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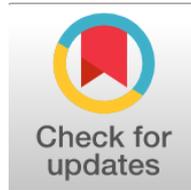
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A Study of the Reality of Social Support and Ethics of the Teaching Profession among Special Needs Educational Staff in Karbala Governorate: Studi tentang Realitas Dukungan Sosial dan Etika Profesi Pengajaran di Kalangan Tenaga Pendidik Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus di Provinsi Karbala

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Abstract

General Background: Educational institutions play a central role in shaping behavioral and professional standards, particularly within special education settings. **Specific Background:** Social support and teaching ethics represent essential psychological and professional dimensions that contribute to teachers' preparedness and responsibility in educational institutions for people with special needs. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite their importance, limited empirical attention has been given to examining the reality of social support and teaching ethics simultaneously among special needs educational staff in Karbala Governorate. **Aims:** This study aimed to identify the level of social support and the level of teaching ethics among educational and teaching staff for people with special needs in Karbala Governorate. **Results:** Using a descriptive survey method on a sample of 40 teachers, statistical analysis revealed that the achieved mean for social support (98.85) and teaching ethics (97.66) significantly exceeded the hypothetical mean (75), with calculated t-values of 17.28 and 16.42 respectively at a significance level of 0.05. **Novelty:** The study integrates psychometrically validated scales to examine both variables within a single educational context. **Implications:** The findings provide empirical evidence that special education staff in Karbala demonstrate strong professional ethics and social support, supporting the development of stable and responsible educational environments.

Keywords: Social Support, Teaching Ethics, Special Education Staff, Educational Environment, Descriptive Survey

Key Findings Highlights:

1. Statistical comparison confirmed scores significantly above the theoretical average.

2. Professional conduct indicators reflected strong moral commitment.

3. Psychometric testing demonstrated reliable measurement properties.

Introduction

Educational human resources are considered the foundation of a developing and advanced society and one of the fundamental pillars sought to shape and organize life from time to time. Developing and organizing these human resources and energies is a matter, a duty, and a fundamental necessity in all eras of society's life, using all available means to advance society's affairs in all areas of life. Considering special education as one of the important means and institutions in developing the energies and capabilities of community members, as it aims to educate individuals in a scientifically integrated manner, physically, mentally, psychologically, morally, and socially, and its returns result in the development of various aspects of activity.

The educational environment is among the general environments that influence the behavioral patterns that arise from the socialization of students. Attention to this educational environment is a fundamental duty, given that it is the institution within whose walls students, who are considered among society's most important human resources, are raised. From this standpoint, those in charge of governments must pay attention to and support all educational sectors in general, and educational institutions for people with special needs in particular. One of the most important basic components of building the educational process is addressing the phenomena that contribute to the success of educational cadres for people with special needs. Special needs for the performance of their work to the fullest extent through research and scientific studies of all behavioral aspects of the teacher, physical, mental, emotional, administrative and ethical aspects. The teaching profession requires many psychological and social characteristics embodied in social support, because working with students with special needs at various levels stems from the environment and situations.[1] It is also one of the most important foundations of sound scientific and professional preparation for the teacher to be worthy of bearing his responsibilities in the educational process and carrying out the duty with skill and sincerity to change reality for the better. This results from the conscience that represents the first image of internal control to be able to accomplish tasks to become more influential and positive in their field of work. Among the topics that require attention to study is social support from family, friends and colleagues as factors that contribute to the direct impact on behavior, especially the factors of support, motivation, reward, punishment and learning.[2] This requires a state of mental and emotional readiness for the human will, and with this spirit it is the basis for the development of humanity with what the human being possesses of creative abilities resulting from the efforts of his past and present experiences to move towards the future and for the human being's view of life to be realistic and the person's ambitions to be at the level of his capabilities, in addition to The ethics of the teaching profession among educational cadres, as it shows some aspects of the cognitive and professional abilities of the teacher and the school, and that the person has a set of positive personal traits and that his understanding of himself is consistent with the reality or as others perceive him, and that the individual is free of internal conflict and enjoys a life free of crises and psychological disorders. As a result of what the researcher has addressed, the importance of the research and the need for it lies in which the researcher clarified the theoretical importance of what the research produces in terms of cognitive and theoretical additions about the variables of the current research and work according to scientific formulas in the study.

Research Problem:

As the profession of special needs education and teaching requires high skill and performance from educational and pedagogical staff in their duties, and through the researcher's modest field experience, she found it absolutely necessary to study the fundamental variables affecting this segment of the workforce. This is because the requirements of their work require innovation, modernity, and continuous development, as well as the use of the latest technology and a high level of scientific and professional competence that will assist them in constructively interacting with segments of society with special needs, thereby advancing educational work. Furthermore, these staff members must possess a sufficient level of social support to contribute to their high level of preparedness and to fulfill the professional ethics required by the profession in educational institutions for people with special needs, which distinguishes them from other professions. All of this will lead to the preparation of educational and pedagogical staff who can provide services to educational institutions, individuals, and the communities to which they belong.

Research Objectives:

1. To identify the reality of social support among educational cadres for people with special needs in the holy city of Karbala.
2. To identify the reality of teaching ethics among educational cadres for people with special needs in the holy city of Karbala.

Research Areas:

- Human Domain: Educational and teaching staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate.
- Time Domain: From January 2, 2025 to March 1, 2025.
- Spatial Domain: Centers for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate.

Research Methodology:

The researcher adopted a descriptive approach using a survey method and studying the current situation. This approach aims to identify the circumstances and relationships between reality and appearance, and to collect data from community members to determine the current state of society in several variables (1). This approach, she believes, is consistent with the specifications of her research and achieves the objectives of her study.

Research Community and Samples:

The research community included educational and teaching staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate, numbering (45) teachers. (5) teachers were selected as a survey sample, representing (11%), and (40) teachers were selected as the main research sample, representing (89%).

Research Methods, Devices, and Tools Used:

Research tools are the mechanisms used by the researcher to collect and process evidence. They are the mechanism for implementing the methodology chosen by the researcher. The type of tools used by the researcher in his research is determined by the type of material and the nature of the study. These include:

- Sources and References.
- Questionnaire.
- Personal Interviews.
- Emotional Scales.
- (2) Stopwatches.
- Casio Handheld Calculator.
- HP Computer.

Procedures for Measuring Social Support and Teaching Ethics:

To measure the study variable, social support among educational and teaching staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate, the researcher was required to adopt standardized measurement tools with scientific weight.

After reviewing references and sources related to the concept of social support, the social support scale, developed within a local study by researcher Ali Abdul-Kazem Awda[3], was adopted. It included (30) items.

In order to measure the study variable, which is the ethics of the teaching profession among the educational and teaching cadres for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate, this requires the researcher to review the references and sources related to the concept of ethics of the teaching profession and then adopt the scale of ethics of the teaching profession built within one of the local studies by the researcher (Tahrir Abdul Hussein Marzouq) and which includes (3) areas, namely the area of his ethics towards himself, the area of his ethics towards colleagues and school administration, and the area of his ethics towards students (30) paragraphs. In order to identify the validity of those scales and the paragraphs concerned with measuring them,[4] the researcher resorted to presenting them to a group of specialists in testing and measurement, general psychology and sports psychology within a questionnaire for the purpose of evaluating and judging them in measuring what they were prepared to measure and making the necessary observations if required, with an expression regarding the approved four-point alternatives (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). After collecting the forms, transcribing the data, and analyzing the opinions of (10) experts and specialists, they suggested amending a section of the paragraphs. They also suggested that they be Four-point answer alternatives (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree), and in light of that, the opinions of experts and specialists were taken into account regarding the adoption of four-point answer alternatives for the social support and teaching ethics scales, and through the use of the chi-square to fit the statements and to keep the statements that received an agreement rate of (79%) from the experts or more, in which the calculated degree of the chi-square is greater than the tabular value of (3.84) under a significance level of (0.05) and at a degree of freedom of (1).

Preparing Measurement Instructions:

The researcher developed several instructions for the measures, as follows:

1. Do not mention the name.
2. Do not leave any paragraph unanswered.
3. Answer honestly and accurately.
4. Do not ask another colleague to help you answer.
5. Place a check mark (/) in the box that applies to you and in front of each paragraph.

The researcher concealed the true purpose of the measures by not mentioning their names. The instructions also included an example of how to answer the paragraphs, which were written together without mentioning the field to which the paragraph belonged, in preparation for its survey among the exploratory sample.

Survey of the two scales:

To determine the clarity of the instructions, the difficulty of formulating the items, and the answer options for educational and teaching staff with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate, as well as to determine the time required to complete the items and identify the difficulties and obstacles that the researcher might encounter when applying the two scales to members of the primary experimental sample, thus avoiding them, the two scales were surveyed on a sample of (5) teachers randomly selected from the community on January 5, 2025.

It was found that the educational staff encountered no difficulties in answering the statements, and that the time required to

complete each scale's items was between (5-10) minutes. Thus, the two scales were ready for application to the research sample. **Correction of the scales:**

The items on the social support and teaching ethics scales were formulated in a positive direction with four alternatives. Weights (4-3-2-1) were assigned to the items according to the sequence of responses to the items. To determine the nature of the sample's responses to the two scales, a correction key prepared for this purpose was used, which means "the tool by which the examiner identifies responses that indicate the presence of the outcome being measured."[5] Thus, the highest score obtained by the teacher on the social support and teaching ethics scales was (120), and the lowest score obtained by the principal was (30).

Psychometric characteristics of the two scales:

Validity and reliability are among the most important psychometric characteristics of psychological and educational scales, regardless of the purpose of their use. Therefore, these characteristics and conditions must be verified to ensure the quality and validity of the scale used for measurement and evaluation (1).

1. Validity of the Two Scales:

Validity of the scale refers to the validity and reliability of the scale, which captures the function it was designed to measure without capturing any other function besides it.[6]

The researcher verified the validity of the two scales, social support and teaching ethics, for educational and teaching staff in the holy Karbala Governorate, by calculating the content validity index when they were presented to experts and specialists to determine the validity of their items for their intended purpose.

2. Reliability of the Two Scales:

Reliability is considered an important characteristic of educational and psychological scales, and must be present in the scale for it to be valid for use. It means "the measuring instrument is reliable and dependable" [7]. The researcher verified the reliability of the two scales, social support and teaching ethics, for educational and teaching staff, by using the half-split test and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

· Split-half method:

The researcher adopted the odd and even numbers method in dividing the (30) items of the social support scale and the (30) items of the teaching ethics scale into two halves. The first half included the odd-numbered items, and the second half included the even-numbered items. After ensuring the homogeneity of the two halves, the researcher used the F test for the two scales. By applying the F-ratio equation, the calculated value of (F) for the social support scale reached (1.03) and the calculated value of (F) for the teaching ethics scale reached (1.07). These values are smaller than their tabular value of (1.22) under a significance level of (0.05) and at two degrees of freedom (4-4), which confirms that there are no differences between the two halves of the scales and that they are relatively homogeneous. After that, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the two halves of the scales, which showed that the value of the correlation coefficient for the social support half scale reached (0.854) and the value of the correlation coefficient for the teaching ethics half scale reached (0.877). Since these values represent the stability of the two halves of the scales, the researcher sought to use the Spearman-Brown equation for modification and to extract the stability values of the two scales in full. The degree of stability of the social support scale reached (0.921) and the degree of stability of the teaching ethics scale reached (0.934), which confirms that the two scales enjoy a degree of stability. High and reliable.

· Cronbach's alpha coefficient method:

The researcher applied Cronbach's alpha reliability to the survey sample using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The reliability coefficient for the social support scale using the Cronbach's alpha method reached 0.896, and the reliability coefficient for the teaching ethics scale reached 0.884, which are high and reliable indicators of reliability.

Main Research Experiment:

After completing the procedures for applying the Social Support Scale and the Teaching Ethics Scale, each containing (30) items, to educational and teaching staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate, the researcher began applying them to the main research sample, which numbered (40) teachers, during the period from January 19 to 23, 2025. After completing the application of the scales, the researcher collected the questionnaires, transcribed their data, and organized them in preparation for statistical processing.

Statistical Methods Used:

The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to process the data in the following topics:

- **Split-half method:**
- **Cronbach's alpha coefficient method:**
- Mean.

- Standard Deviation.
- Skewness Coefficient.
- Pearson Correlation.
- Spearman-Brown Correction Coefficient.
- T for a Single Sample.

Results

Presentation of the primary data for the studied variables:

1. Presentation, analysis, and discussion of the social support variable

After applying the social support scale to the members of the primary research sample, numbering (40) teachers, the researcher then sought to extract the values of the mean and standard deviation of the scores of the educational cadres for people with special needs in Karbala Governorate on the scale, and then calculate the value of the hypothetical mean for the scale, which amounted to (75) points. After inferring the significance of the differences between the two means (the achieved mean and the hypothetical mean for the scale) by using a single-sample (t) test as a statistical method to achieve this purpose and identify the reality of the level of social support for the educational cadres, the results related to data analysis showed that the achieved mean for the scores of the members of the research sample amounted to (98.85) points, with a standard deviation of (8.49) points. When comparing the achieved mean and the hypothetical mean for the scale, which amounted to (75), it became clear that there was a statistically significant difference between the two means, and the calculated (t) value amounted to (17.28) is greater than its tabular value of (2.02) at a degree of freedom of (39) and below a significance level of (0.05), and Table (1) shows this:

Sample	Mean	SD	Hypothetical mean	Degree of freedom	value (t) The calculated	Tableau	Statistical significance
40	98.85	8.49	75	39	17.28	2.02	Sig.

Table 1. **Table 1.** shows the significance of the differences between the achieved mean and the hypothetical mean for the social support scale.

From Table (1), it is clear that the difference is in favor of the achieved mean, which indicates that the level of social support is above the average. The researcher attributes these differences to the value of the achieved mean score among the educational cadres, as it is greater than the value of the hypothetical mean score for the scale, which confirms that teachers are distinguished by a high level of social support, as members of the educational staff try to achieve their selves, especially in their educational work with students with special needs, in addition to the climate and social environment and the accompanying work requirements. Many studies explain that "a person always seeks to obtain a job that brings him approval and a respected social position, even if the motivation for this job is not related to economic needs. The individual seeks respect and needs appreciation. He is proud of his qualifications and the achievement of his professional ambition, and by satisfying this need, the individual achieves psychological health and the ability to face the pressures of life".[8] This confirms that they enjoy a high level of listening, dialogue and speaking skills. The researcher attributes this to the length of service of members of the educational staff in educational institutions for people with special needs, which provided them with appropriate environmental conditions that contributed to increasing the desire and impulse to express Their interests and their pursuit of achieving their goals and their high self-confidence that they have the ability and capacity for dialogue, conversation, time management and success in the teaching profession in these private institutions gave him a scientific background and formed within him the culture whose role in serving society is highlighted, as a science in itself, no less than other specializations, as it contains many sciences and knowledge, and at the same time it has knowledge in common with other scientific specializations. The researcher believes that members of the educational bodies must be characterized by social support from family, friends and members of society to make him a diligent educational member in the success of the process, especially with what he possesses of cognitive levels. It also shows the extent of experience and distinction that reflect the intelligence of the member of the educational bodies, because knowledge is "a diverse group of mental preparations and abilities such as study, understanding, perception, imagination, memory and reminder. Therefore, the result is the final outcome of acquisition, attainment, and formation of concepts and mental formations, as knowledge represents the mental aspect of the human personality",[9] as "the cognitive aspect has a direct reflection on the personality of the teacher, who is considered one of the most important basic components of success." The researcher then sought to extract the values of the mean and standard deviation of the sample members' scores on the scale, and then calculate the hypothetical mean value of the scale, which amounted to (75) points. After inferring the significance of the differences between the two means (the achieved mean and the hypothetical mean of the scale) by using a single-sample t-test as a statistical method to achieve this purpose and identify the reality of the ethics of the teaching profession among teachers, the results related to data analysis showed that the achieved mean of the scores of the sample members reached (97.66) points, with a standard deviation of (8.77) points. When comparing the mean The achieved mean and the hypothetical mean of the scale, which is (75), show that there is a statistically significant difference between the two means. The calculated (t) value reached (16.42), which is greater than its tabular value of (2.02) at a degree of freedom of (39) and below a significance level of (0.05). Table (2) shows this:

Sample	Mean	SD	Hypothetical mean	Degree of freedom	value (t) The calculated	Tableau	Statistical significance
40	97.66	8.77	75	39	16.42	2.02	⬜⬜⬜⬜⬜

Table 2. **Table 2.** shows the significance of the differences between the achieved mean and the hypothetical mean of the scale in ethics of the teaching profession.

From Table (2), it is clear that the difference is in favor of the achieved mean, which indicates that the level of ethics in the teaching profession is above the average. The researcher attributes these differences to the value of the achieved mean

score among the educational and teaching cadres for people with special needs, as it is greater than the value of the hypothetical mean score for the scale, which confirms that teachers are distinguished by a high level of ethics in the teaching profession, as the educational and teaching cadres try to achieve their selves, especially in their educational work, in addition to the climate and social environment and the accompanying requirements of professional and administrative work. The researcher believes that the educational cadres for people with special needs possess a high level of ethics in the teaching profession. Many studies explain that "a person always seeks to obtain a job that brings him approval and a respected social position, even if the motivation for this job is not related to economic needs. The individual seeks respect and needs appreciation, so he is proud of his qualifications and the achievement of his professional ambition, and by satisfying this need, the individual achieves psychological health and the ability to face the pressures of life".[10] This confirms that they enjoy a high level of listening, dialogue, speaking, sharing opinions, and working in meetings. Parents' councils, providing advice and assistance to colleagues, and a keen interest in special education lessons and achieving their educational and learning goals in line with the students' capabilities and abilities. [11]The researcher attributes this to the level of preparation and development of teaching staff in educational institutions, which provided them with appropriate environmental conditions that contributed to increasing the desire and drive to express their interests and strive to achieve their desired goals. They also possessed high self-confidence, believing they had the ability and capacity to engage in dialogue, conversation, time management, and success in the teaching profession in educational institutions, in a manner consistent with the development of teaching skills.[12] The knowledge teachers acquire highlights its role in serving students in educational institutions, as a science, no less than other disciplines, as it contains many sciences and knowledge, while at the same time having common knowledge with other scientific disciplines. The researcher believes that there are a set of social and environmental conditions that lead teachers and schools to consider themselves "competent and accomplished" and multi-talented. When this concept is born, accompanied by a high sense of self-esteem, in addition to the upbringing methods used by educational communities, it encourages the creation of a distinguished generation. A good level of professional ethics for teaching is because educational institutions represented by the school are social organizations, and although they are small, working within them towards common goals develops a sense of belonging and loyalty.[13] The high level of ethics in the teaching profession can be explained by the fact that educational cadres have achieved a degree of mental, cognitive, social and moral maturity. This maturity makes it easier for them to see life from a broad angle, so they tend to liberate themselves from a narrow, selfish view towards a social view that considers the feelings and emotions of others. [14]As a result, the behavior resulting from this view achieves a state of psychological and social harmony and thus leads to the teacher and school possessing a high level of ethics in the teaching profession. In addition, their arrival at the stage of professional responsibility means that they have achieved their most important desires in professional life, and this makes them feel themselves, their being and their personality. In addition, professional life and the rich relationships it includes help to form realistic self-concept for the teacher and school by comparing themselves with their other colleagues, which leads to good psychological and social harmony. This is what Fahmy Mustafa Al-Zayat (2009) confirmed: "that The ability to sacrifice and serve others is one of the most important characteristics of a leader, along with their ability to give, contribute, and produce. A leadership personality contributes to serving humanity in general, achieving happiness for the greatest possible number of people. Furthermore,[15] professional ethics are the individual's ability to establish fruitful and enjoyable social relationships with others, characterized by an individual's inclination toward love, giving, and cooperation. Fakhri Abdul Hadi pointed out in his study, "He demonstrated that individuals who are distinguished by their professional ethics and who are psychologically and socially compatible possess certain characteristics, such as love for others, integration, interaction, and a desire to provide aid and assistance."[15]

Conclusions

1. The teaching and educational staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate enjoy a high level of social support.
2. The teaching and educational staff for people with special needs in the holy Karbala Governorate have a high level of teaching ethics.

Recommendations:

1. Benefit from the results of the current study, particularly by identifying the reality of social support and teaching ethics for educational staff with special needs in Karbala Governorate.
2. Conduct similar studies that examine other psychological and social variables among educational and pedagogical staff in Karbala Governorate.
3. Conduct studies that incorporate the variables of the current study and other educational institutions, including broader samples encompassing all of Iraq.

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