



## JOB SATISFACTION AMONG SPECIAL EDUCATORS IN LEBANON AS RELATED TO THEIR SELF-EFFICACY AND SOME DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES<sup>i</sup>

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### Abstract:

This study aims to find a relationship between the perceived job satisfaction of special education teachers and both their (1) socio-demographics (age, gender, years of experience, education level, working hours, type and the geographic area of educational institution, and type of employment) and their (2) self-efficacy. 205 special education teachers, female predominantly (94.6%), from 5 districts of Lebanon participated in this study. A correlation was found between special educators' job satisfaction and their self-efficacy. Moreover, teachers with a higher level of education were more satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts who had lower education levels. A supportive school climate that fosters positive relationships with teachers and regular training programs for promoting teachers' knowledge and skills development, were also recommended.

**Keywords:** special education teachers, students with special needs, job satisfaction, self-efficacy

### ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى كشف مستوى الرضا الوظيفي لدى معلمي التربية الخاصة من خمس محافظات في لبنان وعلاقته بمتغيرات إجتماعية - ديموغرافية ( العمر، الجنس، الخبرة العملية، المستوى الدراسي، مكان وساعات العمل ، وطبيعة المؤسسة التعليمية) و الكفاءة الذاتية للمعلمين. أسفرت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود علاقة ترابطية بين الرضا الوظيفي و الكفاءة الذاتية لمعلمي التربية الخاصة. كما و أوضحت النتائج أنّ هناك فروقاً في الرضا الوظيفي يُعزى إلى متغير المؤهل الدراسي الأعلى لدى معلمي التربية الخاصة. في ضوء ما أسفرت عنه الدراسة، يوصى بتعزيز فاعلية معلمي التربية الخاصة و تشجيعه على اكتساب المعارف و المهارات و خبرات جديدة في بيئة مدرسية مشجعة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: معلمي التربية الخاصة، ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة، الرضا الوظيفي، الكفاءة الذاتية

<sup>i</sup> الرضا الوظيفي لدى معلمي التربية الخاصة في لبنان و علاقته بالكفاءة الذاتية و بعض المتغيرات الديموغرافية

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## 1. Introduction

For centuries, children with special needs were neglected and mistreated, struggling in a society that was unable to provide them with basic resources, such as education. Children with special needs are those with emotional, behavioral, learning, or physical disabilities who require special instruction and programs (American Psychological Association, 2015). It was only in the past few decades that remarkable advances in the education of children with special needs took place. These not only involved offering the appropriate education to those disabled children but also sought the attainment of diverse related issues to special education, such as inclusion, standardized assessment, diagnosis, and classification, which all resulted in the expansion of the special education field. Consequently, there was a rise in the demand and urgent call for skilled special education teachers who responded to the increased number of diagnosed children with disorders. Teaching students with special needs may be stressful and exhausting (Brunsting, Sreckovic, & Lane, 2014). Many special education teachers, striving to meet the educational, social, and emotional needs of students, often face excessive pressure, feel unsatisfied with their jobs, and ultimately end up quitting or changing their careers (Brunsting, Sreckovic & Lane, 2014). Research has found that problems of attrition and retention are a global crisis (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019).

In Lebanon, the field of special education is nascent and correspondent research is scarce. No study has been found to build an empirical understanding of personal and demographic characteristics related to job satisfaction among special educators. Azar (2007) highlighted the escalation of the attrition and retention issue among Lebanese special educators over the past few years. Moreover, there is still a dearth of published research investigating the characteristics of special educators and their satisfaction. Since 2019 and to date, Lebanon has been struck by a severe economic, political, security, and health crisis, impacting all its systems, including the educational one, which has not recovered since the civil war in 1975.

In the face of the current situation, many professionals facing salary cuts and an insecure future have left the country seeking better job opportunities. This has resulted in a shortage of qualified personnel, leading to lower levels of teacher quality and promoting the hiring of non-certified teachers in the field of special education. Currently, special educators, like many other Lebanese, are working under stressful circumstances with minimal resources and wages, a condition that might have undermined their satisfaction with their jobs. As in many other professions, job satisfaction has been found to increase positive attitudes toward their tasks (DiMaria, Peroni & Sarracino, 2020). Research has found that when teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they can increase their productivity, responsibility, and engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Türkoğlu, Cansoy & Parlar, 2017).

Special education teachers, constantly dealing with students who have emotional and behavioral disorders, are more prone to experiencing stress and burnout (Muijs & Reynolds, 2002; Evers, Tomic, & Brouwers, 2004; Klassen & Anderson, 2009) rendering

them more susceptible to attrition (Carlson & Thompson, 1995; Leung & Lee, 2006). However, the experience of stress resulting from working with students with special needs might vary among teachers who work with them (Greene, *et al.*, 2002). This variation might result not only from the stressors that emerged from the work environment (Fernet, Guay, Senecal, & Austin, 2012), but also from some teachers' personal characteristics (Beltman, Mansfield, & Price, 2011), such as their self-efficacy. In view of the challenges experienced by special education teachers, self-efficacy is important in helping them overcome obstacles and setbacks. Previous studies revealed that teachers' self-efficacy is a crucial factor in influencing job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

According to Billingsley (2004a), teacher demographics and individual characteristics account for a teacher's level of job satisfaction. It has also been found that teachers' job satisfaction may be influenced by teachers' age, gender, and years of experience (Williams, 2019).

This study aims to find a correlation between the perceived job satisfaction of special education teachers in Lebanon and both their (1) socio-demographics (age, gender, years of experience, education level, working hours, type of educational institution, type of employment, geographic area of the institution) and (2) self-efficacy.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Special Education Teachers' Job Satisfaction

Employees spend a great part of their lives in their workplace, and for that reason, they need to perceive satisfaction in their job. Job satisfaction and likewise self-efficacy have attracted the interest of researchers and policymakers over the past few decades (e.g., Moe *et al.* 2010; Shann 1998; Skaalvik and Skaalvik 2010, 2011). Hoppock, who first studied teacher job satisfaction, defines it as any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances which make a person satisfied with their job (Hoppock, 1935). Aldridge and Fraser (2016) stated that job satisfaction is the positive or negative evaluative judgment made by people about their jobs. Lefgren (2008) found that work conditions and relationships with peers affect job satisfaction. Research has also found that people who are satisfied with their jobs experience positive and better outcomes (Staw *et al.*, 1994), are more committed to teaching, and have a low turnover rate (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Teacher attrition and turnover negatively affect students' academic achievements and morale (Stockard & Lehman, 2004).

### 2.2. Special Education Teachers' Self-efficacy

Albert Bandura introduced the concept of self-efficacy as an important factor in human motivation, defining it as the capability of a person to act intentionally and control his environment. Self-efficacy is viewed as embedded in the theoretical framework of social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the role of human agency in controlling human functioning (Bandura, 2006a). Bandura added that self-efficacy refers to the belief in our

capability to handle various tasks (Bandura, 1982, 1986, 1989). Individuals with high self-efficacy perceive themselves as capable of overcoming challenging tasks. They tend to choose more difficult and longer to achieve activities and show high perseverance when facing obstacles (Pajares, 1997). Teachers' self-efficacy has received attention from researchers and policymakers over the past few decades (Moe *et al.*, 2010; Shann, 1998; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2010, 2011). It is defined as teachers' beliefs in their capability to control and impact student learning (Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011). Teachers with a high level of self-efficacy believe that all students are teachable through extra effort and appropriate strategies (Bandura, 1997). They experience less stress and burnout than teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura 1997; Betoret 2009; Caprara *et al.* 2003, 2006) and are less prone to leave their job (e.g., Wang, Hall, & Rahimi, 2015). Teachers with high self-efficacy believe in their personal ability to produce positive outcomes for students who may have difficulties completing learning activities and tasks (Zee & Koomen, 2016). Lebanese special educators survived the dramatic collapse that affected all the country's sectors, including education, living in daily tension while dealing with disabled children. Lebanese special educators' self-efficacy was assessed in this study using the general self-efficacy scale, which might have predicted how much teachers could cope with stressful situations. Scholz *et al.* refer to the General Self Efficacy as "*the global confidence in one's coping ability across a wide range of demanding or novel situations*" (Scholz *et al.*, 2002, p. 243).

### **2.3. Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction**

Studies have also shown that teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to feel devoted to teaching, and more engaged and satisfied in teaching (Zee *et al.*, 2016). A positive linear relationship exists between the self-efficacy of special teachers and their job satisfaction (Simmons, 2021), which means that as a teacher's self-efficacy increases their job satisfaction increases as well. Along the same line, teachers who believe in their ability to engage their students in the classroom are more capable of controlling the environment and tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction (Bruce, 2015; Staple, Hlland & Higgons, 1999).

## **3. Material and Methods**

### **3.1. Participants**

A total of 205 Lebanese special education teachers participated in this study and completed online questionnaires. The participants, predominantly females (94.63%), were contacted through their supervisors. The sample was representative of the five districts of Lebanon. Participants fell into five age categories, with the majority being between the ages of 25 and 34 years (33.17%). The majority also have more than 10 years of working experience, hold university degrees, mainly work in inclusive schools, and mostly teach at the primary school level.

### **3.2. Data Collection Procedure**

A pilot study was conducted prior to this main study with twenty-two teachers from one inclusive and another special school. Authorization for the pilot study was obtained via email from the corresponding administration, and aimed to enhance the reliability and validity of the data collection and questionnaires. Data for the main study was collected after obtaining permission from the heads of the educational institutions. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study.

The confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation were assured. Participants filled out the Arabic-translated forms of MSQ (Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire), and GSES (Generalized Self-efficacy Scale) on Google Forms.

### **3.3. Instruments**

A short questionnaire was developed by the researchers including a request for extensive demographic information from the special education teachers covering teaching experience, age, gender, education level, working hours, and type of schools. It also indicated the geographical area of the school and the level of students.

### **3.4. The Generalized Self-efficacy Scale**

The generalized self-efficacy scale (GSES) assesses an individual's beliefs in their ability to deal with life challenges and control environmental demands by responding to difficult situations and obstacles (Schwarzer, 1992). In this study, GSES was administered to assess the self-efficacy of special education teachers. The unidimensional scale comprises 10 items scored on a four-point Likert scale with 1 being "not at all true," 2 being "hardly true," 3 being "moderately true," and 4 being "exactly true". The minimum score is 10 and the maximum score is 40. There is no cut-off for this scale, while the higher the total score, the higher the self-efficacy (Shawarzer, 2011). It has a high internal consistency rate, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.75 to 0.90 across 23 nations (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995).

The value of Cronbach's Alpha for this study was equal to 0.887. In this research, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic and back-translated. Subsequently, a pilot study was designed, involving 23 special education teachers. The pilot study assessed the internal reliability of the GSES in Arabic, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.826.

### **3.5. Job Satisfaction Scale**

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), Short Version (Weiss, Davis, England, 1967) is a self-report scale that assesses the degree of the individual's overall feeling about the job and their satisfaction related to different aspects of this job (Spector, 1997: 2). The short form of MSQ consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 "very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job", 2 "dissatisfied with this aspect of my job", 3 "can't decide if I'm satisfied or dissatisfied with this aspect of my job", 4 "satisfied with this aspect of my job" and 5 "very satisfied with this aspect of my job"). The score can be obtained as a total score or a mean of the 20 items. Three aspects were identified in this scale: intrinsic

satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and general satisfaction, which is the overview of the extrinsic and intrinsic satisfactions (Weiss *et al.*, 1967; George *et al.*, 2008; Strydom, *et al.*, 2012). A high score indicates higher levels of job satisfaction, whereas a low score indicates a lower level.

#### 4. Results

A quantitative descriptive study was conducted to gather empirical data on socio-demographic variables, as well as job satisfaction and general self-efficacy among teachers.

**Table 1:** Demographic Variables Frequency (N=205)

		Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Female	194	94.63
	Male	11	5.37
<b>Age</b>	Below 25	46	22.44
	25 – 34	68	33.17
	35 – 44	62	30.24
	45 – 54	23	11.22
	Above 55	6	2.93
<b>Experience</b>	Less than 5 years	67	32.68
	Between 5 and 10 years	54	26.34
	More than 10 years	84	40.98
<b>Education</b>	High school or technical	20	9.76
	University degree in specialized education	73	35.61
	University degree in education	43	20.98
	University degree in another field	69	33.66
<b>Working Hours</b>	Full time	178	86.83
	Part-time	27	13.17
<b>Type of School</b>	University	11	5.37
	Inclusive school	119	58.05
	Specialized school for special needs	38	18.54
	Specialized center for special needs	37	18.05
<b>Sector</b>	Private	199	97.07
	Public	6	2.93
<b>Area</b>	Beirut	61	29.76
	Mount Lebanon	70	34.15
	North	8	3.90
	South	44	21.46
	Bekaa	22	10.73
<b>Student Level</b>	Pre-school	37	18.05
	Primary	105	51.22
	Middle	46	22.44
	Secondary	7	3.41
	University	10	4.88

The level of satisfaction of 205 teachers was measured by their responses to the MSQ. The mean scores ranged between 0.98 and 1.17 for all items, indicating a satisfactory level of job satisfaction, with the exception of items 13, 14, and 17, where teachers were somewhat satisfied, with mean scores ranging between 1.06 and 1.17. With respect to the GSES, the special education teachers showed high self-efficacy with a mean score ranging between 3.18 and 3.34.

Furthermore, the results revealed that 94.63% of the participants were females. In terms of age distribution, 33.17% were aged between 25 and 34 years, while 30.24% were aged between 35 and 44 years. Regarding experience, 40.98% of participants had more than 10 years of experience. In terms of educational qualifications, 35.61% had a university degree in specialized education, and 33.66% had a university degree in other fields.

The results also showed that 86.83% of the participants were full-time employees, 58.05% worked in an inclusive school, 18.54% in a special school, and 18.05% in specialized centers for students with special needs. Most participants worked in the private sector, with 34.15% working in Mount Lebanon, 29.76% in Beirut, and 21.46% in the South of Lebanon. Regarding the students' grade level, 51.22% were in the primary level, 22.44% in the middle level, and 18.05% in pre-school (See Table 2).

The means of job satisfaction are presented in Table 3.

**Table 2: Mean Value of the MSQ**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Female	194	3.66
	Male	11	3.94
<b>Age</b>	Below 25	46	3.78
	25 – 34	68	3.62
	35 – 44	62	3.62
	45 – 54	23	3.75
	Above 55	6	3.78
	Total	205	3.68
<b>Experience</b>	Less than 5 years	67	3.73
	Between 5 and 10 years	54	3.59
	More than 10 years	84	3.69
	Total	205	3.68
<b>Education</b>	High school or technical	20	3.57
	University degree in specialized education	73	3.62
	University degree in education	43	3.58
	University degree in another field	69	3.83
	Total	205	3.68
<b>Working Hours</b>	Full time	178	3.68
	Part-time	27	3.63
<b>Type of school</b>	University	11	3.84
	Inclusive school	119	3.66
	Special school	38	3.55
	Specialized center	37	3.82
	Total	205	3.68

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<b>Sector</b>	Private	199	3.67
	Public	6	3.81
<b>Area</b>	Beirut	61	3.80
	Mount Lebanon	70	3.64
	North	8	3.35
	South	44	3.70
	Bekaa	22	3.50
	Total	205	3.68
	<b>Student level</b>	Pre-school	37
Primary		105	3.69
Middle		46	3.63
Secondary		7	3.71
University		10	3.81
<b>Total</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>3.67</b>

The value of Cronbach's Alpha for this study was equal to 0.887. The subsequent factor analysis of the GSES shows that the ten items were loaded onto one factor with high loading values ranging between 0.565 and 0.789 (Table 3). For the MSQ, the 20 items were loaded clearly on one factor with loading values ranging between 0.325 and 0.758. The value of Cronbach's Alpha of the MSQ was equal to 0.919, which indicated a highly satisfactory internal consistency.

**Table 3:** Factor Analysis of Job Satisfaction (JS) and Self-efficacy (SE) (N=205)

	<b>Factors</b>	
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
JS1	0.446	
JS2	0.541	
JS3	0.440	
JS4	0.625	
JS5	0.710	
JS6	0.711	
JS7	0.325	
JS8	0.702	
JS9	0.606	
JS10	0.602	
JS11	0.644	
JS12	0.758	
JS13	0.563	
JS14	0.717	
JS15	0.717	
JS16	0.746	
JS17	0.620	
JS18	0.633	
JS19	0.717	
JS20	0.750	
SE1		0.698
SE2		0.662

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SE3		0.575
SE4		0.737
SE5		0.721
SE6		0.787
SE7		0.565
SE8		0.711
SE9		0.769
SE10		0.789

Pearson correlations were used to study the relationship between job satisfaction and self-efficacy as well as between job satisfaction and the demographic variables. Results in Table 4. highlighted a weak to moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.154$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between the Level of teachers' Education and their Job Satisfaction.

**Table 4:** Correlation between Job Satisfaction and Sociodemographic Variables

	<b>Job satisfaction</b>
Gender	0.108
Age	-0.022
Experience	-0.027
Education	0.154*
Working Hours	-0.030
Type School	0.037
Sector	0.039
Area	-0.115
Student Level	0.025

Results in Table 5 showed that the education level of the participants was positively correlated with the dependent variable, namely, Job Satisfaction ( $r = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with higher levels of Job Satisfaction.

**Table 5:** Correlation between Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction (N = 205)

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
1. Self-efficacy	2.27	0.37	(0.887)	
2. Job satisfaction	3.67	0.59	0.224**	(0.919)

**Notes:** Correlations are presented below the diagonal. Cronbach's Alpha values are shown between parentheses. M = Mean, SD = Standard deviation.  $p^{**} < 0.01$

Results also showed that the proportion of variation in the dependent variable Job Satisfaction was equal to 7.3%. The F statistic was found to be significant, which indicates that the independent variable Self-Efficacy plays a role in explaining the variation in Job Satisfaction.  $F(2,202) = 7.898$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $R^2 = 0.070$ .

The standardized coefficient of Self-efficacy showed a positive effect on Job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.221$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Results also showed the positive effect of the control variable, Education Level, on the dependent variable, Job Satisfaction, while the standardized coefficient was positive ( $\beta = 0.150$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), which suggests that an increase

in self-efficacy contributed to an increase in the levels of job satisfaction. A more in-depth investigation was conducted using simple linear regression, with the education level as a control variable. This aimed to identify the specific variables influencing job satisfaction. Table 6 indicates also, a positive effect of the control variable, Education Level, on Job Satisfaction,  $\beta$ , Standardized Coefficient = 0.150,  $p < 0.05$ , indicating that education level positively influences job satisfaction.

**Table 6.** Simple Linear Regression Assessing  
 the Relationship between Self-efficacy and Job Satisfaction (N = 205)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
(Constant)	2.632	0.270		9.732	0.000**
Education	0.086	0.039	0.150	2.212	0.028*
Self-efficacy	0.353	0.108	0.221	3.262	0.001**

**Notes:** B = Unstandardized Coefficients, SE = Standard Error,  $\beta$  = Standardized Coefficients,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $p < 0.01$

## 5. Discussion

The findings of this study underscore a positive correlation between job satisfaction and the self-efficacy of special education teachers in Lebanon. Therefore, teachers with a high level of self-efficacy are more likely to be satisfied with their job. These teachers are better equipped to overcome not only the high levels of strain resulting from their daily exposure to students with emotional or behavioral disorders but also the stress and burdens imposed by the socio-economic situation of the country. The results were consistent with those of another study done on a sample of 1,430 teachers in western Canada, analyzing relationships between some of the teachers' characteristics, their self-efficacy, and their job satisfaction. It was found that teachers who have greater self-efficacy show greater job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). The findings of this study were also in line with other research (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Klassen *et al.*, 2009; Badri *et al.*, 2013; Caprara *et al.* 2003; Türkoğlu, Cansoy & Parlar, 2017).

Teaching students with special needs is highly stressful and demanding. Compared to general education teachers, special educators are more stressed out (Hopman, Tick *et al.*, 2018) and more exposed to violence and threats (Pihl, Grytnes, & Andersen, 2018; Rasmussen, Høgh, & Andersen, 2013). However, despite the significant amount of stress, many remain satisfied with their job (Chaplain, 2008; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). Ogunmakin (2014) found a significant relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their job satisfaction. He describes how self-efficacy positively influences the teacher's creativity and analysis (Akomolafe & Olatomide, 2013). It should be noted that the challenging situation in Lebanon has added additional pressure on those working in this field.

Despite the chronic struggle with low wages, Lebanese educators were subject to more salary cuts due to the drastic devaluation of the currency by 90% of its original

value (Perryl, T., 2023). The tragic political situation entailed a total power cut, fuel shortage, and problems with drinking water. However, this research has demonstrated that some teachers still show the capability to control and influence the environment. They were able to overcome obstacles and show endurance when dealing with difficulties. According to the social cognitive theory, self-efficacy influences how people see opportunities and obstacles in the environment (Bandura, 2006), direct their choices toward challenging tasks while putting effort and showing perseverance to face adversities and achieve their goals, despite setbacks (Bandura, 1986, 1993, 1997). On the other hand, some findings suggest that teachers' self-efficacy might not account for short-term changes in job satisfaction but may instead be more related to other variables such as relationships with colleagues, salary, and school resources (Collie *et al.*, 2012). It was crucial to address the relationship between job satisfaction and self-efficacy in this research, as it helped uncover the influence of intrinsic factors such as self-efficacy, and extrinsic ones such as demographic variables.

The correlation between the teachers' education level and their job satisfaction was another area of interest in this research. Further investigation was done by conducting a regression analysis using the variable of education level as a control variable. The results aligned with another study, revealing a positive relationship between teachers' level of education and their job satisfaction. It concluded that teachers holding a master's degree in education ( $M = 4.58$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ) had greater job satisfaction than those holding a bachelor's degree in education ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 1.97$ ) or those without professional education ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 0.29$ ) (Shaukat *et al.*, 2019). This could be attributed to the role of their professional training in enhancing their teaching skills and facilitating their interactions with students. Therefore, the more special educators learn, the more advanced skills they acquire, making them feel more confident and competent in their roles, leading to higher job satisfaction (Lam, Foong & Moo, 1995).

Another interpretation of the above result could be that special educators holding advanced degrees might be better prepared to handle the challenges and complexities of working with students with special needs. This can lead to a more positive and effective teaching experience, which in turn increases the perception of feeling satisfied with the job. Results of the current study also showed that (94.63%) of special educators were females and worked in the private sector. This raises a question about the absence of male teachers in the field of special education and the absence of the public sector in the field of special education. Regarding gender and years of experience, no significant results were found in this study. This echoed with another study investigating the level of job satisfaction of special education teachers in South Africa using MSQ (Strydom, *et al.*, 2012...). Similarly, a study conducted in India on special educators found no significant differences concerning gender, age, or years of experience (Jain & Ahmad, 2022).

## **6. Recommendations**

As previously mentioned, the field of special education imposes additional responsibilities on teachers. Therefore, the results of this study could be significant in suggesting actions and effective strategies. Characteristics such as self-efficacy are crucial to be reinforced when future teachers opt for a career in special education. Regular training programs might be essential for advancing their knowledge and skills. Introducing new teachers to the concept of self-efficacy through workshops and conferences could enhance their practice. A supportive school climate that fosters positive relationships between teachers and administrators, as well as among teachers, is also advisable.

## **7. Conclusion**

The results of this study emerged at a time when Lebanon was navigating through a challenging economic and political landscape. They highlighted a positive correlation between job satisfaction and self-efficacy among special education teachers, indicating that teachers with high self-efficacy experience high job satisfaction. Additionally, the correlation between teachers' education level and their job satisfaction was evident, with teachers holding higher degrees reporting greater satisfaction in their jobs than their counterparts with lower educational qualifications.

This study was purely quantitative, which means some important aspects might have been uncovered if qualitative methods such as focus groups or interviews with teachers had been utilized. Given that job satisfaction is dynamic and can change over time, a longitudinal study could reveal other variables that influence job satisfaction.

Further analysis is needed to investigate the impact of the dire economic and political situation impacting the whole country on a teacher's self-efficacy. The question that comes to mind is whether special education teachers feel an increased sense of responsibility and bear the burden for their students' success when the country's systems, including political, economic, health, education, and others, are collapsing.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### About the Author(s)

**Randa Kanj Farhat, TD, MA, PhD**, holds a doctorate in Educational Sciences. She currently serves as an instructor at the University of Sciences and Arts in Lebanon (USAL) and as a Thesis Director at Université Saint Joseph (USJ). In response to the Syrian crisis and the subsequent influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon, Dr. Farhat became involved in implementing educational programs within Lebanese public schools, offering supervision and support to teachers across multiple institutions. She has also collaborated closely with NGOs, training teachers and administrators on the adopted programs aiming to improve educational opportunities for refugee children facing psychosocial challenges.

**Mona F. EL-Abed, TD, MA, PhD** holds a doctorate in Educational Psychology. She currently serves as an instructor and a coordinator of Special Education Division at the University of Sciences and Arts in Lebanon (USAL). Her research interests include self-esteem and adolescence.

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