

Stress Experienced by Special Education Teachers and Coping with Stress¹

Abdullah Sadan² , Fulya Akgül³ , İsmail Çelik⁴ , Özcan İkbâl⁵ , Serkan Atilla⁶ , İbrahim Kuz⁷ , Gökmen Keklik⁸ 

Abstract

The main purpose of the research is to examine the stress factors of special education teachers. The sample of the research consists of special education teachers working in special education schools in a district in the Aegean Region. Pearson correlation analysis, t test and ANOVA test were used to analyse the data in the research in which quantitative research methods were used. As a result of the research, it is seen that the inadequate salary of the teachers, ignoring the individual differences of the students in the course curriculum, perception of teaching as a profession that "everyone can do", and students' lack of interest in the lesson partially affect the stress level. There is a positive, moderately strong relationship between the student dimension and the personality dimension, curriculum dimension, teacher/teacher relations dimension, management/supervision dimension, school dimension and professional dimension. There is a moderately strong positive relationship between School Dimension and Occupational Dimension. There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of gender, marital status, type of school graduated from, reason for choosing teaching profession and length of service.

Keywords: Stress, Special Education, Organisation, Education

Özel Eğitim Öğretmenlerinin Yaşadığı Stres ve Stresle Başa Çıkma

Özet (Türkçe)

Araştırmanın temel amacı; özel eğitim öğretmenlerinin stres yaratan faktörlerini incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemini Ege Bölgesinde bir ilçede bulunan özel eğitim okullarında görevli özel eğitim öğretmenlerinden oluşmaktadır. Nicel araştırma yöntemleri kullanılan çalışmada verilerin analizinde, Pearson korelasyon analizi, t testi ve ANOVA testi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, öğretmenlerin aldıkları ücretin yetersiz olmasının, ders müfredatının öğrencilerdeki bireysel farklılıkların göz ardı edilmesinin, öğretmenliğin "herkesin yapabileceği" bir meslek olarak algılanmasının, öğrencilerin derse ilgi göstermemelerinin, stres düzeyini kısmen etkilediği görülmektedir. Öğrenci boyutu ile kişilik boyutu, müfredat boyutu, öğretmen/öğretmen ilişkileri boyutu, yönetim/denetim boyutu, okul boyutu ve meslek boyutu arasında pozitif yönlü orta kuvvetli bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Okul Boyutu ile Meslek Boyutu arasında pozitif yönlü orta kuvvetli bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Cinsiyet, medeni durum, mezun olunan okul türü, öğretmenlik mesleğini seçme nedeni ve görev süresi bakımından stres faktörlerinin bütün boyutları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı fark bulunmamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: stres, özel eğitim, örgüt, eğitim

Introduction

With the progress of industry and technology day by day, the migration of individuals from the village to the city has accelerated, the population has increased in the cities, and with the increase in the number of employees, working conditions and living conditions have become difficult. These difficult conditions have led the employee to improve himself/herself. The decrease in green areas with the effect of industrialisation, air pollution, unplanned urbanisation as a result of population growth, and the difficulty of living conditions day by day have affected the employees physiologically and psychologically. As a

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² Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, a.sadan@hotmail.com

³ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, fulyakgul@gmail.com

⁴ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, i.celik1968@hotmail.com

⁵ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, ozcanluto@gmail.com

⁶ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, stoper_4@windowslive.com

⁷ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, ibrahimkuz@outlook.com

⁸ Teacher., Ministry of Education, Türkiye, gokmenkeklik@hotmail.com

result of this effect, the concept of stress has become one of the biggest problems of today's conditions. People live by constantly pushing their own limits and capabilities due to reasons such as ease of access to information, intense competitive environment, fear of unemployment. Regardless of the sector in which individuals work, being faced with the concept of stress has affected their work and social lives, reduced the work efficiency of individuals and caused diseases. Therefore, stress and the factors causing stress have been the subject of research and studies in this field have accelerated since the 1980s.

In this study, the concept of stress, factors causing stress, teaching profession and stress factors in teachers were discussed.

Stress is one of the most important factors that negatively affect human health in physiological and psychological terms (Pehlivan 1993). Stress decreases productivity and efficiency due to the negative factors it creates on people (Akgün and Kemalöglü, 1991). The raw material of the education system and schools, which are the building blocks of this system, is human. Human being is a part of the society and schools, which get their raw material from the society, give back to the society by educating them. This situation causes the sphere of influence of schools to be very wide and also causes schools to be affected by society and human relations (Bursalioğlu, 1999).

Teachers are among the most important stakeholders of education. It is necessary for the teacher to be mentally and physically comfortable for communication with his/her students. Teachers who are happy in their work life and social life will be able to transfer this happiness to their students. Stressfulness of the teacher prevents communication with the students and decreases the efficiency of education.

The school is a workplace, and the aim of teachers and other stakeholders is to work to provide the best service to students. They have some expectations in order to provide this service. These expectations can be exemplified by schools built according to the characteristics of the stakeholders and equipping these schools in the best way (Ergin, 1995). The fact that the school has all kinds of equipment, the teacher is comfortable and peaceful, and the ease of access to information will positively affect the efficiency of the teacher and make a great contribution to the academic and social development of the students.

It is impossible for teachers not to be affected by the problems experienced by people today. Because teachers are also human beings and stress is an element that they are also affected by (Güler, 1998). The occupational stress experienced by teachers reduced their sense of belonging to the school, prevented professional satisfaction and caused a decrease in the quality of education. They reflected their burnout to the school and thus to the students.

Teachers are the most important element of the effective and efficient continuation of the education process. In order to increase the efficiency and job satisfaction of teachers, it is necessary to determine the stress factors, to examine the causes of these factors and to develop methods to cope with stress.

The aim of the study conducted by Göçen (2019) is to examine the meaning of life for teachers, their desire to continue their profession, stress and burnout. Content and descriptive analysis techniques were used to analyse the data. A sample group of 10 teachers was examined, and at the end of the study, it was stated that teachers developed different solutions to the factors causing job stress. Although the participants generally wanted to continue their profession, they stated that they wanted to leave the profession at least once during their professional life due to the problems they experienced and job stress. Argon and Ateş (2007) tried to explain that keeping the stress level at a certain level is possible by determining the factors that cause stress. In this study, they aimed to determine

the stress factors that primary school teachers are under the influence of in educational institutions. The research has a descriptive nature, the participant group is primary school teachers working in Gerede District of Bolu province. The data were collected with the "Stress Source Scale" consisting of four dimensions: self-interpretation, physical environment, work environment and social environment. The study showed that the factors arising from the social environment are the most important factors that create teacher stress. Teachers are less affected by the factors arising from the work environment than all other factors.

In the 2004-2005 academic year, a study was conducted with the participation of 4522 classroom and branch teachers working in primary schools in Antalya city centre. The aim of the study is to determine the stress and satisfaction levels of primary school teachers and whether these concepts are affected by variables such as age, length of service, gender and educational status. The study was prepared using the survey model. As a result of the research, it was found that there was a significant inverse relationship between job satisfaction and job stress of teachers (Günbayı and Tokel 2012). Accordingly, job stress and job satisfaction are important concepts that affect teachers' professional potential and performance.

Özdemir, Sezgin, Kaya, Receptoğlu (2011) aimed to determine the factors causing stress in primary school teachers and to examine whether teachers' coping styles with stress are related to their humour styles. The study is a correlational research. A sample group consisting of 221 teachers selected in Ankara and working in central districts participated in the study. Multiple linear regression analysis was applied for data analysis. The results of the study showed that all humour styles were significant predictors of self-confident approach in coping with stress.

In Balaban's (2000) study, stress sources and coping techniques of teachers in basic education were analysed. In the study conducted in the form of literature review, it was concluded that unplanned teacher appointments, high class size and low salaries were the reasons for stress in teachers.

The aim of Akpınar's (2008) study was to determine teachers' views on stress that negatively affects teachers as educators. In the study, data were collected by applying a questionnaire to a total of 184 teachers working in public primary schools in Elazığ provincial centre and districts in the 2005-2006 academic year. According to the findings obtained in the descriptive study, the causes of teachers' stress are students' learning and discipline problems, lack of time, inadequacy of teachers' salaries and excessive workload.

The aim of Bulut Bozkurt's (2005) study on stress was to examine the relationships between stressful life events and coping styles of teachers. The data were collected by applying a scale to 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade teachers working in 8 primary schools in Izmir city centre in 2003-2004 academic year. The data were analysed with percentages, one-way analysis of variance, "t" test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. According to the results of the study, there were significant differences according to teachers' ability to cope with stress, seniority in the profession, productivity in the profession and whether the teaching profession has the place it deserves in the society. While there was no significant relationship between the scale of stressful life events and coping with stress subscales in teachers with low stress, there was a negative relationship between life events and social support subscale in teachers with high stress.

Şanlı (2017) aimed to determine the perceived stress level of teachers working in public schools in terms of some variables. The opinions of 540 teachers working in the 2014-2015

academic year were taken, different schools were selected and branches were used in the random sampling method. In this study, it was revealed that there was a significant relationship between teachers in the stress / discomfort dimension of the stress scale.

Problem Statement

In the face of the rapid development of the modern world, schools must also renew themselves. Schools are organisations that scientists and countries attach great importance to. Schools are rare institutions that train qualified, knowledgeable and skilful people (Gümüşeli, 1996). Schools, which are the most important building blocks of the education and training system, should emphasise the concept of quality in order to improve themselves (Günbayı & Çevik, 2004). The quality of education shows variability and parallelism with the quality of teachers. Without qualified teachers, education cannot reach its goal. The fact that teachers have a good command of their profession and are efficient positively affects student success. This increases the quality of society.

Like all living beings, human beings have mental and physical limits. Stress, which arises as a result of threatening and forcing these limits, shows a decrease in individual and organisational productivity when it is not combated. Employees whose productivity and efficiency decrease cannot get the necessary pleasure from work life and have difficulty in establishing close relationships with their colleagues and other organisational stakeholders (Baltaş & Baltaş, 2008).

In organisations, the way the work is done, the structure of the organisation, the physical environment or factors arising from the characteristics of individuals are the factors that lead to the emergence of stress (Kirel, 1991). Each organisation can develop different sources of stress according to the service it provides, the technological materials and systems it uses, the environmental conditions, the education level of the members of the organisation, the groupings that occur within the organisation, and the factors related to the organisational climate (Öztürk, 1995).

Due to the nature of the profession, teachers exhibit high levels of professional burnout behaviours (Cemaloğlu and Şahin 2007). It is seen that there is a connection between teachers' stress levels and their job satisfaction. Stress levels of teachers whose job satisfaction increases also decrease. The fact that teachers who do not get satisfaction from their profession experience more stress causes a decrease in productivity.

Sub Problems

It was aimed to understand the stress levels of teachers at the basic education level. In order to achieve this goal, answers to three sub-problems were sought:

1. What are the opinions of special education teachers about their stress levels?
2. What is the relationship between stress factors?
3. To what extent do teachers' stress levels vary according to various factors?

Purpose of the Study

The research aims to reveal the sources of stress faced by special education teachers and the factors affecting this situation.

Importance of Research

One of the most fundamental stakeholders of education is teachers. High performance of teachers positively affects the success of students and the education system. For this

purpose, this study is important in terms of determining the stress and stress factors that negatively affect the performance of special education teachers and taking measures to minimise teacher stress. The reason why this study was conducted only with special education teachers is because they face unique job stress factors. Special education teachers are required to have more specific skills in the education of students with special needs, which is different from traditional teachers. Therefore, special education teachers may be exposed to higher levels of job stress compared to other teachers. This study was conducted to determine the stress factors of special education teachers and to discuss measures that can be taken to minimize teacher stress.

METHOD

Research Model

In the study, the survey model was used to determine the stress factors affecting special education teachers. According to Karasar (1999), the survey model is an approach that aims to explain an event that has occurred before or at the present time by describing it as it is. Therefore, in this study, stress factors of teachers were tried to be explained.

Population and Sample of the Study

The sample of the study consists of special education school teachers working in Bornova district of Izmir province. A total of 89 teachers working in special education schools in this district participated in the study.

Table 1: Personal Information

		N	%
Gender	Male	14	15.7%
	Woman	75	84.3%
Marital Status	Married	74	83.1%
	Single	15	16.9%
Graduated School Type	High School	7	7.9%
	Undergraduate/Master's degree	82	92.1%
Do you love your profession?	Yes	88	98.9%
	No.	1	1.1%
Choosing Teaching Profession Format	Knowingly and Willingly	64	71.9%
	Because I Have To	14	15.7%
	Coincidentally	11	12.4%
How many years in your profession	Less than 10 years	9	10.1%
	10-15 years	9	10.1%
	More than 15 years	71	79.8%
Type of school you work at	Official	89	100,0%

Among the teachers who participated in the study, 84.3% were female, 83.1% were married, 92.1% had bachelor's or master's degrees, 98.9% of the teachers stated that they liked their profession and 71.9% of them chose the profession knowingly and willingly. The tenure of 79.8% of the teachers is more than 15 years.

Data Collection Tools Used in the Research

The scale used in the study was developed by Sarı (2005).

Table 2: Stress Scale Reliability Levels

Size	Cronbach's Alpha
Student Dimension	0.826
Personality Dimension	0.820
Curriculum Dimension	0.629
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	0.775
Management/Supervision Dimension	0.791
School Dimension	0.808
Occupation Dimension Scale Total	0.786 0.944

When Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.70 and above, the scale is considered to be reliable. However, when the number of questions is small, this limit can be accepted as 0.60 and above (Kalaycı, 2006). According to the results of the analysis, it is understood that the dimensions used in the research are reliable.

Table 3: Normality Test

	N	Skewness	kurtosis
Student Dimension	89	0.655	-0.181
Personality Dimension	89	-0.136	-0.655
Curriculum Dimension	89	0.512	-0.643
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	89	-0.092	-0.424
Management/Supervision Dimension	89	0.284	-0.349
School Dimension	89	0.402	-0.483
Occupation Dimension	89	-0.051	-0.503
Scale Total	89	-0.102	-0.393

Scale scores were calculated and kurtosis and skewness coefficients were analysed to determine the suitability of the scores for normal distribution. According to George and Mallery (2010), skewness and kurtosis values are between +2.0 and -2.0. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), if the values are between +1.5 and -1.5, the scale is normally

distributed and parametric tests will give more valid and reliable results. In this context, the kurtosis and skewness values of the scale and dimensions used in the research are between +1.5 and -1.5, which means that the factors are normally distributed.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected remotely on the internet via Google form due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The data were analysed with SPSS 24.0. In the study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to determine the reliability level of the scale. Cronbach's alpha coefficient gives the reliability level of the scale. The coefficient varies between 0 and 1. Depending on the alpha (α) coefficient, the reliability of the scale is interpreted as follows. According to the criteria specified by Şencan (2015), the reliability of the scale used in the research was found to be high depending on the Alpha (α) coefficient.

The kurtosis and skewness coefficients were analysed to determine the suitability of the scores for normal distribution. It was decided to select parametric tests when the normal distribution condition was met. In this context, while the relationship between the scores was analysed by Pearson correlation test, the difference of the scores according to demographic variables was analysed by t test and ANOVA test (one-way analysis of variance).

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Findings Related to the First Sub-Problem

The mean (\bar{x}) and standard deviation (ss) of the answers given by the teachers participating in the study about their stress levels were calculated and the results are given in Table 4.

1. What are the opinions of the teachers participating in the study about their stress levels?

Table 4: Mean Levels of Agreement of Scale Items

	SS	Xv
1- Low achievement of students affects my stress level	1.96	0.865
2- My inability to communicate well with students affects my stress level.	2.36	1.180
3- Teaching a subject I am not prepared for affects my stress level.	2.19	1.021
4- Students' lack of interest in my lesson affects my stress level	1.89	1.016
5- Having problematic students in my class affects my stress level	2.18	1.134
6- Students' lack of basic knowledge about my course affects my stress level	2.39	0.996
7- Students' difficulty in understanding the subjects affects my stress level	2.30	0.970
8- High student absenteeism affects my stress level	1.91	0.913

9- The fact that students are not curious about anything other than what is taught affects my stress level	2.37	1.081
10- Students making too much noise during lessons affects my stress level	2.08	1.058
11- The fact that the inspectors do not guide me affects my stress level.	3.61	1.311
12-Non-application of a certain standard in inspections affects my stress level	2.76	1.332
13- School principal's watching my lesson affects my stress level	2.98	1.357
14-Too many holidays in a school year affects my stress level	3.61	1.164
15- Administrators' indifference to teachers' problems affects my stress level	1.96	0.999
16- The fact that my work is not appreciated by the administrators affects my stress level	2.18	1.183
17- The fact that the administration provides too many advantages to some teachers in our school affects my stress level	2.13	1.120
18- The fact that there are empty lessons in the breaks in my lesson programme affects my stress level	3.63	1.091
19-Frequent changes in the curriculum affect my stress level	1.94	1.209
20-The fact that the curriculum ignores individual differences in students affects my stress level.	1.79	0.947
21-The anxiety of completing the syllabus affects my stress level.	2.33	1.175
22-The high intensity of my studies affects my stress level.	2.28	1.138
23-The fact that the teaching load required by my branch is higher than other branches affects my stress level.	2.30	1.318
24- The fact that teaching does not provide me with sufficient personal happiness affects my stress level.	2.97	1.434
25-My dislike of teaching affects my stress level.	4.21	1.123
26-It affects my stress level that I do not consider myself as competent as other teachers in my profession.	4.29	1.014
27-The fact that other teachers do not see me as a good teacher affects my stress level.	4.20	1.089
28- Inadequate co-operation among teachers affects my stress level.	2.90	1.332
29-The fact that my profession does not provide the social status I expect affects my	2.57	1.389

stress level.

30-Inconsistent decisions of managers affect my stress level.	2.10	1.197
31- Not being able to express my opinions about the functioning of the school to my fellow teachers affects my stress level.	3.07	1.268
32-The existence of socio-economic differences among my students affects my stress level.	2.76	1.314
33-Widespread gossip among teachers at school affects my stress level.	2.72	1.340
34-Taking responsibility for some tasks other than my duties at school affects my stress level.	2.38	1.336
35-The problems I have with other teachers affect my stress level.	2.66	1.279
36-The fact that the school building, classrooms and laboratories are not clean enough affects my stress level.	2.33	1.175
37-It affects my stress level that the school environment is not clean enough.	2.36	1.160
38-High noise pollution around the school affects my stress level.	2.38	1.192
39-Lack of green areas around the school affects my stress level.	2.31	1.154
40-The fact that I cannot take a holiday due to the intensive study programme affects my stress level.	2.89	1.369
41-It affects my stress level that the salary I receive in return for my duty is insufficient.	1.74	1.093
42-The high expectations of students' parents from teachers affect my stress level.	1.96	1.167
43-It affects my stress level that I cannot help students with economic inadequacy.	1.94	1.004
44-The fact that social pressure prevents me from doing my job in the best way affects my stress level.	2.38	1.220
45-The perception of teaching as a profession that "anyone can do" affects my stress level	1.84	1.107
46-Disrespectful behaviours of students affect my stress level.	2.07	1.175
47-Teacher's different assessment and evaluation systems affect my stress level.	3.00	1.314
48- The fact that the environment does not show the necessary respect to teachers affects my stress level.	1.90	1.066
49-Believing that my professional knowledge is insufficient affects my stress level.	3.93	1.185
50-Making no effort to improve myself affects my stress level.	3.55	1.297

51-It affects my stress level that I cannot follow the publications related to my profession.	3.36	1.218
52-Not being able to attend in-service trainings affects my stress level.	3.37	1.326
53-The inadequacy of our school library affects my stress level.	3.02	1.422

In the study, the items with the highest level of agreement among the stress factors are given below: "The fact that I do not consider myself as adequate as other teachers in my profession affects my stress level.", "The fact that I do not like teaching affects my stress level.", "The fact that other teachers do not see me as a good teacher affects my stress level.", "Believing that my professional knowledge is insufficient affects my stress level.", "Having empty lessons in the breaks in my curriculum affects my stress level.", "Not being guided by the inspectors affects my stress level.", "Having too many holidays in a school year affects my stress level.", "Not making efforts to improve myself affects my stress level." Items.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Stress Factor Scores

	N	Xv	SS
Student Dimension	89	2.19	0.66
Personality Dimension	89	3.13	0.88
Curriculum Dimension	89	1.88	0.71
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	89	3.09	0.87
Management/Supervision Dimension	89	2.63	0.75
School Dimension	89	2.62	0.77
Occupation Dimension	89	2.56	0.70

The stress factors of the teachers included in the study were calculated and given in the table. According to the results of the analysis, the Student Dimension score is 2.19; Personality Dimension is 3.13; Curriculum Dimension is 1.88; Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension is 3.09; Management/Supervision Dimension is 2.63; School Dimension is 2.62 and Professional Dimension is 2.56. According to these results, the most important stress factors are Personality Dimension and Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension.

Findings Related to the Second Sub-Problems

The results of the answers given by the teachers participating in the study regarding the "Relationship between Stress Factors" are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Investigation of the Relationship between Stress Factors (Correlation)

	Student Dimension	Personality Dimension	Curriculum Dimension	Teacher / Teacher Relations Dimension	Management / Audit Dimension	School Dimension	Occupation Dimension	Scale Total
Student Size	r 1 p n 89							
Personality Size	r .502** p .000 n 89	1 89						
Curriculum Size	r .390** p .000 n 89	.288** .006 89	1 89					
Teacher/Teacher Relations Size	r .444** p .000 n 89	.673** .000 89	.348** .001 89	1 89				
Management / Audit Size	r .542** p .000 n 89	.461** .000 89	.502** .000 89	.618** .000 89	1 89			
School Size	r .361** p .001 n 89	.464** .000 89	.565** .000 89	.553** .000 89	.568** .000 89	1 89		
Profession Size	r .541** p .000 n 89	.500** .000 89	.610** .000 89	.705** .000 89	.709** .000 89	.639** .000 89	1 89	
Scale Total	r .716** p .000 n 89	.719** .000 89	.636** .000 89	.812** .000 89	.828** .000 89	.766** .000 89	.884** .000 89	1 89

****p<0.01**

The results of the correlation test conducted to examine the relationship between the stress factors are given in the table.

According to the results of the analyses, there is a moderately strong positive relationship between the student dimension and the personality dimension ($r=0.502$, $p<0.01$); between the curriculum dimension and the teacher/teacher relations dimension ($r=0.348$, $p<0.01$); between the management/supervision dimension and the school dimension ($r=0.568$, $p<0.01$); between the management/supervision dimension and the profession dimension ($r=0.709$, $p<0.01$).

There is a weak strong positive relationship between personality dimension and curriculum dimension ($r=0.288$, $p<0.05$), while there is a moderate strong positive relationship between teacher/teacher relations dimension ($r=0.673$, $p<0.01$), management/supervision dimension

($r=0.461$, $p<0.01$), school dimension ($r=0.464$, $p<0.01$) and profession dimension ($r=0.500$, $p<0.01$). There is a moderately strong positive relationship between curriculum dimension and teacher/teacher relations dimension ($r=0.348$, $p<0.01$), management/supervision dimension ($r=0.502$, $p<0.01$), school dimension ($r=0.565$, $p<0.01$), and professional dimension ($r=0.610$, $p<0.01$).

There is a moderately strong positive relationship between the teacher/teacher relations dimension and the management/supervision dimension ($r=0.618$, $p<0.01$), the school dimension ($r=0.553$, $p<0.01$) and a very strong positive relationship between the professional dimension ($r=0.705$, $p<0.01$).

There is a moderately strong positive relationship between the management/supervision dimension and the school dimension ($r=0.568$, $p<0.01$), and the occupational dimension ($r=0.709$, $p<0.01$). There is a moderately strong positive relationship between school dimension and occupational dimension ($r=0.639$, $p<0.01$).

Findings Related to the Third Sub-Problems

The results are given in Tables 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. In Table 7, the scores of teachers' stress factors grouped according to gender variable are compared. In order to determine whether stress factors differed according to gender variable, t-test for independent variables was used. Student sub- dimension [$t(80) = 0.670$; $p>.05$], personality sub-dimension [$t(80) = 1.868$; $p>.05$], curriculum sub- dimension [$t(80) = 1.029$; $p>.05$], teacher/teacher relations sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.514$; $p>.05$], management/supervision sub-dimension ($t80 = 0.692$; $p>.05$), school sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.450$; $p>.05$] and profession sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.1074$; $p>.05$]. However, when the mean scores of the participants were compared, it was seen that the attitudes towards all sub-dimensions were in favour of male teachers.

Table 7: Investigation of Stress Factors in terms of Gender (t test)

Gender	n	centre	ss	t	p	
Student Dimension	Male	14	2.30	0.75	0.670	0.505
	Woman	75	2.17	0.65		
Personality Dimension	Male	14	3.52	0.96	1.868	0.065
	Woman	75	3.05	0.85		
Curriculum Dimension	Male	14	2.13	1.04	1.029	0.320
	Woman	75	1.83	0.64		
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	Male	14	3.20	0.90	0.514	0.609
	Woman	75	3.07	0.87		
Management/Supervision Dimension	Male	14	2.76	0.77	0.692	0.491
	Woman	75	2.61	0.75		
	Male	14	2.71	0.77		

School Dimension	Woman	75	2.60	0.78	0.450	0.654
	Male	14	2.74	0.96		
Occupation Dimension	Woman	75	2.52	0.65	1.074	0.286
	Male					

In Table 7. the scores of teachers' stress factors according to marital status variable are compared. In order to determine whether stress factors differed according to marital status variable. t-test for independent variables was used. Student sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.156$; $p > .05$]. personality sub- dimension [$t(80) = -0.243$; $p > .05$]. curriculum sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.849$; $p > .05$]. teacher/teacher relations sub-dimension [$t(80) = -0.849$; $p > .05$]. management/supervision sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.373$; $p > .05$], school sub-dimension [$t(80) = -0.455$; $p > .05$] and profession sub-dimension [$t(80) = -0.121$; $p > .05$].

Table 8: Examination of Stress Factors in terms of Marital Status (t test)

Marial Status	n	centre	ss	t	p	
Student Dimension	Married	74	2.20	0.66	0.156	0.877
	Single	15	2.17	0.68		
Personality Dimension	Married	74	3.12	0.92		
	Single	15	3.18	0.68		
Curriculum Dimension	Married	74	1.91	0.72		
	Single	15	1.73	0.70		
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	Married	74	3.06	0.90		
	Single	15	3.27	0.75		
Management/Supervision Dimension	Married	74	2.64	0.79		0.243
	Single	15	2.59	0.50		
School Dimension	Married	74	2.60	0.79		0.809
	Single	15	2.70	0.69		
Occupation Dimension	Married	74	2.55	0.73		
	Single	15	2.58	0.54		

In Table 8, the scores of teachers' stress factors according to the education status variable are compared. In order to determine whether the stress factors differed according to the educational status variable, t-test for independent variables was used. Student sub-dimension ($t(80) = 0.870$; $p > .05$), personality sub-dimension [$t(80) = 1.635$; $p > .05$], curriculum sub-dimension [$t(80) = -0.486$; $p > .05$], teacher/teacher relations sub-dimension [$t(80) =$

1.370; $p > .05$], management/supervision sub-dimension [$t(80) = 1.410$; $p > .05$], school sub-dimension [$t(80) = 0.842$; $p > .05$] and profession sub-dimension [$t(80) = 1.032$; $p > .05$]. However, when the mean scores are examined, except for the curriculum sub-dimension, the stress factors attitudes of the teachers in all sub-dimensions are in favour of the teachers who graduated from higher education ($x = 1.75$) when compared with the scores of the teachers who graduated from undergraduate/graduate school ($x = 1.89$).

Table 9: Examination of Stress Factors in terms of Graduated School Type

Significance		n	centre	ss	t	p
Student Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	2.21	0.54	0.870	0.387
	Because I Have To	14	2.21	0.67		
Personality Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	2.06	0.66	1.635	0.106
	Because I Have To	14	3.10	0.88		
Curriculum Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	3.36	0.75		
	Because I Have To	14		0.71		
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	3.52	0.45		
	Because I Have To	14	3.05	0.89		
Management/Supervision Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	3.02	0.49	0.486	0.628
	Because I Have To	14	2.60	0.76		
School Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	2.86	0.76		
	Because I Have To	14	2.60	0.78		
Occupation Dimension	Knowingly and Wilingly	64	2.82	0.58		
	Because I Have To	14	2.53	0.71		

When Table 9 is analysed, as a result of the one-way variance analysis conducted to determine the significance of the effect of teachers' reasons for choosing the profession on stress factors, no statistically significant difference was found in the student sub-dimension, personality sub-dimension, curriculum sub-dimension, teacher/teacher relations sub-dimension, management/supervision sub-dimension, school sub-dimension and profession sub-dimension.

Table 10: Investigation of Stress Factors in terms of Reason for Choosing Teaching Profession (ANOVA Test)

Significance		n	centre	ss	t	p
Student Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	2.21	0.68	0.229	0.796
	Because I Have To	14	2.21	0.66		
	Coincidentally	11	2.06	0.62		
Personality Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	3.10	0.87	0.605	0.549
	Because I Have To	14	3.36	0.89		
	Coincidentally	11	3.02	0.96		
Curriculum Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	1.90	0.68	0.114	0.892
	Because I Have To	14	1.80	0.73		
	Coincidentally	11	1.84	0.93		
Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	3.11	0.94	0.285	0.753
	Because I Have To	14	3.15	0.56		
	Coincidentally	11	2.91	0.85		
Management/Supervision Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	2.66	0.78	0.279	0.757
	Because I Have To	14	2.65	0.62		
	Coincidentally	11	2.47	0.80		
School Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	2.68	0.68	0.230	0.795
	Because I Have To	14	2.49	0.66		
	Coincidentally	11	2.45	0.92		
Occupation Dimension	Knowingly and Willingly	64	2.55	0.69	0.227	0.798
	Because I Have To	14	2.51	0.65		
	Coincidentally	11	2.60	0.87		

When Table 10 is analysed, according to the results of one-way analysis of variance conducted to determine the significance of the effect of teachers' tenure on stress factors, there is no statistically significant difference between the Student Dimension, Personality Dimension, Curriculum Dimension, Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension,

Management/Supervision Dimension, School Dimension and Occupational Dimension among teachers whose tenure is less than 10 years, 10-15 years and more than 15 years ($p>0.05$).

Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

Findings and Discussion Related to the First Sub-Problem

During the pandemic period, stress levels are affected by the inadequacy of the salary they receive, ignoring individual differences in students in the course curriculum, perception of teaching as a profession that "everyone can do", students' lack of interest in the lesson, the environment not showing the necessary respect to teachers, high student absenteeism, frequent changes in the curriculum, and not being able to help students with economic inadequacy. Similar findings were found in the literature. Sarı (2005), on the other hand, found that "low achievement of students is the most stressful situation. Yıldırım (2008) found that "parents' lack of interest in children's education" was the most stressful situation, while Turna (2014) found that "insufficient salary in the teaching profession" was the most stressful situation for teachers.

One of the findings of the study is the health problems faced by special education teachers due to work stress, according to the findings obtained, some of the health problems experienced by teachers are headache and stomach disorders. These findings are in parallel with the studies in the literature. In one study, among the health problems caused by job stress, recurrent headache, flu, nausea, use of harmful substances such as smoking, low self-confidence, sleep disorder, irritability and back pain were shown (Çam, 1992).

One of the findings of the study is that the network of social relations in schools, the school environment, the bureaucratic structures in the school organisation are among the sources of job stress. The behaviours of the students' families, negative actions of the administration, development of unhealthy relationships between colleagues and insufficient level of cooperation, high class sizes, lack of materials used in education, defects in the physical structure of the school, low academic achievement of students, school cleanliness, heat and light were also listed as factors that cause job stress. In addition to these, continuous changes in the curriculum and system, administrators who are not equipped in accordance with the requirements of the modern age, problems arising from the status of the teaching profession, high expectations and the lack of a career system for the teaching profession were also identified as factors that cause job stress in special education teachers. The findings obtained in Öztürk's (1995) research coincide with all these findings in the study.

Findings and Discussion Related to the Second Sub-Problem

There is a moderately strong positive relationship between student dimension and personality dimension, curriculum dimension, teacher/teacher relations dimension, management/supervision dimension, school dimension and profession dimension. Turna (2014) found that the students dimension caused more stress in male teachers than female teachers. While there is a weak positive relationship between the Personality Dimension and the Curriculum Dimension, there is a moderate positive relationship between the Teacher/Teacher Relationship Dimension, Management/Supervision Dimension, School Dimension and Professional Dimension. There is a moderately strong positive relationship between Curriculum Dimension and Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension, Management/Supervision Dimension, School Dimension and Occupational Dimension. There is a moderately strong positive relationship between the Teacher/Teacher Relations

Dimension and the Management/Supervision Dimension and the School Dimension, while there is a very strong positive relationship between the Professional Dimension. There is a moderately strong positive relationship between Curriculum Dimension and Teacher/Teacher Relations Dimension, Management/Supervision Dimension, School Dimension and Professional Dimension.

There is a moderately strong positive relationship between the School Dimension and the Occupational Dimension. While Sarı (2005) analysed the sub-dimensions in terms of variables such as age, gender and education level in his study, this study analysed the sub-dimensions by comparing them within themselves. The study differs in this way.

Findings and Discussion Related to the Third Sub-Problem

There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of gender. Sarı (2005), who conducted a similar study to this study, found that the school dimension caused more stress in women than in men, which does not coincide with our study. In his study, Demirtaş (2006) determined that depression in women was higher than in men. One of the findings of the study is the fact that job stress in special education teachers varies depending on many factors. Among these factors are phenomena such as gender and age. When the literature is analysed, there are some contradictory opinions about gender. In addition to gender, it is seen that age also affects job stress processes. It is seen that special education teachers in certain age ranges are exposed to more job stress than their colleagues in other age ranges. Some of the findings obtained from the study are related to the source of job stress. When the areas of job stress in special education teachers are analysed, it is seen that one of the most stressful areas is job stress caused by students. Job stress caused by students is followed by the types of stress caused by the conditions in which the profession is practised. After these two factors, it is seen that the stress arising from students' families and workload are among the sources that cause teachers' work stress. In addition to these sources of stress, we can also mention the job stress arising from teachers' colleagues and the management level, and the conclusions about all these stress sources coincide with the data in Öztürk's (1995) research.

In the study, it was found that there were some gender-based differences in managing the effects of stress and coping with work stress in special education teachers. When the literature was analysed, it was seen that there were studies supporting this situation. In a study overlapping with the findings of the study, it was concluded that men were more advantageous than their female colleagues in protecting themselves from work stress due to the social support they received from their spouses. The findings of the study for female teachers could not be reached for male teachers. It is a finding of the aforementioned study that male teachers rely on the support they receive from their spouses and that they are protected from some negative effects of work stress thanks to this social support (Çardak, 2002).

There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of marital status. In Turna's (2014) study, it was observed that none of the sub-dimensions differed significantly. The result of this study coincides with our study. However, in Aladağ's (2015) study, it was seen that only the school facilities and supervision dimension differed according to marital status, and there was no differentiation in other dimensions. In a similar study conducted by Yıldırım (2008), the sub-dimension of teaching profession differed significantly. The results of these two studies do not overlap with the findings of our research.

There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of the type of school graduated from. In Turna's (2014) study, classroom teachers' attitudes towards the sub-dimensions of School Facilities and Supervision, School Management, Teaching Profession, Colleagues, Intervention of Parents do not differ according to Gender, Graduation Status, Graduation Area and Marital Status. The results of this study coincide with the findings of our research.

- a) There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of the reason for choosing the teaching profession. Sari's (2005) study also gives similar results.
- b) There is no statistically significant difference between all dimensions of stress factors in terms of tenure. Pilatin (2010) determined that teachers' perceptions of stress increased as the years of seniority increased. In Yıldırım's (2008) and Turna's (2014) study, it was found that school facilities and supervision sub-dimension and students sub-dimension differed significantly according to seniority. The results of these studies do not overlap with our study.

Recommendations

Suggestions for the items that negatively affect the stress level of teachers according to the results of the research;

Teachers' wages should be increased.

Individual differences of students should not be ignored while preparing the course curriculum.

Teaching should not be perceived as a profession that "anyone can do". Attempts should be made to attract students' interest in the lesson.

The environment should show the necessary respect to teachers. Student absenteeism should be prevented.

The curriculum should not be changed frequently. Students with economic insufficiency should be assisted.

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Conflict of Interest

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