

Research Article

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Work-Related Stress among Educators of Disabilities from Their Perspective and Its Relationship to Certain Variables

Ayed Mohammad Ahmad Melhem 

Abstract

Background/purpose. This study aims to identify the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities from their own perspectives. Students with disabilities are among the groups most in need of education, so it is essential to find teachers with advanced psychological and professional characteristics. Hence, the subject of this research focuses on the problem of widespread work stress among them. Because they work in environments that place significant pressure on their psychological, social, and physical health, this study sought to determine the level of stress they experience.

Materials/methods. A descriptive approach was employed in this study, which included a purposive sample of 71 male and female teachers who teach students with disabilities. The researcher developed a questionnaire consisting of 23 items to collect data. Consistency and reliability were found to be consistent with the study objectives.

Results. The level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities indicates a high level of stress. The results also showed no statistically significant differences at the $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level, based on the type of institution and educational qualifications.

Conclusion. The study concluded that educators of disabilities experience stress at work, from their perspective. This appears to be consistent with the nature of the work these teachers perform, the groups they work with, and their limited capabilities and potential, which are further compounded by the demands of continuous and exhausting work.

1. Introduction

Work stress has become an integral part of people's lives due to the many challenges they face. As a result, stress is prevalent in most environments and communities, particularly in workplaces that require direct interaction with people, such as teachers, particularly those working with students with disabilities. Work stress is a major cause of psychological and occupational disorders and affects the quality of professional performance, particularly among professionals in human-centered fields, such as special education teachers. The nature of their work requires high levels of patience, flexibility, and self-motivation, making them vulnerable to chronic psychological stress (Kyriacou, 2001). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) noted that individuals' responses to work stress vary depending on the coping strategies they use, which may be problem-focused or emotion-focused, highlighting the urgent need for professional and psychological support for this group. Numerous studies have indicated that a lack of administrative and social support in educational settings exacerbates the impact of occupational stress. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) confirmed that the lack of a sense of belonging and support from management negatively impacts teachers' psychological health, increasing their susceptibility to emotional exhaustion and burnout, particularly in settings serving students with disabilities who require intensive educational and behavioral efforts.

The above confirms that work-related stress has become a major focus of psychological and educational research due to its direct and indirect effects on the quality of professional performance in various sectors, particularly in the education sector. These stressors are not limited to organizational factors but also stem from complex interactions between individual characteristics and their professional environments. This requires educational institutions to seriously consider these interactions when developing supportive work environments for teachers.

Recently, the field of special education has received significant attention due to the provision of educational, social, and economic services for individuals with disabilities—services that were previously unavailable. These efforts aim to uphold principles such as social justice, human rights, and equal opportunity. Special education teachers play a crucial role in achieving these principles through their educational interactions with students with disabilities. However, like their peers, these teachers face daily psychological pressures that hinder their ability to achieve these goals, particularly those related to working with students with disabilities (Judy, 2006). In addition to teaching academic subjects, they face challenges and obstacles in their work. Despite possessing university qualifications, not all are adequately equipped to perform their duties effectively (Mary, 2016).

Understanding the nature of work stress is a crucial turning point in interpreting teachers' professional behavior, particularly when linked to the psychological, cognitive, and emotional factors associated with professional adjustment. A mismatch between job demands and individual capabilities leads to a decline in the quality of educational practices, paving the way for negative outcomes such as stress, anxiety, and frustration.

Previous studies, such as Abdul Aziz (2021), indicate that special education teachers experience professional and psychological stress that negatively impacts their performance. Work stress varies based on several factors, such as experience and type of disability. Al-Zoubi (2016) and Marai (2020) concluded that work stress leads to decreased job satisfaction among teachers and symptoms of burnout. Al-Samadi (2018) and Khalil (2019) emphasized that institutional support and professional training contribute to reducing levels of occupational stress, which enhances teachers' professional and psychological competence.

The results of Al-Titi's (2017) study showed a positive relationship between work-related stress and decreased self-efficacy among special education teachers. Al-Samdouni and Al-Rabiah (1998) indicated that these stressors stem from factors related to either the individual's personal characteristics or the institution in which they work. This means that work-related stress arises from

a mismatch between the individual and their profession, causing psychological or physical dysfunction. Therefore, an individual's personal and professional characteristics play an important role in the emergence and perception of these stressors (Cislaki & Wallace, 1991). The reality of special education highlights the complexity of the tasks assigned to teachers in this field. Their roles extend beyond teaching, adapting the classroom environment, implementing individualized plans, and providing behavioral and psychological support, which increases their exposure to high levels of stress. Furthermore, addressing the diverse characteristics of students with disabilities requires skillful and intensive effort, which can lead to frustration and lower academic achievement in the absence of adequate institutional support.

The stress on teachers is exacerbated by the need to provide specialized care for students with disabilities and adapt the learning environment to meet their diverse needs. Undoubtedly, the stressors they face on the job are external factors that cannot be ignored. If teachers are unable to cope with these stressors, it can lead to psychological problems and affect their professional competence (Awad, 2000). Youssef (2004) noted that occupational stress is one of the most severe types of stress, with its effects extending to all aspects of an individual's life (Michel, 2008).

The problem is not limited to the sheer size of the responsibilities. The daily challenges faced by special education teachers, such as low student motivation, difficulty managing behavior, and poor responsiveness, affect their self-confidence and increase their exposure to professional and psychological stress. In this context, ongoing training, psychological support, and administrative support become crucial factors in enhancing their resilience and creativity in educational practices.

Forrest and Gibson (2006) explained the relationship between various work stressors and their impact on performance, as well as how personal characteristics influence this relationship through two main sources of stress: 1) stressors related to the nature of the job and the surrounding environment, including the physical work environment and individual, social, and organizational stressors; and 2) stressors resulting from mental, emotional, and physical characteristics, such as personality type, locus of control, and individual needs and abilities. This framework demonstrates that work stress is not only related to the volume or difficulty of work, but is also influenced by individual characteristics, such as their personality traits, coping mechanisms, and perception of their role.

Teachers are the cornerstone of the educational process and are the essential element in developing and advancing education, as well as transferring knowledge across generations. They are leaders and professionals in various fields and disciplines. The success and progress of society depends on teachers' ability to instill knowledge, sound education, and values in students (Ahmed, 2006). Given this reality, the importance of developing intervention programs that focus on adaptive skills and establishing psychological and professional support systems within educational institutions becomes clear. These measures aim to reduce stress and burnout among special education teachers, enhance their professional well-being, and ultimately have a positive impact on educational outcomes. Their roles are multiple, and can be summarized as bearing responsibility for achieving the school's overall goals. They are among the most influential elements in shaping student behavior, beyond the curriculum, teaching methods, and school facilities. Qualified teachers can develop curricula that instill meaning in them, aligning with students' needs and interests. Additionally, they can utilize diverse facilities to make them more conducive to student learning (Taliha, 2010).

The International Labor Organization's classifications indicate that teaching is among the most stressful professions. This aligns with studies indicating that workers in human service fields, such as education, healthcare, and nursing, are more susceptible to stress due to coercive factors in their work environments, reflecting the significant pressures these teachers experience (Miho & Yoko, 2020).

The educational process is inherently more challenging for individuals with disabilities, requiring additional burdens and demands compared to the education of regular students. They are characterized by diverse impairments, including motor, intellectual, hearing, and visual impairments, making each student a unique case that requires educational plans and teaching methods tailored to their specific needs. Additionally, they require specialized support and training, as well as support services such as healthcare and psychological counseling. Furthermore, their lower cognitive abilities and academic achievement levels can lead to frustration among teachers, resulting in decreased academic achievement and increased stress, which can ultimately lead to burnout (Al-Zaidawi, 2007).

Malika (2011) noted that special education teachers experience greater professional stress than their general education counterparts. These stressors are associated with negative phenomena such as aversion to teaching, boredom with the classroom and students, decreased motivation to participate in school activities, lack of interest in preparing and delivering lessons, late arrival to class, neglect of students' homework, increasing student complaints about their behavior, accusations of laziness or poor understanding, and general dissatisfaction with the level of education at school.

Furthermore, special education teachers' feelings of low self-efficacy in teaching, resulting from the behavioral and cognitive challenges they face with students, exacerbate their psychological stress and affect their job satisfaction (Bandura, 1997; Browers & Tomek, 2000). Some studies have noted that poor professional competence or a lack of ongoing training in dealing with various types of disabilities increases occupational stress and anxiety, calling for the development of training programs that focus on the psychological and pedagogical skills necessary for this specialty (Billingsley, 2004). Kokkinos (2007) highlighted that factors such as workload, excessive administrative tasks, and unclear job roles are strong indicators of occupational stress among special education teachers. Hastings and Beham's (2003) study demonstrated that student behavior, particularly aggressive or maladaptive behavior, is a significant source of stress for teachers, and that enhancing behavior management skills can substantially reduce this stress. Similarly,

1.1. Previous Studies

A study conducted by Abu Mustafa and Al-Zein (2009) aimed to identify the sources of work stress for special education teachers in Gaza. The results showed no statistically significant differences attributed to academic qualifications or type of work. Al-Jado's (2015) study aimed to identify the sources of work stress faced by special education teachers in Amman. The results indicated a high level of work stress among special education teachers in Amman. The results showed statistically significant differences in the sources of work stress according to the variable of institution type (in favor of government centers) and educational level (in favor of those with a bachelor's degree). Musafer's (2016) study aimed to investigate work stress among special education teachers in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The results showed high levels of work stress associated with the characteristics of children with disabilities, the work environment, and relationships with parents. No statistically significant differences were found according to the type of center (public or private).

Al-Muaiqal's (2016) study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies for managing work stress among teachers working with students with intellectual disabilities. The results revealed a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies for managing work stress. The study also found statistically significant differences in coping styles between male and female teachers, in favor of female teachers. No statistically significant differences were found in coping strategies based on the number of years of experience. Smith and Thompson's (2019) study aimed to determine the levels of work stress among special education teachers in the United States. The results indicated high levels of stress. The results did not show statistically significant differences based on the type of center (public or private). Teachers with low qualifications (diploma or bachelor's) showed higher levels of stress

compared to those with advanced degrees. Al-Omari's (2019) study aimed to assess the degree of work stress experienced by female educators of disabilities with hearing disabilities in Jeddah. The results showed statistically significant differences in the mean scores on the work-related stress scale based on the variables of experience, educational qualifications, and age. Zhang and Chen (2020) investigated the levels of work-related stress among special education teachers in China. The results indicated high levels of stress. The results also indicated no statistically significant differences based on the type of center (public or private). The results also indicated statistically significant differences among teachers based on the educational qualification variable, favoring those with higher educational qualifications (master's degree or higher). Brown and Davis (2021) investigated work-related stress and coping strategies among special education teachers in urban schools in the United Kingdom. The results showed no statistically significant differences based on the type of center (public or private) or educational qualification in terms of work-related stress levels. Abu Hafez and Al-Tal (2023) conducted a study aimed at exploring the mechanisms by which teachers cope with work-related stress in special education centers and inclusive schools. The results indicated an average level of use of coping strategies for work-related stress by all teachers. The results also showed statistically significant differences in teachers' assessments of stress management strategies, favoring males, with these differences varying according to the variables of gender, years of experience, and educational qualification.

1.2. Commentary in Light of the Results of the Current Study and Previous Studies

The current study reached several conclusions, namely: educators of disabilities suffer from high levels of work stress. This finding is consistent with the results of most previous studies, such as Al-Jaddo (2015), Musaffer (2016), and Chang and Chen (2020), which also agree on the presence of high levels of work stress among educators of individuals with disabilities. This consistency suggests that the stability factor enhances the validity of the results and underscores the need for interventions at the educational policy level.

The current study did not find statistically significant differences in work stress based on the type of institution (public or private), a finding confirmed by numerous studies, including those by Smith and Thompson (2019) and Brown and Davis (2021). This suggests that psychological stress is not limited to the type of institution, but may also stem from the nature of the profession itself or the characteristics of the student population being educated. Regarding the educational qualification variable, the current study did not find differences in work-related stress based on this variable, in contrast to some studies, such as Zhang and Chen (2020), which indicated that teachers with advanced qualifications experience lower levels of psychological stress. Variations in work environments may explain this difference, the type of support provided to teachers, or the availability of ongoing training and qualification programs in the local context.

As for research tools, most studies, including the current study, relied on standardized quantitative tools to measure work-related stress, which allows for comparison of results. However, it is recommended that future studies expand their research methodologies to include qualitative approaches, such as interviews or classroom observations, to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of these stressors and conduct quasi-experimental studies.

In conclusion, the results of this study, supported by the previous literature, highlight the urgent need for targeted psychological and professional support programs for special education teachers, irrespective of whether they work in public or private centers. Additionally, there is a need to incorporate stress management components into teacher preparation and training programs.

1.3. Study Problem and Research Questions

The work stress experienced by teachers working with students with disabilities is a critical, sensitive, and complex issue in providing services to this group. This stress plays a significant role in the success and development of work with students with disabilities, positively impacting the quality of services provided to them. Accordingly, the study problem revolves around the following main question:

"What is the level of work stress among educators of disabilities, from their perspective?"

From this main question, the following research questions emerge:

1. Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work stress among educators of disabilities based on the variable of the type of center in which they work?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work stress among educators of disabilities based on the variable of academic qualification?

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study aims to provide insights into the stressors faced by educators of students with disabilities and how these stressors affect the teaching methods employed in the classroom.

1.4.1. Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this research stems from the pressing need to support special education teachers and understand the extent of stress they experience when working with students with disabilities. This understanding enables the production of teachers equipped with professional practices that positively impact their interactions with students with disabilities enrolled in special education centers. Several previous studies have explored stress levels among educators of disabilities, such as Al-Jadoua (2015), which aimed to identify the sources of such stress in Amman. Therefore, the theoretical importance of this study lies in the necessity of verifying the stress levels among educators of disabilities, which this study seeks to explore.

1.4.2. Practical Significance

The practical significance of this study includes the following:

1. Providing a measurement tool to assess the level of stress faced by educators of students with disabilities.
2. Emphasizing the importance of developing programs and services aimed at reducing stress among educators of disabilities, thereby enhancing their performance in educational activities conducted in special education centers.

1.5. Objectives and Rationale of the Study

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities.
2. To highlight the significance of stress levels among educators of students with disabilities and their impact on the services provided to these students.
3. To underscore the necessity of supporting educators of disabilities through programs and services that help them cope with and adapt to stress, reflecting the critical role teachers play in their interactions with students.

1.6. Rationale of the Study

The rationale for this study can be summarized as follows:

1. There is a scarcity of studies that comprehensively examine the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities.
2. The limited number of Arabic studies, to the researcher's knowledge, that investigate the level of work-related stress among educators of students with disabilities and its impact on their professional practices with these students.

1.7. Study Limitations and Constraints

The current study was conducted within the following limitations and constraints:

1.7.1. Study Limitations

1. Spatial Limitations: Special education centers, both public and private, in Irbid, Ajloun, and Jerash.
2. Temporal Limitations: The period during which the study was conducted, specifically the first semester of the 2021/2022 academic year.
3. Human Limitations: The study population consisted of special education teachers working in public and private special education centers.

1.8. Study Constraints

The study's constraints include the research tool, its validity and reliability indicators, and the research methodology in terms of its variables, data collection methods, and statistical analysis procedures.

1.9. Procedural Definitions

- Work-Related Stress: Defined by the researcher as “a set of psychological pressures experienced by educators of disabilities in their workplaces, which affect their educational practices with these students and can be observed and measured through the tool validated in this study.”
- Students with Disabilities: A group of students with various disabilities (intellectual, learning difficulties, autism) who require specialized services from teachers and specialists possessing specific skills and competencies to address their heterogeneous needs.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive approach, as it was suitable for achieving the study objectives, collecting, and verifying its data.

2.2. Study Sample

The final study sample consisted of 71 male and female teachers working with students with disabilities in governmental and private special education centers in the governorates of Ajloun, Irbid, and Jerash during the first semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. They were intentionally selected based on study variables (institution type and educational qualification). A pilot sample of 15 female teachers was used to verify the validity and reliability of the instrument, and they were subsequently excluded from the study sample. Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of the final sample.

Table 1. Distribution of the Sample According to Personal Variables.

Variable	Level	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Qualification	Diploma	22	31.0%
	Bachelor's	29	40.8%
	Postgraduate	20	28.2%
Total		71	100%
Type of Center	Public	25	35.2%
	Private	46	64.8%
Total		71	100.0%

2.3. Study Tool

The researcher developed a questionnaire to assess the level of work stress among educators of individuals with disabilities, in order to achieve the study's objectives. The questionnaire was designed after reviewing the theoretical literature related to the study's topic and its suitability for its objectives. This was based on studies such as Al-Jado (2015), Al-Omari (2019), and Brown and Davis (2021), among others. The necessary validity and reliability indicators were found to support the application of the study tool to achieve its objectives.

2.3.1. Instrument Validity

2.3.1.1. Content Validity

Content validity was verified by presenting the tool to a group of expert judges in the fields of special education, psychology, and counseling. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire was completed by modifying, deleting, or adding items as needed. Based on the referees' comments and suggestions, the researcher incorporated their recommendations, resulting in a final instrument consisting of 23 items. Items deemed appropriate by more than 90% of the referees were retained.

2.3.2. Instrument Reliability

To verify the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied to all its items. The reliability coefficient reached 0.93, which is a high and acceptable value for application purposes. Studies indicate that a reliability coefficient greater than 0.60 is considered acceptable (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

2.4. Scoring Criteria

The responses in the questionnaire were based on a four-point Likert scale, as follows: "Strongly Applies" (4 points), "Moderately Applies" (3 points), "Slightly Applies" (2 points), and "Does Not Apply" (1 point). The cut-off points for scoring were determined using the following formula:

$$(\text{Upper Limit of Response} - \text{Lower Limit of Response}) \div 4$$

$$(4 - 1) \div 4 = 0.75 \text{ (Increment)}$$

Thus, the following cut-off points were established as scoring criteria:

1. Arithmetic means equal to or less than 1.75 are considered low.
2. Arithmetic means ranging from 1.76 to 2.50 are considered acceptable.
3. Arithmetic means ranging from 2.51 to 3.25 are considered moderate.

4. Arithmetic means exceeding 3.25 are considered high.

2.5. Study Variables

2.5.1. Independent Variables

1. Educational Qualification: Comprising three levels: Diploma, Bachelor's, and Postgraduate.
2. Type of Center: Comprising two levels: Public and Private.

2.5.2. Dependent Variable

The level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities, as measured by the study tool from their perspective.

3. Study Results and Discussion

3.1. Results Related to the First Question

These are the results of the first question, "What is the level of work-related stress experienced by educators of disabilities from their perspective?"

To address this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample's responses to all items of the study tool, which measures the level of work-related stress among educators of individuals with disabilities, were calculated. Table 2 presents these findings.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample's Responses to All Items of the Study Tool (n=71).

Rank	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Item No.	Evaluation
1	I strive to complete the maximum number of tasks in the shortest time possible with students who have disabilities.	3.87	1.08	4	High
2	The center's administration manages work with a team spirit.	3.73	1.18	13	High
3	The center's administration evaluates teachers' performance fairly.	3.63	1.23	10	High
4	There is constant competition with my fellow teachers.	3.61	1.21	5	High
5	I feel that the nature of my work requires high competencies.	3.56	1.28	14	High
6	Classrooms often lack the resources necessary to achieve their goals.	3.14	1.51	23	High
7	My adherence to instructions and regulations limits my creativity.	2.85	1.44	7	High
8	I feel that work duties require long working hours.	2.82	1.27	16	High
9	Opportunities at the center do not allow teachers to develop their skills.	2.80	1.47	21	High

Rank	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Item No.	Evaluation
10	Lack of sufficient time affects my ability to organize tasks effectively.	2.75	1.30	8	High
11	There is bias in interactions among teachers at the center.	2.61	1.42	2	High
12	I feel that the evaluation criteria used at the center are not objective.	2.54	1.46	20	High
13	I am unable to take breaks during work.	2.51	1.40	15	High
14	I feel that I have little influence over my fellow teachers.	2.42	1.13	1	High
15	I do not receive continuous feedback on my work.	2.39	1.38	17	High
15	The center's administration does not appreciate the work I do.	2.39	1.46	18	High
17	I am disturbed by the noise caused by teachers' voices.	2.38	1.41	22	High
18	I do not consistently achieve my planned goals.	2.34	1.17	3	High
19	The monitoring style at the center makes me uncomfortable.	2.31	1.44	19	High
20	I consider criticisms directed at me a threat to my job status.	2.21	1.44	6	Moderate
21	I feel that my personal relationship with the administration is weak.	2.07	1.35	11	Moderate
22	Some colleagues try to impose their opinions on me.	2.00	1.34	9	Moderate
23	I feel that my personal relationship with colleagues is weak.	1.90	1.29	12	Moderate
Overall Work-Related Stress Level		2.73	0.80		High

The table above shows that the arithmetic means of the study sample's responses to the tool's items ranged from 1.90 to 3.87. The highest mean was for Item 4 ("I strive to complete the maximum number of tasks in the shortest time possible with disabled students"), with a high evaluation rating, followed by Item 13 ("The center's administration manages work with a team spirit") with a mean of 3.73 and a high evaluation rating. The lowest mean was for Item 12 ("I feel that my personal relationship with colleagues is weak"), with a moderate evaluation rating. The overall mean for the tool, representing the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities, was 2.73, indicating a high level of stress from their perspective.

3.2. Results Related to the Second Question

The following are the results related to the second question, “Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities based on the type of center?”

To address this question, an independent samples t-test was applied to the overall tool based on the type of center (public or private). Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3. Results of the Independent Samples T-Test for the Overall Tool Based on the Type of Center.

Variable	Type of Center	Mean	SD	T	df	Statistical Significance
Type of Center	Public	2.59	0.66	1.12	69	0.26
	Private	2.81	0.86			

The table above indicates that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work-related stress among educators of individuals with disabilities based on the type of center, with a T-value of 1.12, which is not statistically significant.

3.3. Results Related to the Third Question

The following are the results to the question, “Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work-related stress among educators of disabilities based on educational qualification?”

To address this question, a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to the overall tool based on educational qualification. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4. Results of One-Way ANOVA for the Overall Tool Based on Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Mean	SD	F	Statistical Significance
Diploma	2.87	0.94	1.01	0.37
Bachelor's	2.64	0.67		
Postgraduate	2.38	0.22		

The table above indicates that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the level of work-related stress among educators of individuals with disabilities based on educational qualification, with an F-value of 1.01, which is not statistically significant.

4. Discussion of Results

4.1. Discussion of the Results of the First Question

The results of the current study revealed high levels of work-related stress among educators of disabilities, with an overall mean of 2.73. The researcher attributed this to the significant challenges teachers face in meeting the needs of students with disabilities, as well as the limited administrative and material support available to them. Additional workloads, limited resources, and inadequate training programs exacerbate these stressors. The results of this study are consistent with those of Al-Jadoo (2015), who found high levels of occupational stress among special education teachers; Musafir (2016), who highlighted high occupational stress related to the work environment and student characteristics; Smith and Thompson (2019); and Zhang and Chen (2020), who found

high levels of occupational stress among special education teachers. The researcher attributes the high levels of stress to common factors such as limited educational resources, heavy workloads, diverse characteristics of individuals with disabilities, insufficient and inadequate training, and insufficient administrative and psychological support—factors that recur in various educational contexts.

4.2. Discussion of the Results of the Second Question

The results of this study showed no statistically significant differences in the level of work-related stress depending on the type of center (public or private). The researcher explains this result by suggesting that teachers in both public and private centers face similar work-related stress, suggesting that other factors, such as administrative support or environmental conditions, may have a greater impact on stress levels than the type of center. This finding is consistent with the results of Masavr (2016), which found no differences based on center type, and with Smith and Thompson (2019), Brown, and Davis (2021), all of whom reported no differences between public and private special education centers. This can be explained by the similarity in the general and shared nature of the work-related stress experienced by teachers in both types of institutions, such as limited administrative support, heavy workloads for educators of disabilities, insufficient training, and low salaries. This suggests that the daily challenges faced by educators of disabilities are largely independent of center type and related to the nature of the work itself.

4.3. Discussion of the Results of the Third Question

The results of this study showed no statistically significant differences in the level of work stress according to the educational qualification variable (diploma, bachelor's degree, postgraduate studies). The researcher attributes this result to the similarity of work stress levels among teachers, regardless of their educational qualifications. This may be due to the greater influence of environmental and professional conditions on educational qualifications. This result aligns with Brown and Davis (2021), which found no significant differences based on educational qualifications. The researcher explains that possessing a higher educational qualification does not necessarily ensure effective stress management strategies, particularly in the absence of robust professional training programs or when the educational environment is fraught with challenges that cannot be addressed solely by qualifications. The educational environment itself may be the most critical factor influencing stress levels. However, this finding contrasts with Al-Jadoua (2015), who reported differences favoring bachelor's degree holders, and Zhang and Chen (2020), who indicated that teachers with advanced degrees experienced lower stress levels. This discrepancy may be explained by the potential positive impact of higher educational qualifications on reducing work-related stress and occupational strain.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that educators of disabilities experience high levels of work pressure, according to their perspective. This appears to be consistent with the nature of their work, the groups they work with, their limited abilities and potential, and the effort required to complete the demands of continuous and exhausting work.

6. Recommendations

As a result of the above conclusions, the researcher recommends the following:

1. Provide Professional Support and Guidance Programs: It is recommended to offer continuous training programs for teachers on managing work-related stress and interacting with students with disabilities, which would enhance their efficiency and reduce occupational stress.

2. Enhance the Work Environment: Efforts should be made to improve the work environment in schools and special education centers by providing teachers with appropriate educational tools and distributing workloads equitably.

3. Psychological Support for Teachers: Psychological and counseling services should be provided to help teachers cope with the psychological stressors associated with working with students with disabilities, alongside organizing workshops to alleviate psychological stress.

4. Enhance Collaboration with Parents: Mechanisms for effective communication between teachers and parents should be developed to support students with disabilities, fostering a collaborative educational environment that reduces the stressors faced by teachers.

5. Conduct Periodic Studies and Reviews: Regular studies should be conducted to assess the level of work-related stress among special education teachers, identifying ongoing challenges and developing effective strategies to address them.

Declarations

Author Contributions. The author, Dr. Ayed Melhem, confirms that the entire research process—including formulating the research idea, collecting data, statistical analysis, interpreting results, and writing the manuscript—was conducted solely by him.

Conflict of Interest. The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest, financial or personal, that would influence the work reported in this paper.

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Ethical Approval. This study adhered to the ethical standards for research involving human participants. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained electronically, ensuring strict confidentiality and anonymity. No personal identifiers were collected.

Data Availability Statement. The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to confidentiality agreements, but are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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