, Kirshbaum, Phillips, and Klainin-Yobas \(2018\)](#), the internal variables include resilience, self-efficacy, and mindfulness, whereas the external factors include social support and the individual's perceived work or living environment. In the context of these factors, stress also causes extreme anxiety and distress and a fearful and anxious environment rife with stressful situations ([Alqahtani & Alqahtani, 2021](#)). Because the present study examines the various perspectives and dimensions of psychological stress, it is necessary to evaluate different levels and classifications of stress that are regulated differently in various situations. Psychological stress is categorized into three primary levels: 1) Normal stress is the first level that can be eliminated, and it is the lowest. The majority of the time, people experience this type of stress, which is caused by minor life issues with which they can easily manage. 2) Individuals who grew up in a depressing environment are susceptible to acute stress. Intervention and therapy are required to treat its effects, surmount the problems it causes, and relieve the individual of anxiety and fear. 3) Abnormal stress encompasses a group of neurological disorders a person develops due to rebelling against oneself and others.

Several researchers ([Hecker, Goessmann, Nkuba, & Hermenau, 2018](#); [Pace, D'Urso, Zappulla, & Pace, 2021](#)) assert that being on bad terms with colleagues, perceived job roles, isolation, the ambiguity of roles assigned to a teacher, completing additional paperwork, limited opportunities for promotion and job advancement, lack of support by decision-makers, and students' behavioral problems all contribute to the development of psychological stress. All of these factors create a toxic learning environment that does not meet the requirements of special education students. Students with learning disabilities require a stimulating learning environment, a calm atmosphere, and individualized workstations. In addition, these student groups require strategic learning, composed and tranquil teaching methods, and a healthy emotional orientation. Including emotional and psychological support for faculty and special education, students has remained a top priority for special education institutes ([Polo-Blanco & González López, 2021](#)). Therefore, it is necessary to provide the educational materials and environmental activities that will enable a teacher to provide adequate special education to these students ([Butros, 2009](#)). Poor classroom climate emotionally drains the teacher and causes them to develop negative attitudes toward her students and profession. Consequently, it affects accomplishing pertinent objectives ([Alkhateeb & Alhadidi, 2011](#)).

Literature Review

The priceless Recent research papers and studies conducted in this discipline indicate that it has received a great deal of interest from scholars. Several research papers and studies in the current research stream underscore the psychological stress of teachers of students with learning difficulties. Thus, the researchers attempted to draw from relevant studies, such as [Al-Qaryouti and Al-Dhafri's \(2010\)](#) investigation, into the levels of burnout among teachers of individuals with learning disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman. The study's results indicated that individuals in the study sample were experiencing exhaustion. They demonstrated that fatigue levels differed according to the variables of major, in favor of science majors, and education qualification, in favor of bachelor's degree holders as compared to higher diploma holders. However, the results revealed no statistically significant difference based on the teacher's marital status. They also demonstrated that the lower the students' socioeconomic status, the higher the levels of exhaustion among female teachers.

However, the results indicated no correlation between most exhaustion dimensions and teaching experience or training courses. As the present study also considers the role of parents in determining learning environment outcomes and the psychological health of teachers, it is observed that the part of parents reduces teachers' stress when interacting with such students. According to [Widyawan, Ma'Mun, Rahely, and Hendrayana \(2020\)](#), the assistance of special-needs parents in communicating their children's needs and learning requirements to teachers reduces the teachers' workload and makes their jobs easier. Thus, the active participation and support of the parents facilitate and aid the teachers in organizing strategic measures to improve the learning of children with learning disabilities. In addition, [Al-Jadoua's \(2015\)](#)

study sought to identify the causes of occupational stress among special education teachers. According to the study's findings, occupational stress sources among special education teachers are substantial. It revealed that there were statistically significant differences in the sources of stress among special education teachers according to the variables of gender in favor of females, marital status in favor of married people, years of experience in favor of those with one to five years of experience, educational level in favor of those with a bachelor's degree, and student disability in favor of the category of autism. In addition, Alqahtani and Alqahtani's (2021) study sought to demonstrate a correlation between teachers' patience levels and their coping strategies for coping with psychological stress. The findings revealed a correlation between teachers' scores on the scale of tolerance attributes and their scores on the scale of coping strategies for psychological stress. On the scale of methods for dealing with psychological stress, there was also a statistically significant difference between the mean levels of experienced teachers and those of inexperienced teachers in favor of experienced teachers. In addition, Parker and Neuharth-Pritchett (2006) sought to determine the occupational stress experienced by special education teachers. The findings revealed that the participants in the study felt that stress affected their responses to the teaching profession.

Similarly, Voltz, Sims, Nelson, and Bivens (2008) conducted a study to determine how prepared exceptional education instructors were for the occupational stress they were experiencing. The findings indicated that anxiety was a prominent characteristic of outstanding education instructors. In addition, previous surveys and studies suggest that educators and mentors of special children with cognitive disabilities are more susceptible to stress due to their role as mentors. The tension they experience at work hinders their performance and lowers the caliber of their work (Cancio et al., 2018). Individuals with adaptive strategies can cope with the prevalent stress. Job stress about work manageability is thus a significant phenomenon requiring a special work evaluation of the individual designated to teach special children.

Reviewing prior research increased the researcher's awareness of the research problem and its significance, given that no initial local study had addressed the subject. Reviewing previous studies also assisted the researcher in understanding the objectives of these studies and how to determine the study's scope. In addition, it has been determined that the variation between variables used in previous studies contributed to the enrichment of the variables. By identifying research gaps in the previous study, the researchers intend to analyze the perceived psychological stress of teachers in Emirati educational institutions who work with students with learning difficulties. The researcher developed the study's scale to identify the psychological stress that instructors experience so that appropriate organizations can assist.

Research Problem

The actuality of occupational stress in teaching cannot be ignored in contemporary workplace research and academia. During the learning phase, the professional requires various teaching strategies, administration, and relationship-building with the students. To meet its demands and fulfill its responsibilities, the teacher must be highly qualified and possess exceptional personal skills. Working with students with learning difficulties is the most distressing educational occupation because the teacher of people with special needs, including the teacher of people with learning difficulties, has greater responsibilities (Askar & Abdullah, 1997). The increasing number of students, lack of parental support, lack of incentives, low salaries, and the teacher's ability to meet the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of the students all contribute to a great deal of psychological stress for a teacher of people with learning difficulties (Al-Enezi, 2000). Given those mentioned above, it is evident that working as a teacher of children with learning disabilities, with the various situations and responsibilities of this profession, causes the teacher intolerable occupational stress. While working as a supervisor of teachers of persons with learning disabilities in the Special Education Department at Dubai International School, the researcher observed that the teachers experienced psychological stress from working with children with learning disabilities. The profession most susceptible to psychological stress is teaching children with special needs because it is a demanding profession with numerous responsibilities. This psychological stress poses a hazard to the individual's health, equilibrium, and psychological being. The researchers believe it is essential to identify teachers' perceptions of stress to take appropriate action if teachers fail to acclimate to it. In addition, the focus must be placed so that proper preventive, guiding, and treatment solutions can be developed for this population segment. Consequently, it is evident that the research problem is vital, worthy of study, and requires a comprehensive scientific investigation. Exploring the sources of psychological tension among teachers of students with learning difficulties thus defines the research problem.

Research Objectives

- To Explore the level of psychological stress among the sample individuals according to the research variables (sex, educational experience, and marital status).
- To Explore the order of psychological stress according to the research variables (sex, educational experience, emirate, and marital status).
- To Explore the significance of differences in psychological stress among the sample individuals according to the research variables (sex, educational experience, emirate, and marital status).

Research Questions

The research tries to answer the following questions:

RQ 1: The First Question: What is the level of psychological stress among the individuals of the research sample?

RQ2: Does the degree of psychological stress occurrence among the individuals of the research sample vary according to the research variables (sex, educational experience, emirate, and marital status)?

Research Terminologies

- *Learning Difficulties*

Hafedh (2000) defines learning disabilities as a disorder of fundamental mental and psychological processes, including attention, perception, concept formulation, recall, and problem-solving. Also, Alkanzi (2007) defines learning difficulties as a term used to describe individuals who experience one or more mental processes and achievement difficulties and who cannot benefit from learning activities in the typical classroom. This term excludes kinesthetic, visual, auditory, and cognitive impairments. In addition, Abraham (1992) defines learning difficulties as a central nervous system disorder.

- *Children with Learning Difficulties*

Harre and Lamb (1983) define a child as having learning difficulties if they have one or more problems relative to peers of the same age and cannot benefit from the educational opportunities available.

Psychological Stress: It is defined by Papathanasiou et al. (2015) as a collection of distressing events that individual encounters while performing tasks that threaten the self because they are beyond the individual's capabilities. They elicit extreme and enduring emotional responses from their audiences. As a consequence of these stressful events, negative phenomena affect an individual's performance and mental and behavioral state.

Method and Measures

Research Philosophy

Philosophy studies the nature, significance, and justification of various concepts and principles in the universe, whereas research is discovering new information. In this regard, research philosophy examines research knowledge, assumptions, and nature. Since this study is grounded in objective actuality, positivism is employed. The fundamentals of positivist philosophy will be utilized to clarify ontological and epistemological premises. In addition, the study demonstrates how positivist philosophical assumptions influence the choice of research methods and methodology.

Research approach

Creswell (2014) explains that research approaches consist of methods and strategies used in research studies to disperse decisions from broad hypotheses to specific data collection techniques. The research methodology includes strategies, theoretical presumptions, and particular methods. The descriptive-analytic method was utilized because it applies to the study of psychological coercion. The descriptive-analytical process investigates an educational or psychological phenomenon, analyzes its aspects, and establishes the relationships between its constituent parts. Consequently, the function of this technique is not limited to describing the phenomenon or the phenomena under investigation. It also includes data analysis, classification, correlation processes, and interpretation of some of their aspects to identify the sources of psychological stress among teachers of students with learning difficulties (Adnan Farah, 2001).

Research Population

Population refers to the sum or collection of all objects, subjects, and members of a given set. Majid (2018) explains that a population is a collection of distinct human groups and non-human entities, such as institutions and geographical locations. In contrast, a sample is a subset of the population. The research cohort for the current study consists of all teachers of students with learning difficulties from the Sharjah Center for Learning Difficulties, Alnoor School in Sharjah, and Ajman Private School. There are 126 male and female faculty members.

Research Sample

A selective sample was drawn from the source population, and the number of the research individuals whose answers were taken was (63) at data extraction.

Table 1 Distribution of Sample Individuals according to Research Variables

Sex	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Marital Status	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	14	22.22%	Single	23	36.51%
Female	49	77.78%	Married	40	63.49%
Total	63	100%	Total	63	100%

Years of Experience	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Emirate	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
(1-5) Years	19	30.16%	Dubai	20	31.75%
(6-10) Years	20	31.75%	Sharjah	29	46.03%
11 years and over	24	38.09%	Ajman	14	22.22%
Total	63	100%	Total	63	100%

Research Instruments

As an instrument, the researcher created a psychological stress scale. The scale's dimensions are as follows: According to Table 2, the first dimension contains six statements about material stress, the second dimension includes nine statements about the stress of relationships with parents, the third dimension contains nine statements about the stress of the work environment, and the fourth dimension includes eleven statements about relationships with students.

Table 2. Dimensions and items of a psychological stress scale.

Dimensions	Items Number
Material Stress	1-2-3-4-5-6
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14-15
The Stress of Work Environment	16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24
The Stress of Relationship with Students	25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35

The study used the three-point response style (extremely, moderately, slightly). A score (1,2,3) corresponds to each item of the scale, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Points response style

Alternatives	Extremely	Moderately	Slightly
Score	3	2	1

Also, the study used a triple parameter for the responses, as illustrated in the Table 4.

Table 4. Parameter for the responses.

Extremely	Moderately	Slightly
From 2,34 to 3	From 1,67 to 2,33	From 1 to 1,66

The Validity of the Scale

A group of arbitrators (7) faculty members of professors at Damascus University, Ajman University, and Family Science University with extensive experience in the field of Psychology and Education were asked for their opinions on the items of the scale in terms of the relevance of items for achieving the research objectives and the number and comprehensiveness of sale items. In light of the evaluators' opinions and recommendations for enhancing the scale, certain statements were modified, and others were eliminated. To accomplish the purpose of the study, the scale was modified to contain 35 elements.

The Scale Reliability:

The study assessed the reliability of the scale according to the following methods:

- *Reliability via Cronbach's Alpha method.*

Cronbach's Alpha Formula was applied to the sub-dimension and total scale scores of twenty teachers of pupils with learning difficulties (the same internal consistency sample). According to this procedure, the reliability coefficients ranged between (0.795 and 0.949), indicating the scale's high reliability.

- *Consistency via Split-Half method.*

The study calculates the split-half reliability coefficient for the subdimensions and total score of the scale. Using the Spearman-Brown formula, the reliability coefficient was then adjusted. The values of the coefficients of reliability ranged between (0.777 and 0.945). Table 5 shows these high-reliability coefficients indicate a reliable scale according to the split-half method.

Table 5. Reliability Coefficients for the scale according to Split-Half methods.

Sub-Dimensions	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Split-Half
Material Stress	6	0.795	0.777
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	9	0.832	0.883
The Stress of Work Environment	9	0.824	0.853
The Stress of Relationship with Students	11	0.878	0.861
Total Score	35	0.949	0.945

Ethical Consideration:

Ethical considerations in a research study refer to principles that guide research practices and design. Hancock, Naaman, and Levy (2020) believe it is a matter of human dignity to protect the rights of research participants. In addition to focusing on appropriate methodology, this study emphasizes ethical considerations. This study respects the rights of participants and informed consent, a key element of ethical conduct. Participants were guaranteed access to information and the ability to disengage anytime. In addition, this study protects the participants' names and self-identification statements to assure the confidentiality of data.

Results

The First Question: What is the level of psychological stress among the individuals of the research sample?

To answer this question, a scale of psychological stress was ascribed to each level among the research sample on the scale of psychological stress sources using a three-point Likert scale. The categories of the means for each level were determined using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Likert Scale Levels} - 1}{\text{Number of Levels}} = \frac{3 - 1}{3} = 0.66$$

Based on the mathematical rounding rule, the means of scores can be treated as follows:

Table 6. Levels of Psychological Stress among the individuals of the Research Sample and their Corresponding values

Level of psychological stress	The value assigned to each level	Categories of arithmetic mean values for each level
High	3	2,34 - 3
Moderate	2	1,67 - 2,33
Low	1	1 - 1,66

To determine the psychological stress level, arithmetic means, and standard deviations were calculated for the scores of the research sample individuals on the scale of psychological stress sources and its sub-dimensions, as seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of the Research Sample Individuals on the Scale of Psychological Stress Sources

No.	Dimensions	No. of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Order
1	Material Stress	6	2.21	.481	Moderate	2
2	The Stress of Relationship with Parents	9	2.09	.454	Moderate	3
3	The Stress of the Work Environment	9	2.07	.437	Moderate	4
4	The Stress of Relationship with Students	11	2.28	.527	Moderate	1
	Total Score	35	2.03	.384	Moderate	

It can be seen from the preceding Table that the arithmetic means of the research sample's scores on the psychological stress scale and its subdimensions are as follows: the dimension of (stress of relationship with the students) with arithmetic mean (2.28) which is of a (moderate) level, followed by (material stress) with arithmetic mean (2.21) which is of a (moderate) level, then (stress of relationship with parents) with arithmetic mean (2.09) which is of a (moderate) level, and finally (stress of work environment) with arithmetic mean (2.07) which is of The arithmetic mean of the scores of the research sample and the total score on the scale of psychological stress is (2.03), which indicates a moderate level of psychological stress. Figure 2 displays the arithmetic means of the level of psychological stress in the research sample for each dimension of the psychological stress scale and its total score:

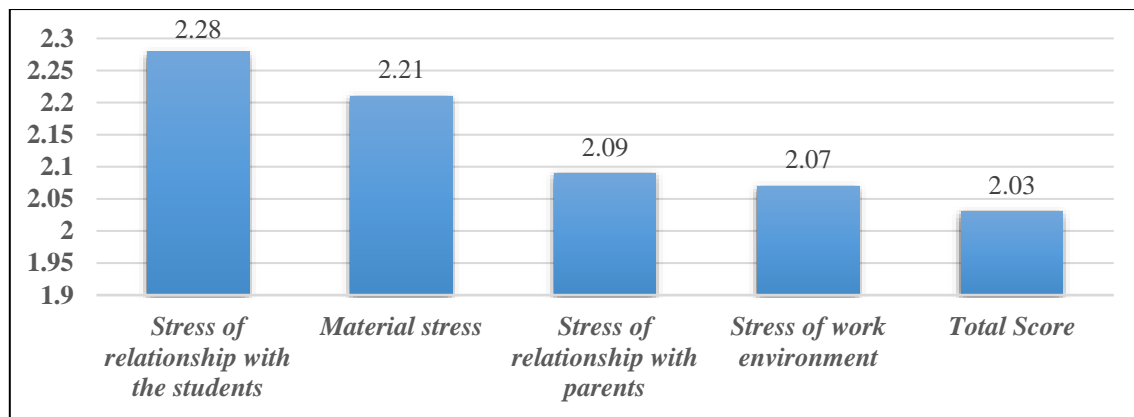


Figure 2. Arithmetic Means for the Levels of psychological stress among the sample. Research individuals in each one of the dimensions of the scale and its total score.

As shown in Table 8, the number of individuals and percentages in each psychological stress level was determined relative to the subdimensions and total score of the scale.

Table 8. Number of Individuals and Percentages according to Psychological Stress Levels

Sub-Dimensions	Value	Psychological Stress Levels		
		Low	Moderate	High
Material Stress	Number	9	32	22
	Percentage	14.29%	50.79%	34.92%
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Number	10	36	17
	Percentage	15.87%	57.14%	26.94%
The Stress of Work Environment	Number	12	39	12
	Percentage	19.05%	61.90%	19.05%
The Stress of Relationship with Students	Number	8	25	30
	Percentage	12.70%	39.68%	47.62%
Total Score	Number	12	37	14
	Percentage	19.05%	50.73%	22.22%

The second Question: Does the degree of psychological stress occurrence among the individuals of the research sample vary according to the research variables (sex, educational experience, emirate, and marital status)?

The arithmetic means, and standard deviations were calculated, and the (T-Test) was used to determine the significance of the differences between the means for the independent samples. According to the research variables, the results of the subjects' responses to the survey are provided below.

- According to the Sex variable

A t-test was used to assess the significance of the differences between the Means of the Scores of the Research Sample individuals on the Scale of Psychological Stress Sources, according to sex, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Means and SD of the individuals of the research sample Based on sex variable.

Sub-Dimensions	Sex	Number	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	Degree of Freedom	p-value	Decision																																															
Material Stress	Male	14	2.10	.554	1.002	61	0.320	Non-Significant																																															
	Female	49	2.24	.460					The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Male	14	1.94	.576	1.334	61	0.187	Non-Significant	Female	49	2.13	.411	The Stress of Work Environment	Male	14	1.75	.427	3.260	61	0.002	Significant	Female	49	2.16	.402	The Stress of Relationship with Students	Male	14	2.07	.576	1.690	61	0.096	Non-Significant	Female	49	2.34	.504	Total Score	Male	14	1.84	.427	2.157	61	0.035
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Male	14	1.94	.576	1.334	61	0.187	Non-Significant																																															
	Female	49	2.13	.411					The Stress of Work Environment	Male	14	1.75	.427	3.260	61	0.002	Significant	Female	49	2.16	.402	The Stress of Relationship with Students	Male	14	2.07	.576	1.690	61	0.096	Non-Significant	Female	49	2.34	.504	Total Score	Male	14	1.84	.427	2.157	61	0.035	Significant	Female	49	2.09	.358								
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	Female	49	2.09	.358																																																			

Table 9 displays the t-values relative to each dimension of the scale and its total score in the following order: (1.002, 1.334, 3.260, 1.690, 2.157), with the corresponding p-values: (0.320, 0.187, 0.002, 0.096, 0.035). They are less than the significance level of (0.05) for the sub-dimension (stress of work environment) and the scale's total score but more significant than the significance level of (0.05) used in the study for the sub-dimensions (material stress, stress of relationship with parents, and stress of relationship with students). Therefore, there are statistically significant differences between the means of the sample's scores on the dimension (work environment stress) and the total score of the scale of psychological stress sources according to the variable of gender. The differences favor the females whose arithmetic mean is the highest.

- According to the Marital Status variable

A t-test was used to assess the significance of the differences between the Means of the Scores of the Research Sample individuals on the Scale of Psychological Stress Sources, according to the Marital Status variable, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Means and SD of the individuals of the research sample Based on the Marital Status variable.

Sub-Dimensions	Marital Status	Number	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	Degree of Freedom	p-value	Decision
Material Stress	Single	23	1.80	.491	6.541	61	0.000	Statistically Significant
	Married	40	2.44	.284				
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Single	23	1.69	.393	7.118	61	0.000	Statistically Significant
	Married	40	2.32	.304				
The Stress of Work Environment	Single	23	1.65	.376	8.405	61	0.000	Statistically Significant
	Married	40	2.31	.248				
The Stress of Relationship with Students	Single	23	1.76	.339	8.754	61	0.000	Statistically Significant
	Married	40	2.58	.363				
Total Score	Single	23	1.62	.251	11.243	61	0.000	Statistically Significant
	Married	40	2.27	.202				

Table 10 displays the t-values relative to each dimension of the scale and its total score: (6.541, 7.118, 8.405, 8.754, 11.243) with the corresponding p-values: (0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000). All of them are less than the research's significance threshold (0.05). Therefore, there are statistically significant differences between the sample individuals' mean scores on the scale of psychological stress sources based on their marital status. The differences favor the instructors with the highest arithmetic mean who are married.

- According to the years of experience variable

Table 11 shows the results of the Analysis of Variance according to years of experience variable by One Way ANOVA test for students' responses.

Table 11. Analysis of variance according to years of experience variable by One Way ANOVA test.

Sub-Dimensions	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Squares	f value	p-value	Decision
Material Stress	Between-Group	1.145	2	.572	2.594	.083	Statistically Non-significant
	Within-Group	13.242	60	.221			
	Total	14.387	62				
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Between-Group	1.522	2	.761	4.049	.022	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	11.279	60	.188			
	Total	12.801	62				
The Stress of Work Environment	Between-Group	.041	2	.020	.103	.902	Statistically Non-Significant
	Within-Group	11.849	60	.197			
	Total	11.890	62				
The Stress of Relationship with Students	Between-Group	1.209	2	.604	2.257	.114	Statistically Non-Significant
	Within-Group	16.072	60	.268			
	Total	17.281	62				
Total Score	Between-Group	.638	2	.319	2.247	.115	Statistically Non-Significant
	Within-Group	8.513	60	.142			
	Total	9.151	62				

According to the Table below, the f-values and p-values for the subdimensions and total score of the scale of psychological stress sources are (2.594, 4.049, 0.103, 2.257, 2.247) and (0.083, 0.022, 0.902, 0.114, 0.115), respectively. Except for the sub-dimension (stress of relationship with parents), all are greater than the significance level (0.05) employed in the study. As shown in Table 13, the (sheffee) test was utilized for post hoc comparisons relative to the homogenous samples to ascertain the direction of differences between the means of the sample individuals' scores.

Table 13. Results of (Scheffe) Test of Post Hoc Comparisons

Sub-Dimension	Number of Years of Experience	Difference of Means	Variance Error	Decision
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	(6-10) Years	.090	.139	Insignificant
	(1-5) Years	.358*	.133	Significant
	(6-10) Years	.268	.131	Insignificant

The information presented in the Table above demonstrates the following: - There are statistically significant differences between the means of the research sample individuals in the sub-dimension (stress of relationship with parents) in the scale of psychological stress sources according to the number of years of experience between: * Individuals who have (1-5) years of experience with the essential arithmetic mean.

- There are no statistically significant differences between the means of the research sample individuals in the sub-dimension (stress of relationship with the parents) in the scale of psychological stress sources according to the variable of the numbers of the years of experience between: * Individuals who have (1-5) years of experience and those who have (6-10) years. - * Individuals with (1-5) years of experience and those with (6-10) years.

* People who have between six and ten years of experience and those who have between eleven and more than ten years of experience. Therefore, the findings demonstrated that the source of the differences, which favored the (1-5) years of experience, was following the results.

- According to the years of emirate variable

To examine the statistical significance of the differences between the arithmetic means of the scores of the research sample individuals on the scale of psychological stress sources according to the variable of the emirate, (One Way ANOVA) Test was used, as illustrated by Table 14.

Table 14. Analysis of variance according to emirate variable by One Way ANOVA test.

Sub-Dimension	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freed	Mean Squares	F value	P value	Decision
Material Stress	Between-Group	3.105	2	1.552	8.255	.001	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	11.282	60	.188			
	Total	14.387	62				
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Between-Group	1.677	2	.838	4.521	.015	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	11.125	60	.185			
	Total	12.801	62				
The Stress of Work Environment	Between-Group	2.489	2	1.244	7.942	.001	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	9.401	60	.157			
	Total	11.890	62				
The Stress of Relationship with Students	Between-Group	5.419	2	2.710	13.707	.000	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	11.861	60	.198			
	Total	17.281	62				
Total Score	Between-Group	2.636	2	1.318	12.138	.000	Statistically Significant
	Within-Group	6.515	60	.109			
	Total	9.151	62				

It can be seen from the Table that the f values relative to the sub-dimensions and the overall score of the scale of psychological stress sources in order are 8.255, 4.521, 7.942, 13.707, and 12.138 at the p values of 0.001, 0.015, 0.001, 0.000, and 0.000. This is something that can be observed. They are lower than the research's predetermined significance level, which was set at 0.05. As a result, to evaluate the direction of differences between the means of the scores of the people in the sample, the sheffee test was utilized for post hoc comparisons about the homogenous samples, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15. Results of (Sheffe) Test of Post Hoc Comparisons.

Sub-Dimensions	Emirate		Difference of Means	Deviation Error	Decision
Material Stress	Dubai	Sharjah	.508*	.126	Significant
		Ajman	.370	.151	Insignificant
The Stress of Relationship with Parents	Sharjah	Ajman	-.138-	.141	Insignificant
		Dubai	.376*	.125	Significant
The Stress of the Work Environment	Dubai	Ajman	.232	.150	Insignificant
		Sharjah	-.144-	.140	Insignificant
The Stress of Relationship with Students	Dubai	Sharjah	.442*	.115	Significant
		Ajman	.133	.138	Insignificant
Total Score	Sharjah	Ajman	-.308-	.129	Insignificant
		Dubai	.676*	.129	Significant
	Dubai	Ajman	.371	.155	Insignificant
		Sharjah	-.305-	.145	Insignificant
	Dubai	Sharjah	.471*	.096	Significant
		Ajman	.253	.115	Insignificant
	Sharjah	Ajman	-.219-	.107	Insignificant

The results showed that there are differences between the individuals of the sample according to the variable of "emirate in favor of the Emirate of Dubai

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings collected in response to the first research question posed by the investigators on the extent to which the individuals who comprised the research sample experienced high levels of psychological stress indicated that it occurred at a moderate level. It was in line with the broader literature in occupational psychology and social psychology that emphasizes that general teaching and special education are stressful professions. In other words, it was in line with what the literature says. The findings of this study are in contrast to those of Al-Jadoua's (2015) study, which found that a significant amount of psychological stress was present. According to the findings of this study, a moderate amount of psychological stress was experienced. Table 14 reveals that the most stressful aspect of teaching is maintaining healthy relationships with the students. Material stress is the most common type, followed by the stress brought on by one's connection with one's parents and, lastly, the stress brought on by one's working environment. According to the study, this can be attributed to the fact that instructors are expected to treat the population of students who have difficulties learning with unique and appropriate methods. The unique qualities of these kids, who are challenging to manage, are unable to be quiet, have poor levels of motivation, and cannot perform the duties allocated to them, contribute to the tension caused by a scenario of this kind. Hester, Bridges, and Rollins (2020) demonstrated that instructors who are subjected to a heavy workload and a lack of support from the authorities are more likely to experience emotions of burnout. The unrecognized and undervalued labor that special education teachers do is the same whether male or female. However, as a way of coping with stressful situations, women are more prone to emotional outbursts than men. Haydon, Leko, and Stevens (2018) came to similar conclusions and stressed that anger, impatience, anxiety, and burnout are all symptoms of occupational stress in teachers. These symptoms are accompanied by occupational stress in teachers and their emotional experience. The indications of stress, on the other hand, bring to light that the possible elements in regulating influence differ depending on the setting of the academic institute. It also depends on the personality of the instructor, their adaptability, and how the students regard the classroom. Therefore, the perceptions and attitudes cause frustration and a common sense of achievement and accomplishment, which causes psychological stress for the teacher, affecting their relationship with children with learning difficulties. In addition, most teachers lacked the academic knowledge and practical experience to deal with the students who had difficulty learning effectively. The stress that the instructor is under is both physically and mentally exhausting as a result of the circumstances mentioned above. In addition to this, the instructor does not possess the appropriate coping techniques to deal with the stress that she is under. The findings are consistent with those of a study conducted by Abo Nayyan and Aljalmoud (2016), which found that the stress caused by connections with one's parents rated highly. Regarding the stress brought on by one's working environment, this factor is placed dead last; while stress can be found at high levels in some workplaces, other workplaces experience it to a far smaller extent.

The second research question centered on the degree to which the individuals who made up the research sample suffered different levels of psychological stress depending on the research factors of their gender, level of education, place of residence, and marital status. According to the findings, the variable of sex does not have a statistically significant impact on the dimensions of material stress, the stress of relationship with pupils, or the stress of relationship with parents. However, there are differences in how females are affected by stress in the workplace, and these differences work in their favor. Some workplaces encourage healthy competition. The findings are consistent with those of Sharp Donahoo, Siegrist, and Garrett-Wright (2018),

who demonstrated that the causes of stress and depression in special education teachers are more likely to be environmental issues rather than the instructors' statuses. This study's findings align with those of [Sharp Donahoo et al. \(2018\)](#). Researchers have discovered that the behaviors associated with the workplace are the primary cause of psychological stress felt by working teachers. The findings agree with those of [Mohammad, Alkharabsha, and Algharbiyat's study \(2005\)](#), which found variations depending on the factor of gender. Also, those with (1-5) years of experience have an advantage over those with (11 or more) years of experience because there is a difference between the two in favor of those with (1-5) years of experience. According to the researcher's interpretation, experienced teachers of persons with learning challenges have had many experiences that helped reduce stress. This contrasts inexperienced teachers, who are still training and acquiring expertise by going through the events that regular people go through. Experience significantly reduces psychological stress, particularly the kind associated with one's connection with their parents. Teachers who have worked in the classroom for a significant amount of time are recognized for their capacity to handle stressful circumstances involving parents.

On the other hand, because they lack practical experience, new instructors often face stress connected to their relationships with the parents of their students. The [Mohammad, Alkharabsha, and Algharbiyat study \(2005\)](#) analysis of the variable of experience differ from the current research in that there are no differences according to the variable of experience. This is where the recent research differs from the previous study. There are also changes according to the marital status variable, with married teachers benefiting from these variances. According to the researcher's opinion, whether male or female, instructors have many familial responsibilities and duties that require a significant amount of financial support. If the instructor cannot provide for their family's requirements, they will be placed in a stressful situation. The findings of this research and those of a study done by [Al-Jadoua \(2015\)](#) come to the same conclusion: there is statistical significance in favor of married professors. In addition, the study's findings demonstrated variations between the emirates of Dubai and Sharjah on the scale of psychological stress in its many dimensions, with the results favoring the emirate of Dubai in each case. The researcher grounds her reasoning on Dubai's position as a global city and its openness to various cultures worldwide. In addition to the already demanding and competitive work environment, the fact that pupils come from different countries is one of the primary factors contributing to the increased stress experienced by teachers. In addition, Dubai is a popular location for tourists and is considered a global metropolis by residents and visitors worldwide. When considering the requirements of their families in terms of finances, this results in severe financial conditions for the teachers. In addition, parents frequently spend long hours away from the house, which leaves them with no time to provide child care for their families. As a direct result, most of the work falls on the shoulders of the instructor.

Recommendations

The researcher makes several ideas and recommendations, which can be broken down into the following categories based on the findings:

- It is essential to pay attention to the levels of psychological stress present among teachers of persons with learning challenges and to make an effort to bring it under control to improve teachers' overall productivity and maintain their physical and mental health.
- It is essential to provide professional and emotional support for educators of persons with learning difficulties. This can be done by organizing training seminars and classes to improve instructors' efficacy and bring them closer to expert status. This can also be accomplished by attending psychological training courses in which the instructors are selected following appropriate scientific and professional criteria.
- It is vital to pay attention to the financial support of teachers by focusing on salaries and incentives that would stimulate them and are comparable with the exerted efforts and suitable for the living conditions. It is also essential to recognize that it is crucial to pay attention to the financial support of teachers. This will assist the instructor in experiencing a sense of psychological stability and safety. In addition, it is vital to provide exceptional people bonuses and incentives and celebrate them to inspire them to be generous, innovative, and creative. This is done so that people will be inspired to donate. This will assist us in encouraging the pupils' desire to learn, which is beneficial. We must remember to offer emotional support to the educators as well.
- It is essential to limit the amount of labor required of teachers of students who have difficulties learning, and each teacher should be responsible for educating a small number of students.
- It is essential to develop training programs that focus on the establishment of positive relationships between instructors and students as well as the fulfillment of teaching standards.
- It is essential to provide guidance and direction to the parents of individuals with learning challenges regarding the duties and efforts that teachers of people with learning difficulties are expected to do. In addition, it is essential to bring to their attention the significance of being present at parent-teacher conferences and the requirement of monitoring their children at home and inquiring about them at school to maximize the effectiveness of these efforts.

- It is essential to make policies to elevate the profession of teaching people with learning difficulties socially and to hold it in a high position among all occupations through various media and communications. It is also essential to raise teachers' awareness of the age features of students in each level of education who have people with learning difficulties and their associated behavioral disorders.

Significance of Research

This study would substantially contribute to previous research and have theoretical or practical implications. In the United Arab Emirates, working with pupils with learning difficulties in public and private schools and centers is a novel experiment. It is essential to understand the most prevalent psychological tension experienced by educators in this field. The research addressed a topic that requires greater attention from special education administrators and researchers. This research is viewed as a call to improve teachers' working conditions and a call for specialists to assist teachers in maintaining mental health and overcoming their challenges. The findings of this study can be used to design programs that will help instructors suffering from psychological stress to better adapt to their profession. This positively impacts and enhances students' academic, psychological, and social performance with learning difficulties.

Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

Despite encompassing a variety of topics, the research has few limitations. The study concentrates on the Sharjah Center for Learning Difficulties, Alnoor School in Sharjah in Dubai, School of Research Science in Ajman, and Ajman Private School regarding Spatial Limitations. The researcher conducted her investigation during the academic year of 2022. As the working environment in every particular education sector poses challenges for teachers, future research can elaborate on this topic in the context of various educational institutions. In addition, the study is limited to examining the causes of psychological stress among teachers of students with cognitive disabilities and its relationship to a few variables. The selected variables are gender, marital status, and experience years. In addition to these variables, teachers' stress levels are affected by international factors, such as personality traits, adaptive ability, mentality, and behavioral approaches. Future research can examine these variables regarding the tension among special education teachers. Concerning sample size, a representative sample of teachers of individuals with cognitive disabilities was randomly selected from Sharjah, Dubai, and Ajman, United Arab Emirates. Future researchers can expand the sample size alongside the international study.

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