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Occupational Stress among School Administrators: Its Level, Sources, and Coping Strategies :A Field Study at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution, Ghardaïa Province

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***Abstract*—**This study aimed to explore the reality of occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province, by measuring its level, diagnosing its most influential causes and sources, and identifying the coping strategies adopted by staff to confront occupational stress, in addition to examining the effect of professional experience on the level of occupational stress.

To achieve the study's objectives, a descriptive approach was adopted, using a questionnaire as the data-collection instrument. The questionnaire, developed by the researcher Fatiha Ben Zeroual (2013), was administered to the entire study population, consisting of 35 male and female administrative staff members at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.

The results showed that the level of occupational stress among school-administration staff was moderate, and that their level of use of coping strategies for occupational stress was likewise moderate, with problem-focused coping strategies proving to be the most frequently used compared with emotion-focused coping strategies. The results further revealed no statistically significant differences in the level of occupational stress among school-administration staff attributable to the variable of professional experience.

***Keywords*—**Occupational stress; School administration; Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.

Introduction

In recent years, educational institutions have witnessed rapid changes in their roles and functions, a development that has directly affected staff working in school administration. School principals and their assistants are now required to perform multiple tasks that go beyond traditional administrative roles, including dealing with a wide range of problems that vary in nature, scale, and origin — problems that may arise from the school itself, the home, the street, or the wider community. Against this backdrop, the concept of occupational stress has emerged as one of the most prominent challenges facing staff in the educational field in general, and in school administration in particular, given its negative effects on employees' psychological health, on the effectiveness of institutional performance in schools, and on staff retention in the years ahead (Maayta, 2018, p. 235).

Askar (2003, p. 130) defines occupational stress as a state of emotional exhaustion and depletion resulting from continuous exposure to high levels of pressure, manifesting in a range of negative symptoms such as fatigue and exhaustion at work. Numerous studies have shown that education professionals are among the occupational groups most exposed to pressure and occupational stress. Some international reports indicate that around 26% of teachers report experiencing high levels of work-related stress (Cahill, 2025), owing to the unlimited scope of their administrative and organizational responsibilities.

Recent indicators also suggest that more than half of teachers and school staff experience symptoms of psychological burnout or occupational exhaustion, and that around 40% of them consider leaving the profession because of work-related pressures (Lindberg, 2026).

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Occupational stress in the school environment is linked to a number of interrelated sources and factors, most notably: the abundance of administrative obligations, time pressure, the multiplicity of tasks and responsibilities coupled with uncertainty about work priorities, dealing with urgent student problems and the resulting need to contact parents, and the limited availability of human resources both in quantity and quality. Organizational factors such as excessive paperwork, continual changes in certain administrative arrangements, and rising performance expectations from senior management and decision-makers also contribute to increasing stress levels among school-administration staff.

Given the risks and multiple effects of this stress, scientific interest in studying it among staff of educational institutions has grown, along with efforts to uncover its principal sources and the strategies employed by staff to mitigate its intensity, and to compare these with the educational literature that has addressed the topic, in order to arrive at a comprehensive approach combining individual strategies — such as developing stress-management and time-management skills — with organizational strategies concerned with improving the work environment, strengthening psychological and administrative support, and reconsidering the weight and sensitivity of the job in a more balanced manner.

In light of the foregoing, this study sheds light on the reality of occupational stress among school-administration staff in Ghardaïa Province and its principal underlying sources, in addition to exploring the main strategies adopted to confront it and reduce its effects, thereby contributing to staff stability and to improving their administrative and educational performance in educational institutions.

From this standpoint, the study poses the following general question:

What is the reality of occupational stress among administrators working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province, Algeria?

Sub-questions

- What is the level of occupational stress among administrators working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province, Algeria?
- What are the most frequently used strategies for coping with occupational stress among administrators working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province, Algeria?
- Are there statistically significant differences attributable to the variable of professional experience in the level of occupational stress among administrators working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province, Algeria?

Significance of the study

- Attempting to uncover the risks of occupational stress and its potential negative effects on administrators working at the Ammi Saïd Institution and at other institutions.
- Developing administrators' capacities to cope with occupational stress and preserving their stability within the institution and their high level of performance.

Objectives of the study

- Identifying the principal sources of occupational stress among administrators working at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.
- Attempting to determine the level of occupational stress among administrators working at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.
- Identifying the factors causing occupational stress among administrators working at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution and proposing solutions to reduce them.

Key concepts of the study

Occupational stress: What staff working in the administration of the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province are exposed to, as revealed through their responses to the questionnaire items, where a high score indicates a high level of stress and a low score indicates a low level of stress.

Administrators working in school administration: All individuals holding administrative positions within the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution who undertake tasks of planning, organizing, directing, following up, and evaluating the educational and administrative process, such as the institution's director, deputy directors, educational counselors, and heads of administrative departments.

Theoretical Framework and Previous Studies

Al-Hadrawi (2018) conducted a study titled "The Effect of Occupational Stress on Reducing Employee Enthusiasm at the Administrative Technical College in Kufa, Iraq." The researcher adopted a descriptive approach, using an occupational-stress questionnaire administered to a sample of 35 employees at the college. After analyzing the results using SPSS, the study found that the level of occupational stress among the sample members was high, that there was a correlation between occupational stress and employee enthusiasm, and that occupational stress had a significant positive effect in reducing employee enthusiasm.

Rayeb Allah and Chouaib (2022) conducted a study aimed at investigating the relationship between occupational stress and job performance among employees of the municipality and district of Oued Rhiou–Relizane. To verify the study's findings, the researchers used a descriptive approach and both interview and questionnaire instruments to collect data from a sample of 40 employees. After analysis using SPSS v.22, the study concluded that there was a level of occupational stress among municipal and district employees, that an inverse relationship existed between occupational stress and job performance, and that job performance declined as occupational stress increased.

Singh, Amiri, and Sabarwal (2017) conducted a study titled "The Role of Occupational Stress in Job Satisfaction." The researchers used a descriptive-analytical quantitative methodology and a questionnaire to measure the relationship between occupational stress and satisfaction in work environments, covering roughly 200 participants (100 from an IT center in Pune and 100 from Chandigarh), focusing on life events and stress triggers in the work environment. The main triggers were work pressures — represented by heavy workload and long working hours — at 50%, followed by family concerns at 32%. Symptoms manifested mainly in health and psychological problems, most notably persistent back pain and sleep disturbances/insomnia. Regarding management's supportive role, 22% of employees reported that wellness programs and management support had a positive effect on their stress levels. Ongoing communication and informal management meetings were also identified as key strategies for easing a charged work environment. The researchers recommended redesigning tasks, improving administrative communication, activating psychological-support programs, ensuring fair wages, and enhancing job flexibility to reduce occupational stress (Singh, Amiri, & Sabarwal, 2017).

Commentary on previous studies

A review of the previous studies shows both common ground and points of divergence. In terms of objective, all of them addressed the topic of occupational stress; in terms of methodology, all adopted a descriptive approach; and in terms of instruments, they varied between questionnaires and interviews, with most conducted on samples of employees in economic institutions. The current study differs from them in its study population, as it focuses on staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province. The study benefited from the previous studies in selecting an appropriate methodology, adopting a research instrument, framing the research problem, and discussing the results.

The concept of occupational stress

Views on the concept of occupational stress vary among researchers. Maritunjoy (1995) defines it as the nervous tension that arises when an individual perceives a given circumstance as a threat exceeding their capacity to cope, while Al-Sabbagh defines it as a situation in which the interaction between working conditions and an employee's personality affects their psychological and physical state, potentially prompting them to change their habitual behaviors and attitudes toward certain situations (Abdel Majid, 2003, p. 33).

It is also defined as a type of response to an external condition that places the individual in a psychological and physical state, shifting them from a normal state to an abnormal, emergency one as a result of various internal and external influences that differ in nature and intensity and in their effects and consequences on individual performance, depending on individual differences among people; the disappearance of the effects of this state likewise differs in nature and extent from one individual to another (El-Meleigy, 2011, p. 202).

It can also be defined as a state of psychological and physical tension resulting from an imbalance between the demands of the job and the employee's capacity to respond to and control them, which in turn affects their efficiency, health, and occupational well-being.

Sources of occupational stress

Sources of occupational stress are numerous and vary in nature and degree of influence from one job to another, and even from one position to another. These sources may also be linked to an individual's psychological and physical characteristics; one employee may be able to adapt to and control the pressures imposed by the nature of their work, while another employee may be unable to bear the same pressures or control their effects — reflecting the impact of individual differences in the capacity for adaptation and endurance.

Although sources of occupational stress differ according to work environment and individual, researchers have identified a set of principal sources that may lead to its occurrence. Some are organizational sources related to the work environment and its physical, organizational, and professional conditions, while others are general sources related to daily life and social relationships of various kinds. These sources can be presented as follows:

1. Organizational sources of occupational stress

Organizational sources are among the most prominent causes of occupational stress and are related to the work environment and its organizational and physical conditions. Researchers have classified them into several aspects, the most important of which are:

a. Physical working conditions: These include the physical conditions surrounding the employee, such as lighting, noise, temperature, ventilation, working hours, and health and safety provisions. These factors directly affect the employee's comfort, health, and performance; their inadequacy leads to feelings of fatigue and exhaustion and increases the likelihood of errors and reduced productivity, making them one of the most important sources of occupational stress.

b. Relationship with superiors: The nature of the relationship between an employee and their superior is an influential factor in the level of occupational stress. Authoritarian leadership styles, unfairness, weak communication, and the absence of participation in decision-making increase tension and reduce satisfaction and performance. Conversely, supportive leadership based on cooperation, respect, and trust helps reduce stress and enhance professional harmony.

c. Relationship with colleagues: Positive relationships among colleagues represent an important source of social support within the organization, helping to ease occupational pressures and foster a sense of security and belonging. Conversely, weak cooperation, frequent conflicts, and a lack of social support lead to increased levels of tension and anxiety, and consequently to higher occupational stress among employees.

d. Workload: This refers to the abundance or complexity of tasks, which increases psychological and physical stress, and includes quantitative overload (too many tasks) and qualitative overload (task difficulty).

e. Working hours (shifts): Shift-based work disrupts the biological rhythm, thereby increasing feelings of stress.

f. Organizational structure: Unplanned changes, technological developments, administrative arbitrariness, and task changes increase anxiety and stress.

g. Administrative structure: Rigidity, obsolescence, or bureaucratic bloat contribute to reduced job satisfaction, higher tension, and staff turnover.

h. Role demands: Role refers to the expectations associated with an individual's position at work. Stress emerges when:

- Expectations conflict ("role conflict").
- Expectations are unclear ("role ambiguity").
- Role demands exceed the individual's capacities ("role overload").

i. Personal requirements: Individual characteristics play an important role in increasing or reducing occupational stress, most notably:

- Locus of control: Individuals with an internal locus of control are better able to adapt to and cope with pressures, whereas those with an external locus of control are more prone to anxiety and tension.
- Responsibility: Stress levels rise with increased responsibilities, particularly those involving the management of people.
- Professional development: Limited training and promotion opportunities, together with unmet personal expectations, lead to feelings of frustration and stress, which in turn negatively affect job performance.

General sources of occupational stress

Daily life and its changes: In daily life, individuals are exposed to varied events and changes, some positive and some negative, which impose differing levels of pressure. These changes, along with the accompanying situations and irritants, affect an individual's psychological state and capacity for adaptation, making them one of the general sources of stress.

Family life: Family life is considered a general source of stress, as pressures may arise from conflicts between family and work demands, or from family events such as illness and death, as well as financial burdens and family responsibilities.

The literature indicates that sources of occupational stress vary among organizational, environmental, personal, and social factors, and their influence differs according to individuals and the nature of the profession (El-Meleigy, 2011, p. 202). Despite the abundance of studies in this field, researchers still differ in classifying and ordering these sources, which makes adopting a single, unified classification difficult. Precisely identifying the sources of occupational stress therefore remains contingent on field studies that take into account the specificity of each profession and work environment.

Theoretical models explaining occupational stress

Several theories have sought to explain the phenomenon of occupational stress, the most prominent being Hans Selye's theory (1956), which explains stress as a series of physiological and psychological reactions the body undergoes in response to pressure. Selye holds that stress depends on the degree of threat an individual perceives, and that an organism's response to pressure passes through three main stages:

1. Alarm stage: This represents the initial response to a stressful situation, during which the body passes through a stage of shock followed by counter-shock, activating defense mechanisms and hormone secretion. Physiological responses appear, such as an increased heart rate, sweating, and muscle tension, aimed at preparing the body to confront and adapt to the situation.

2. Resistance stage: The body attempts to adapt to the stressful situation and restore its balance, so symptoms temporarily disappear. However, continued pressure depletes adaptive energy, reducing the body's capacity for resistance.

3. Exhaustion stage: If the pressure persists for a long period, adaptive energy is depleted and symptoms reappear — such as sleep disturbances, diminished enthusiasm, self-doubt regarding one's abilities, and difficulty making decisions — indicating a decline in the body's capacity to adapt (Cheikhani, 2018, p. 203).

Symptoms of occupational stress

An occupationally stressed individual displays symptoms indicating that they are suffering from occupational stress, which can be classified as follows:

- Physical symptoms: Sleep disturbances, headaches, muscle and back pain, digestive-system disorders, persistent fatigue, dizziness, and sweating.
- Emotional symptoms: Anxiety, irritability, anger, depression, psychological burnout, and loss of energy.
- Behavioral symptoms: Changes in appetite, use of harmful substances such as smoking, and nail-biting.
- Cognitive symptoms: Poor concentration, forgetfulness, difficulty making decisions, confused thinking, an increase in errors, and reduced motivation and achievement.
- Social symptoms: Suspicion of others, frequent blaming of others, diminished trust in oneself and others, and the use of sarcasm and mockery in relationships.

Method and Procedures

Methodology

A descriptive approach was used, as it is appropriate to the nature of the study.

Study population and sample

The study population consisted of all male and female employees working in the various branches of the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution in Ghardaïa Province during the 2025/2026 academic year, numbering 35 employees. Given the limited size of the population, a comprehensive-survey method was adopted, whereby the study covered all members of the original population. Approval was obtained from the institution's Human Resources Department to conduct the study, and the consent of the male and female

employees to participate was also obtained.

Study instruments

The study used a questionnaire to measure occupational stress. Its items were formulated and constructed drawing on the study by Fatiha Ben Zeroual, titled "Occupational Stress among Staff in Emergency and Maternity Departments," Annals of the University of Guelma, No. 43, June 2018, pp. 130–151. It consists of 44 items, structured as follows:

- Part One: Demographic and personal information about the respondent (professional experience).
- Part Two: Concerned with the subject of the study, divided into two dimensions — the first dealing with sources of occupational stress, and the second with strategies for coping with occupational stress.

Table 1: Distribution and count of questionnaire items by dimension

No.	Dimension	Item numbers	No. of items
1	Sources of occupational stress	1–26	26
2	Strategies for coping with occupational stress	27–44	18
	Total		44

Source: The researcher

All response scales for the positive and negative items were constructed according to a three-point Likert scale, as shown in the following table:

Table 2: Response scale for positive and negative items

Response options	Low	Moderate	High
Weight (positive items)	1	2	3
Weight (negative items)	3	2	1

Source: The researcher

The weighted mean was calculated to determine orientation according to its values and to more precisely determine the degree of agreement with the questionnaire items, as shown in the following table:

Table 3: Weighted-mean range for each level

Weighted mean	**1 – 1.66**	**1.67 – 2.33**	**2.34 – 3**
Level	Low	Moderate	High

Source: The researcher

Psychometric properties of the study instrument

a. Validity

The validity of the instrument was verified by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between the scores of each dimension of the instrument and its overall score, as shown in the table below:

Table 4: Pearson correlation coefficients between questionnaire dimensions and overall score

Dimension	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Significance level	Sample size
Sources of occupational stress	0.821	0.000	0.05	35
Strategies for coping with occupational stress	0.792	0.000	0.05	35

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The results in the table show that the Pearson correlation coefficients between the instrument's dimensions and its overall score are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, with the correlation between the sources-of-

occupational-stress dimension and the overall score reaching 0.821, and the correlation between the coping-strategies dimension and the overall score reaching 0.792 — good results confirming the internal-consistency validity of the instrument's dimensions.

b. Reliability

To measure the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to confirm its reliability on the study sample, as shown in the following table:

Table 5: Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for questionnaire dimensions

Dimension	Item numbers	No. of items	Reliability coefficient
Sources of occupational stress	1–26	26	0.810
Strategies for coping with occupational stress	27–44	18	0.732
Overall reliability		44	0.805

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Table 5 shows that the reliability coefficient for the sources-of-occupational-stress dimension was 0.810, for the coping-strategies dimension was 0.732, and the overall reliability of the questionnaire was 0.805 — results confirming that the scale is reliable and that consistent responses would be obtained approximately 80.5% of the time, indicating that the questionnaire enjoys a high degree of reliability and can be relied upon in field application.

Boundaries of the study

Spatial boundaries: All male and female employees working at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution, a non-profit educational institution located in the city of Ghardaïa, concerned with preparing individuals to fulfil their duties toward themselves, their families, their community, their homeland, and humanity as a whole. It oversees primary, middle, and secondary education for boys and girls in an ideal environment following the curricula of the Algerian Ministry of National Education, in addition to supplementary curricula such as Qur'an memorization and other religious sciences, and it also offers opportunities for specialization in Islamic sciences at the post-secondary level.

Temporal boundaries: The field study was conducted during April 2026.

Statistical treatments

The following statistical treatments were used: the Pearson correlation coefficient to measure the construct validity of the study instrument; Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the reliability of the study instrument; percentages and frequencies to identify the characteristics of the study sample; means and standard deviations to determine the importance and general direction of the sample's responses regarding the study's statements and dimensions; and the one-way ANOVA test.

Presentation and Discussion of Results

Discussion of the results of the first hypothesis: The level of occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution is high

Table 6: Direction of the study sample regarding the level of occupational stress

Dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	General direction
Occupational stress	1.85	0.32	Moderate

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the attitudes of staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution regarding their level of occupational stress. It can be observed that it reached a mean of 1.85 with a standard deviation of 0.32, a mean that falls within the category (1.67–2.33), indicating that the level of occupational stress among the study sample was moderate.

Within this framework, the attitudes of the study sample regarding the items of the sources-of-occupational-stress dimension and the coping-strategies dimension will be examined by presenting the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of the data, in which means and standard deviations were calculated, and, based on the weighted-mean values calculated earlier according to the three-point Likert scale, the degree of agreement and the general direction of the responses were determined.

1. Attitudes of the study sample regarding the items of the sources-of-occupational-stress dimension

Table 7: Attitudes of the study sample regarding the sub-dimensions of the sources-of-occupational-stress dimension

Sub-dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	General direction
Nature of work	1.91	0.41	Moderate
Work timing	1.40	0.44	Low
Incentives and relationship with superiors	1.49	0.45	Low
Workload	1.33	0.45	Low
Social support	1.53	0.40	Low
Relationship with colleagues	1.55	0.40	Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the means of the items and sub-dimensions of the sources-of-job-stress dimension among administrative staff at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution from their own perspective, arranged in ascending order. It can be observed that "nature of work" ranked first with a mean of 1.91 and a standard deviation of 0.41, indicating a moderate direction, which shows that the nature of the work represents the most influential source of occupational stress among the sample members.

The remaining dimensions — incentives and relationship with superiors, relationship with colleagues, social support, workload, and work timing — all appeared at a low level, with means ranging between 1.33 and 1.40, reflecting a low level of influence of these dimensions in generating occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.

The following is a detailed presentation of the items of each dimension separately.

First: Incentives and relationship with superiors dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	Heavy administrative workload (meetings, office work, etc.)	2.12	0.66	Moderate
2	Low salary relative to the volume of tasks	1.91	0.65	Moderate
3	Receiving contradictory instructions from different parties	1.40	0.66	Low
4	Lack of support or guidance from superiors	1.52	0.65	Low
5	Bias of superiors in evaluation and report writing	1.50	0.61	Low
6	Relationship with superiors based on surveillance	1.45	0.65	Low
7	Superiors interfering in my tasks	1.32	0.63	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.49, standard deviation 0.45 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Second: Relationship with colleagues dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	Frequent disputes and conflicts with colleagues	1.32	0.62	Low
2	Lack of team spirit	1.52	0.65	Low

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
3	Unfair competition among colleagues	1.91	0.65	Low
4	Lack of support from colleagues	1.52	0.65	Low
5	Not knowing my tasks (responsibilities) precisely	1.55	0.61	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.55, standard deviation 0.61 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Third: Social support dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
16	Being subjected to frequent criticism from others	1.30	0.51	Low
17	Dealing with people who do not follow instructions/advice	1.35	0.65	Low
18	Officials thinking we do not perform our tasks properly	1.52	0.61	Low
19	Inability to balance work and private life	1.52	0.65	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.53, standard deviation 0.61 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Fourth: Nature of work and available resources dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	Positive sense of responsibility toward my position	2.65	0.36	High
2	Working under time pressure	2.63	0.61	Moderate
3	Lack of opportunities to acquire new skills	1.51	0.65	Moderate
4	Difficulty keeping up with developments in my field of specialization	1.60	0.62	Moderate
5	Lack of necessary equipment and tools for work	1.90	0.62	Low
6	Inadequacy of the equipment and tools used at work	1.52	0.64	Low
7	Inadequate physical conditions (ventilation, cooling, heating, cleanliness…) in the workplace	1.32	0.63	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.91, standard deviation 0.41 — Moderate

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Fifth: Workload dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
24	Making decisions whose errors carry serious consequences	1.50	0.63	Low
23	Too little work	1.52	0.55	Low
22	Excessive workload	2.00	0.35	Moderate

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.33, standard deviation 0.45 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

Sixth: Work timing dimension

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	Work continues even during holidays	1.91	0.63	Moderate
2	Working long hours	1.42	0.62	Low

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
3	Irregular work schedule	1.42	0.63	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.40, standard deviation 0.44 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

2. Discussion of the second hypothesis: Strategies are used to cope with occupational stress by administrators working in educational institutions in Ghardaïa Province

Table (11): Attitudes of the study sample toward the items of the occupational-stress coping-strategies dimension

Dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	General direction
Occupational-stress coping strategies	1.91	0.61	Moderate

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the attitudes of staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution regarding their coping strategies for occupational stress, where it can be observed that the mean reached 1.91 with a standard deviation of 0.61, indicating that the sample's level of use of occupational-stress coping strategies was moderate.

Within this framework, the attitudes of the study sample regarding the items of the occupational-stress coping-strategies dimension were examined by presenting the results of the descriptive statistical analysis, in which means and standard deviations were calculated, and, based on the weighted-mean values calculated earlier according to the three-point Likert scale, the degree of agreement and general direction of the responses were determined.

Table 8: Attitudes of the study sample toward the items of the first sub-dimension — problem-focused coping strategies

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	I draw on my previous experience to solve the current problem	2.66	0.53	High
2	Discussing with others gives me a broader understanding of the problem	2.63	0.59	High
3	I study the consequences and outcomes of the solution I will implement	2.49	0.55	High
4	I prepare myself for the worst that could happen	2.37	0.59	High
5	I adjust my plans to fit new problems	2.31	0.67	Moderate
6	I immediately take the initiative to solve the problem causing the stress	2.31	0.78	Moderate
7	I develop a plan to solve the problem and implement it	2.29	0.74	Moderate
8	I analyze the stressful situation to understand it well	2.26	0.69	Moderate
9	I exert extra effort to achieve difficult goals	2.26	0.60	Moderate
10	I anticipate the possible outcomes of the problem	2.23	0.68	Moderate
11	I devise different alternatives to solve the problem	2.23	0.64	Moderate
12	I let nothing stand in the way of achieving what I want	2.17	0.65	Moderate
13	I review the steps of the solution before implementing it	2.11	0.75	Moderate
14	I confront the person who caused me the problem	2.03	0.74	Moderate
15	I avoid mixing with others while dealing with the problem	1.83	0.74	Moderate
16	I avoid compromise solutions	1.77	0.59	Moderate
17	I avoid thinking about the problem	1.74	0.73	Moderate

Table 8: Attitudes of the study sample toward the items of the first sub-dimension — problem-focused coping strategies *(continued)*

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
18	I go to sleep	1.31	0.57	Low
19	I occupy myself with my phone to forget the problem	1.26	0.50	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 2.09, standard deviation 0.32 — Moderate

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the means of the items of the first dimension, "problem-focused coping strategies," of the occupational-stress coping-strategies construct among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution from their own perspective, arranged in ascending order, where the mean for this dimension reached 2.09 with a standard deviation of 0.32, indicating that the sample members practice problem-focused coping strategies at a moderate level. The results also showed that a number of items came at a high level, while the remaining items ranged between moderate and low.

This result indicates that employees tend to use practical methods to confront occupational pressures, such as planning, organizing work, and searching for appropriate solutions, although the level of deployment of these strategies still requires further reinforcement and training.

Table 9: Attitudes of the study sample toward the items of the second sub-dimension — emotion-focused coping strategies

No.	Item	Mean	Std. dev.	Direction
1	I blame myself for not knowing what to do about the problem	1.91	0.77	Moderate
2	I use humor and laughter	1.83	0.77	Moderate
3	I blame myself for dealing with the problem emotionally	1.80	0.75	Moderate
4	I practice some hobbies	1.77	0.72	Moderate
5	I submit and accept the situation as it is	1.69	0.71	Moderate
6	I blame myself for the problem occurring to me	1.63	0.80	Low
7	I confide my fear and anxiety to someone close to me	1.63	0.68	Low
8	I exercise	1.60	0.68	Low
9	I recall a past time when I was better off	1.60	0.68	Low
10	I turn to family support	1.54	0.69	Low
11	I practice some relaxation techniques	1.49	0.65	Low
12	I vent my anger on an unrelated matter	1.34	0.53	Low
13	I complain a great deal	1.31	0.52	Low
14	I resort to criticism and mockery	1.23	0.48	Low
15	I find great pleasure in eating despite the problem	1.23	0.48	Low
16	I overconsume coffee and tea	1.14	0.42	Low

Overall mean of the dimension: 1.54, standard deviation 0.26 — Low

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the means of the items of the second dimension, "emotion-focused coping strategies," of the occupational-stress coping-strategies construct among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution from their own perspective, where the results showed that the mean for this dimension reached 1.54 with a standard deviation of 0.26, indicating a low direction, with the majority

of items falling within this level.

This result indicates that the sample members do not rely heavily on emotional strategies to cope with occupational pressures, such as emotional venting, avoidance, or withdrawal, and prefer instead to resort to practical and rational methods in dealing with stressful situations — a positive indicator of their level of professional adjustment.

3. Third hypothesis: There are no statistically significant differences in the level of occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution attributable to the variable of professional experience

Table 10: Results of the ANOVA test for differences in the level of occupational stress according to professional experience

Occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution	Source of variance	Degrees of freedom	F	p-value (Sig.)	Significance level
	Between groups	2	0.009	0.991	0.05
	Within groups	32			

Source: The researcher, based on SPSS v.26 output

The table above shows the results of the one-way ANOVA for differences in the level of occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution according to the variable of professional experience, where F = 0.009 and the p-value (Sig.) = 0.991, which is greater than the adopted significance level (0.05). This indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of occupational stress among the study sample attributable to the variable of professional experience, and accordingly the null hypothesis — which states that there are no statistically significant differences in the level of occupational stress among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution attributable to professional experience — is accepted.

General Conclusion

In general, the results of the study reveal a clear disparity between the dimensions of the sources of occupational stress and the dimensions of coping strategies among staff working in school administration at the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution.

With regard to the sources-of-occupational-stress construct, the "nature of work" dimension ranked first with a mean of 1.91, at a moderate level, indicating that the nature of professional tasks and responsibilities represents the source most influential in staff members' sense of occupational stress. It was followed by work timing with a mean of 1.40, then incentives and relationship with superiors with a mean of 1.49, then workload with a mean of 1.33, followed by social support with a mean of 1.53, and finally relationship with colleagues with a mean of 1.55 — all of these dimensions appearing at a low level.

This result differs from the findings of Al-Hadrawi's study (2018), which showed that the level of occupational stress among employees was high. This difference can be explained, within the bounds of the current study's characteristics, by differences in the nature of the work environment and the characteristics of the two samples, as well as the working conditions prevailing in each institution. The lower levels of occupational stress among the current study's sample may also be linked to the particular character of the Sheikh Ammi Saïd Institution, where a considerable share of the work is voluntary in nature and carried out in a spirit of belonging to the institution and the community, and where a notable proportion of employees are graduates of the institution itself — factors that may reinforce their sense of belonging and attachment to its mission, and lend the work meaning and value beyond its purely functional and material dimensions.

The cultural and social specificity of the Ghardaïa community may also play a role in explaining this result, as certain patterns of upbringing and prevailing values — such as patience, a sense of responsibility, and community service — may enhance an individual's ability to cope with and adapt to work pressures, which may in turn be reflected in a lower level of disclosure of feelings of stress or complaint about them. Moreover, an employee's belief in the institution's mission and their sense of the social and educational value of their work may contribute to a greater degree of psychological satisfaction and comfort, even in the presence of some occupational pressures.

Accordingly, the low level of sources of occupational stress found in this study does not necessarily mean the absence of occupational pressures; rather, it may indicate the sample members' ability to adapt to, manage, and

endure them within the nature of the organizational, social, and cultural environment in which they work.

As for the occupational-stress coping-strategies construct, the problem-focused coping-strategies dimension ranked first with a mean of 2.09 and a moderate level, while the emotion-focused coping-strategies dimension ranked second with a mean of 1.54 and a low level. This indicates that the sample members tend to employ positive strategies based on analyzing the problem and seeking practical solutions, rather than relying on emotional or avoidance-based methods.

These results suggest that the level of occupational stress among the sample members is not high, which was reflected in the low level of most of its sources. At the same time, staff showed a tendency to use coping strategies based on directly addressing problems, which may help reduce the effects of occupational pressures and maintain an appropriate level of professional adjustment and job performance.

This result is consistent with the general trend of previous studies, such as that of Singh, Amiri, and Sabarwal (2017), which indicate that reliance on problem-focused coping strategies is more effective in reducing the effects of occupational stress compared with emotional strategies, because they help individuals address the causes of the problem rather than merely adapting to it emotionally. Furthermore, the low level of sources of occupational stress related to interpersonal relationships within the institution reflects the existence of a supportive organizational climate that helps enhance employees' psychological health and job satisfaction, consistent with the findings of numerous studies in the fields of organizational behavior and occupational health.

Recommendations of the Study

In light of the findings of the current study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Working to improve the work environment by reviewing the distribution of tasks and responsibilities to match the requirements of each position and employees' capacities and potential, and reducing unnecessary burdens that may increase the level of occupational stress.
- Emphasizing the use of problem-focused coping strategies through training courses that equip employees with skills in problem-solving, decision-making, time management, and effective planning, given that these are among the most effective methods for reducing the effects of occupational stress.
- Maintaining the positive organizational climate in the work environment, given the results showing a low level of stress related to relationships with superiors and colleagues and to social support, by entrenching values of cooperation, mutual respect, organizational justice, and teamwork.
- Encouraging school administration to adopt supportive leadership practices based on participation in decision-making and effective communication with employees, and to recognize their efforts, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and raising the degree of organizational loyalty.
- Developing a culture of occupational-stress management within the institution by introducing awareness programs on methods of preventing stress and on how to deal positively with stressful situations.
- Conducting periodic assessments of the level of occupational stress and other indicators of employee satisfaction in order to monitor changes that may arise in the work environment and take appropriate action in a timely manner.
- Building on the strengths identified by the study — namely, the limited influence of interpersonal relationships within the institution as a source of occupational stress — and working to preserve them by continuing to strengthen positive communication and social support among all staff.
- Conducting future studies addressing other variables related and linked to occupational stress, including job satisfaction, occupational burnout, organizational commitment, and quality of work life, applying them to different samples and educational institutions with a view to broadening the scope of benefit from the study's findings.

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