

Self-Compassion Among Mothers Of Students With Learning Disabilities In The Sultanate Of Oman

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the sultanate of Oman. The study sample consisted of (142) mothers of students with learning disabilities which was chosen randomly. The descriptive design was used by using Self-compassion scale prepared by Neff (2010) and translated to Arabic version by Al-Jundi and Tantawi (2020), it consisted of (26) items distributed on six domains. The results showed that the level of self-compassion among the mothers of students with learning disabilities in the sultanate of Oman was high ($M=3.45$; $SD=0.37$). The mindfulness domain was the highest, followed by common human relations, self-pity, self judgment, then excessive empathy domains respectively. Whilst the reclusiveness domain was the lowest. According to variables, the results showed that there are no significant differences in the level of self-compassion among the mothers of students with learning disabilities due to the student's gender, mother's age, and mother's employment variables.

Keywords: *self-compassion, mothers, learning disabilities.*

Introduction

In general, mothers face psychological and social stress due to the nature of motherhood towards their children. The nature of motherhood forced mothers to support and stand side by side with their children specially if the child has learning disabilities, to help them to adapt with their school and social environment.

Some students with learning disabilities, who has disabilities that affect the ability to read, write, understand spoken or written languages, and mathematical operations, including processes of perception, attention, and memory, hinder the learning process in a natural manner (Al-Subhiyah et al., 2016). Having such disabilities within a family affects the psychological well-being of mothers, they may experience depression and psychological stress, making them ponder on how to address these disabilities and stand by their children to overcome the disabilities. Consequently, facing this challenge requires mindfulness because the majority of the responsibilities for childcare and burdens fall on mothers. Most studies emphasized the importance of the roles of mothers, especially for children with disabilities (Salem, 2017).

The educational statistics for the academic year 2020/2021 indicate that the number of students enrolled in the Learning Disabilities Program in public schools in the Sultanate of

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Oman reached (9,990) students, distributed to (458) schools. The number of students in public schools in Muscat Governorate is (1,397) students, distributed to (60) schools (Ministry of Education, 2021). These statistics confirm that there are a number of mothers who may face challenging circumstances and stress as they are mothers of students with learning disabilities. They may confront these stressful situations with mechanisms and strategies that help them alleviate these negative feelings. Therefore, there is a need to assess their self-compassion levels.

Therefore, the self-compassion concept is a relatively new concept in psychology, which began to receive attention in (2003) by the American psychologist Kristin Neff. Neff defined it as an individual's understanding of their own suffering, acknowledging their faults, forgiving themselves, and responding to social and environmental stimuli with kindness, ultimately allowing their troubled self to adapt and find balance (Mukhtar & Muhammad, 2017; Neff & Faso, 2015).

Self-compassion is considered a human trait that leads individuals to better understand themselves, have a comprehensive awareness of the pressures and suffering they go through, and cope with the reality they live in. It acknowledges that one cannot avoid suffering and refrains from blaming oneself for it (Al-Nawajah, 2019).

Neff, as referenced in Abdulla (2019), suggests that individuals with self-compassion are more resilient and open to their experiences. They tend to be more rational when dealing with negative situations, viewing themselves with optimism, tenderness, and understanding in painful situations or moments of failure, rather than exaggerating self-blame and engaging in self-criticism. Mansour (2016) distinguishes between self-compassion and self-pity, where self-compassion involves a mindful and understanding experience of painful self-negative experiences without excessive emotional indulgence. However, when emotions and negative thoughts about the self dominate during moments of pain, self-compassion can lose its value and quickly turn into self-pity. Therefore, mothers of students with learning disabilities need to enhance their personal abilities alongside self-compassion by feeling content with their reality, fostering happiness, optimism, taking initiative, and reducing psychological pressures (Almasaadah, 2010), because the psychologically empowered mothers are characterized by high self-esteem, greater effectiveness, and the ability to control their lives and engage in conscious self-critique (Al-Sahma, 2020).

Hence, it can be inferred that mothers of students with learning disabilities employing their skills and capabilities in facing various stress will have a positive impact on their children's behavior. In addition, affirming the importance and role of mothers of children with learning disabilities and their positive and effective influence on these students, and in light of researchers' conviction of the necessity and significance of studies focusing on the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities, the idea for this study was conceived.

Study Problem

Having a child with learning disabilities places additional responsibilities on mothers in terms of care and attention. They may experience feelings of anxiety, sadness, disappointment, guilt, and self-blame, which can have an impact on the performance of their children with learning disabilities, which make mothers of students with learning disabilities face unique challenges and stress compared to other mothers (Salem et al., 2014).

Jenaabadi and Abaasi (2020) pointed out that the behavior of students with learning disabilities is directly related to a mother's feelings, self-perception, and her ability to cope with negative experiences. This was also emphasized by a study conducted by Rabiaat

(2020), which indicated that parents play an important role in a child's growth and behavior, with increased importance when the child has learning disabilities.

Several studies (Abdulla, 2019; Mukhtar & Muhammad, 2017; Al-Sahma, 2020) have confirmed that self-compassion can contribute to reducing negative feelings towards oneself and, consequently, enhancing the psychological empowerment and mental health of parents of children with disabilities. Therefore, this study aims to determine the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities. The research problem can be framed by answering the following main questions:-

1. What is the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman attributed to the student's gender, mother's age, and mother's employment?

Study Objectives

The study aims to:

1. Identify the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman.
3. Determine statistically significant differences in the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman, attributed to the student's gender, mother's age, and mother's employment.

Study Important

In light of the study's objectives, its significance lies in addressing a relatively new concept in psychology, namely self-compassion, among a crucial segment of society, which is mothers of students with learning disabilities. Additionally, the concept of self-compassion has not been extensively explored in Arabic studies in general and in Oman specifically. While some studies have touched upon self-compassion, they have not specifically focused on mothers of students with learning disabilities and their children.

Therefore, the current study aims to provide a clear analytical perspective on the concept of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities. It is expected that this study will contribute to enriching the theoretical aspect and provide scientific value by adding new insights to the existing theoretical knowledge and conclusions related to self-compassion. Furthermore, it is hoped that the study will offer valuable data and information for relevant authorities in guidance and counseling within the Ministry of Education, which can be used to develop necessary plans and counseling programs for mothers of students with learning disabilities and their children.

The current study will also contribute to researchers in general and in Oman specifically by providing a reliable measurement tool for self-compassion with appropriate psychometric properties that can be utilized in applied research within the Omani context.

Study Limitations

The study's limitations include:

Temporal limitations: The current study was conducted in the academic year 2021-2022, and therefore, the data and results are relevant to that specific time frame.

Spatial limitations: The study was restricted to public schools in the Muscat Governorate that have integration programs for students with learning disabilities.

Human limitations: The study was applied to a sample of mothers of students with learning disabilities only. Consequently, the results may be limited to this specific population.

Study Terms

Self-Compassion:

Neff and Faso (2015) defined Self-Compassion as "the kindness and gentleness a person directs toward themselves in the face of pain and failure, instead of self-criticism or self-hatred, and the ability of an individual to bear feelings of suffering with warmth, love, and care" (p. 223). The current researchers operationally define self-compassion as the level of understanding the mother of a student with learning disabilities has for her own suffering and her ability to adapt to it, determined by her responses on the self-compassion scale used in the current study.

Learning Disabilities:

The American Association of Learning Disabilities defines Learning Disabilities as a neurological condition characterized by deficiencies in acquiring certain fundamental academic skills related to written or expressive language. It includes learning problems resulting from disorders in basic processes such as perception, attention, memory, and thinking, as well as mild brain injuries. Learning disabilities exclude learning problems caused by sensory impairments such as visual or auditory impairments, environmental, cultural, or economic factors (LDA, 2022). The current researchers define learning disabilities operationally as a condition that occurs when a student's actual performance in achievement tests is significantly lower than expected based on their intelligence and age description.

Background

Self-Compassion is defined as a human attribute that leads an individual to understand themselves, have a comprehensive perception of the pressures and suffering they go through, and cope with the reality they live in. It involves treating oneself kindly and with warmth in times of pain and failure, rather than criticizing or hating oneself. Self-compassion allows individuals to bear their suffering with warmth, love, and care (Al-Nawajah, 2019).

The term of Self-compassion is a relatively new concept in psychology that began to receive attention in 2003, notably by the Kristin Neff. Neff defined it as the ability to show oneself kindness and understanding in the face of pain and failure, as well as responding to environmental and social stimuli with gentleness. It helps individuals adapt and maintain balance in their turbulent inner world (Mukhtar & Muhammad, 2017; Neff, 2010).

In general, compassion refers to a person's ability to show empathy, love, and care for others who are going through difficult circumstances. Self-compassion, on the other hand, is the ability to extend that same empathy, love, and care to oneself, especially when facing adverse situations like failures, setbacks, and challenges, and recognizing that suffering, failure, and vulnerability are part of the human experience (Jad Al-Rab, 2021).

Self-compassion does not imply indifference, complacency, allowing oneself to navigate life without restraint, or escaping self-criticism. Instead, it entails positively directing one's

understanding, tolerance, and kindness toward oneself. This leads to alleviating anxiety, insecurity, unhappiness, and psychological distress (Abdulla, 2019).

Therefore, self-compassion is considered an essential and foundational determinant of self-reconstruction and self-understanding, fostering positive self-regard, competence, worthiness, and deservingness with respect and appreciation. It should be noted that self-compassion is not dependent on social comparisons or on an individual's infatuation with their successes, nor is it solely about revering oneself based on these achievements. Instead, it involves acknowledging one's shortcomings, failures, and vulnerabilities as part of life. Subsequently, it motivates individuals to strive, progress, and effectively deal with these aspects of existence (Eliwa, 2019).

The current researchers define self-compassion operationally as the level of understanding exhibited by a mother of a child with learning disabilities towards their child's struggles and how she adapts to them. This level is determined by the score obtained from the mother's responses on the self-compassion scale used in the current study.

It's important to distinguish between self-compassion and self-esteem. Self-compassion is not reliant on personal success in life or social comparisons with others. Instead, it is based on a fundamental aspect: accepting and acknowledging one's flaws and areas of weakness as a driving force for correction and personal growth within the context of these imperfections. This distinction is not part of the meaning and connotations of the term "self-esteem" (Al-Asmi, 2014). On the other hand, self-esteem mainly focuses on the positive evaluation of oneself resulting from personal achievements. Self-compassion, on the other hand, seeks self-empowerment in behavior and action (Gorjian & Mohanan, 2021).

The concept of self-compassion differs from the concept of self-pity, where self-pity contributes to isolating the individual from others by allowing negative emotions to control them. In contrast, self-compassion encourages the belief in the importance of self-acceptance and acknowledges that suffering is not limited to the individual alone; there are many others who experience similar situations and different circumstances (Jenaabadi & Abaasi, 2020). Self-compassion also differs from self-centeredness, where a self-centered individual views themselves as superior to others, focusing solely on self-admiration, love, and infatuation. In contrast, a self-compassionate individual does not need to compare themselves to others (Jenaabadi & Abaasi, 2020).

Neff (2003) and Mukhtar and Muhammad (2017) asserted that the Self-compassion consists of several dimensions and components divided into three main dimensions, with opposing facets, resulting in six dimensions:

- **Self-kindness vs. Self-judgment:** Self-kindness involves understanding and treating oneself with kindness and compassion rather than harsh self-judgment.
- **Mindfulness vs. Over-identification:** Mindfulness involves balanced and conscious awareness of oneself, thoughts, and feelings, allowing one to acknowledge painful experiences without over-identifying with them.
- **Common Humanity vs. Isolation:** Common humanity is the perception that one's experiences and struggles are part of the shared human experience, rather than feeling isolated and different from others.

One of the key indicators that individuals, such as mothers of students with learning disabilities, are self-compassionate in challenging situations is that they exhibit greater resilience and openness to their experiences. They tend to be more rational in dealing with painful situations and negative experiences from all angles. Additionally, self-compassion

is linked to optimism, happiness, and psychological maturity (Al-Asmi, 2014). Self-compassionate mothers of students with learning disabilities tend to view themselves with understanding, kindness, and empathy in moments of pain, rather than excessively criticizing themselves. However, when negative emotions take over the self in painful moments, self-compassion can lose its value and turn into self-pity.

Self-compassion is considered a tool that parents of individuals with disabilities use for adaptation and coping. It is strongly linked to an individual's sense of well-being and mental health. Some believe that self-compassion increases in the later stages of a person's life through their life experiences. Additionally, self-compassion is associated with reducing anxiety and depression, increasing social cohesion and harmony (Neff & Germer, 2013).

Mothers, in general, face psychological and social stress due to the nature of motherhood and their role in caring for their children. This, in turn, places a burden on families in general and mothers in particular, as they stand alongside their children. This challenge and effort intensify when the child has learning disabilities, as they need to adapt and cope with their surroundings, whether in the school or social environments.

Some students have learning disabilities, which is a category of students who struggle with processes related to education, such as reading, writing, various forms of expression, and mathematical operations. This includes processes related to perception, attention, and memory, all of which hinder the learning process in a normal way (Al-Subhiyah et al., 2016).

The statistics indicate that the number of students registered in the Learning Disabilities program in public schools under the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman reached 9,990 students, distributed in 458 schools, according to the educational statistics for the academic year 2020/2021. The number of students in the Muscat Governorate was 1,397, distributed among 60 schools (MoE, 2021).

The Learning Disabilities program in the Sultanate of Oman began during the academic year 2000/2001, in line with the scientific campaign to teach students with learning disabilities. The program was implemented for grades 1-4 since the academic year 2000/2001 in primary and general education schools, in two schools in South Al Batinah and Muscat Governorates. The program expanded to include 458 schools in the academic year 2020/2021, with 9,990 students (Annual Educational Statistics, 2020/2021). The Ministry of Education in Oman had several reasons for implementing the Learning Disabilities program, including the emergence of behavioral and social problems among students enrolled in the program, which affected their academic achievement. Additionally, students with low academic performance were dropping out of school due to repeated academic failures. The program also aligned with the global trend as a scientific and educational approach to dealing with this group (MoE, 2022).

However, there is still some confusion in society regarding the objectives of the Learning Disabilities program and the target group it serves. The Ministry of Education, through the Special Program Department, has detailed the stages of the program, emphasizing the need to raise awareness in the local and school community about the concept of students with learning disabilities. The program also focuses on the services it offers to enrolled students, as well as the methods and approaches to dealing with them. Moreover, the program aims to highlight the importance of the community's role in helping individuals with learning disabilities integrate into daily life with their peers. It also emphasizes the importance of early intervention to improve the academic performance of students enrolled in the Learning Disabilities program and educate and guide parents on the significance of the program for their children (MoE, 2022).

The researchers reviewed previous studies, especially Arab ones, and found a scarcity of previous studies that addressed self-compassion among mothers of children with learning disabilities. However, there were few studies that examined self-compassion among parents of children with disabilities in general.

Mukhtar & Muhammad (2017) aimed to determine the level of self-compassion and its role in reducing depression among mothers of children with intellectual disabilities in Egypt. The study sample consisted of 261 mothers of children with intellectual disabilities. The study found that mothers who had high levels of self-compassion had better mental health, positivity, and life satisfaction compared to those with lower levels of self-compassion.

Al-Nawajah (2019) conducted a study in Palestine to determine the level of self-compassion among mothers of children with Down syndrome. The study also examined the impact of various variables such as gender, child's age, mother's educational level, and mother's age. The study included 150 mothers, and the results showed that mothers of children with Down syndrome had relatively high levels of self-compassion. The study also found statistically significant differences in self-compassion based on gender, child's age, mother's educational level, and mother's age.

Abdulla (2019) conducted a study in Egypt to assess the impact of self-compassion and psychological flexibility on reducing depression symptoms and feelings of loneliness among mothers of children with autism spectrum disorders. The study revealed a positive relationship between self-compassion and the reduction of depression symptoms and loneliness among these mothers.

Al-Sahma (2020) conducted a study in Saudi Arabia to determine the level of self-compassion among fathers and mothers of children with autism spectrum disorders. The study also examined differences in self-compassion between fathers and mothers and whether self-compassion could predict cohesion within the family. The sample included 360 parents, and the results indicated that the self-compassion levels of fathers and mothers of children with autism spectrum disorders were moderate. The study also showed statistically significant differences in self-compassion between fathers and mothers in favor of fathers.

Salem (2020) conducted a study in Saudi Arabia to examine the relationships between mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychological flexibility among mothers of children with special needs in primary and middle schools in the Al-Baha region. The study included 200 mothers, and the results revealed a positive relationship between mindfulness, self-compassion, and psychological flexibility among these mothers.

These studies indicate the importance of studying self-compassion among mothers of children with special needs and highlight the positive impact of self-compassion on their mental health and well-being. Self-compassion is an important factor to consider when developing support and empowerment programs for these mothers. The current researchers have drawn upon previous studies in several significant and diverse aspects. They attempted to build upon the previous efforts to arrive at a precise diagnosis of the problem and comprehensively address it. They sought to formulate a precise research title, select the appropriate methodology for this study, which is a descriptive approach. Additionally, they enriched the theoretical framework related to self-compassion, choose the suitable research instrument, applied it to the target sample, and determined the necessary statistical procedures to complete the current study.

Due to the scarcity of Omani studies in general, this study stands out in terms of the novelty of its topic. It contributes by providing researchers, both in general and specifically in the Sultanate of Oman, with a measurement tool that assesses self-compassion. This tool possesses suitable psychometric properties, and researchers can rely on it for their applied studies in the Omani context.

Methods

Participant

The study population consists of mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Muscat Governorate, Sultanate of Oman, totaling 1,397 mothers (MoE, 2022). The study sample was a subset of the study population consisting of 142 mothers of students with learning disabilities. The sample was selected using cluster random sampling, representing 10.2% of the original population. The number of female students with learning disabilities (70.4%) is higher than male students with learning disabilities (29.6%). The percentage of mothers who do not work (54.8%) is higher than working mothers (45.2%). Mothers of students with learning disabilities were classified into three age groups, with 47.9% falling between 31 and 40 years old, 30.3% being 41 years or older, and 21.8% being 30 years or younger.

Implementation Procedures

To achieve the study's objectives and address its problem and research questions, the researchers employed a descriptive methodology, which is suitable for studying human and social phenomena. This approach involves studying the phenomenon as it exists in reality, collecting credible information, and providing a detailed description expressed both descriptively and quantitatively to obtain the best results for objective interpretation. The current researchers followed these steps:

- Reviewed previous studies and relevant literature related to self-compassion.
- Developed the measurement scale and submitted it to a group of experts for validation.
- After validation, the researchers extracted the psychometric properties of the scales by applying them to a pilot sample, measuring reliability and validity, and finalizing the scale.
- Prepared an electronic version of the scale for ease of distribution to mothers of students with learning disabilities in Muscat.
- Obtained approval for the tool's usage from the Ministry of Education in Oman.
- Administered the finalized scale to the study sample, comprising 142 mothers.
- Collected and statistically analyzed the data using SPSS software.
- Presented and discussed the results.
- Formulated recommendations and future suggestions in line with the study's objectives and research questions.

Instrument

The Self-Compassion Scale, developed by Neff (2010) and translated by Jundi Tantawi (2020), was adopted for this study. The current study adopted a scale that is suitable for its objectives, has good psychometric properties, and demonstrated validity and reliability through expert assessment and statistical analysis. The data collected from the scale will help measure self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Muscat Governorate. The scale consists of 26 items distributed across six dimensions, including self-kindness (5 items), self-judgment (5 items), common humanity (4 items), isolation (4 items), mindfulness (4 items), and over-identification (4 items). This scale has been used in several Arabic studies (Al-Nawajah, 2019; Abdulrahman et al., 2015), and the correlation coefficients between the dimension scores and the total scale score were significant at the 0.01 level, indicating good internal consistency and construct validity. The reliability and validity of the Self-Compassion Scale were assessed as following:

Content Validity: The current researchers presented the scale in its initial form to 11 experts in counseling psychology, mental health, and educational psychology. The experts assessed the scale in terms of its relevance to the study's objectives, suitability for the environment, and linguistic clarity. There was consensus among the experts regarding the suitability of the scale items for the study's purpose, their alignment with the intended dimensions, and their linguistic clarity. Some items were rephrased for improved clarity.

Item Validity: The item validity was assessed by calculating Pearson correlation coefficients between each item and its corresponding dimension score, as well as between each item and the total scale score. The results indicated significant correlations at the 0.01 level, demonstrating the appropriateness of the items for measuring self-compassion. All six dimensions of the self-compassion scale are statistically significantly correlated with the total score of the scale at a significance level of 0.01. The correlation values ranged from 0.425 to 0.610 for the dimensions, indicating a strong and statistically significant relationship. This is a good indicator of the scale's validity and internal consistency.

Reliability of the Scale: To assess the reliability of the Self-Compassion Scale, it was administered to a sample of 30 mothers of students with learning disabilities. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated for each dimension, resulting in acceptable values. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the six dimensions of the self-compassion scale are as follows: self-kindness is 0.829; self-judgment is 0.684; common humanity is 0.786; isolation is 0.566; mindfulness is 0.744; and over-identification is 0.540. Additionally, the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the entire self-compassion scale is 0.744. These coefficients indicate that the self-compassion scale demonstrates acceptable and suitable levels of internal consistency for the purposes of the study.

These findings enhance the reliability and validity of the scale in measuring self-compassion levels among the individuals included in the study, increasing confidence in the results obtained using this scale in psychological and social research and studies

Scoring: The scale consists of 26 items, and participants respond to each item on a five-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree). The scoring involved computing the mean score for each dimension and each item. The scale provides a total self-compassion score that is interpreted based on predefined categories. To determine the range for the five-point scale, the lower and upper boundaries were calculated, then the range (highest value - lowest value) was determined, resulting in a range of 4 ($5 - 1 = 4$). To obtain the category width, the range was divided by the highest value in the scale, which is 5, yielding a category width of 0.8. Then, the category width was added to the lowest value in the scale, which is 1, to determine the upper limit for each category. The adopted standard for determining the level of self-compassion is as follows: Very Low 1 – 1.79; Low 1.80 – 2.59; Moderate 2.60 – 3.39; High 3.40 – 4.19; and Very High 4.20 – 5. The scale also included instructions regarding confidentiality and the use of information solely for research purposes. Respondents were instructed to condense their responses to ensure the privacy of mothers of students with learning disabilities in the Muscat governorate

Results and Discussions

The results related to the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in Oman, were presented and explained. To present the results, means and standard deviations were calculated. Table 1 illustrates the means and standard deviations for the levels of overall self-compassion and six dimensions of the Self-Compassion.

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations for Participants' Responses on the Self-Compassion

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviations	Order	Level
Self-Kindness	3.83	0.71	3	High
Self-Judgment	3.39	0.74	4	Moderate
Common Humanity	3.88	0.72	2	High
Isolation	3.04	0.72	6	Moderate
Mindfulness	3.93	0.64	1	High
Over-Identification	3.29	0.46	5	Moderate
Overall self-compassion	3.45	0.37		High

Table 1 shows that the level of self-compassion is high for the overall scale, with an average of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 0.37. Self-compassion in the dimensions ranges between high and moderate. Mindfulness, which is the first dimension in the ranking, has a high average of 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.64. On the other hand, Isolation is the last dimension in the ranking with a moderate average of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 0.72. The remaining four dimensions: Self-Kindness, Self-Judgment, Common Humanity, and Over-Identification have moderate averages ranging from 3.29 to 3.88.

It is evident from Table 1 that self-compassion is generally high among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the study sample. The high level of self-compassion is attributed to the mothers' compassion, tolerance, and positive outlook towards themselves in challenging situations. These mothers are more flexible and open to their painful experiences and exhibit more rationality in dealing with negative aspects of their experiences. This finding is consistent with the study by Salim and Abu Halawa (2018), which indicated that high self-compassion among mothers explains their ability to handle painful situations calmly. Moreover, it indicates their acceptance of failures and recognition that these hardships are part of human experiences. This leads them to internal peace, reconciliation, and self-compassion, enabling them to effectively cope with responsibility and change the direction of their and their children's lives. The complete realization that failures and challenges are a natural part of human experience allows them to have compassion and tolerance for themselves and others, and acceptance of destiny, whether it is good or bad. This enhances their ability to endure the suffering resulting from disability.

The current researchers attribute this increase to the mothers' positive spirit, which allows them to develop positive feelings and deal with painful situations and failures more positively and flexibly instead of excessively self-criticizing and blaming themselves. This, in turn, affects the children's behaviors positively in various aspects of life. This is in line with the results of the studies conducted by Breines and Chen (2012) and Ghali (2015), which suggested that high self-compassion in individuals reduces the likelihood of failure, stumbling, and self-blame, increases achievement motivation, improves their outlook on life, and develops positive feelings. This increase has a positive impact on the behaviors of children with disabilities, and vice versa. This is also consistent with the results of the study by Psychogiou et al. (2016), which indicated that low self-compassion levels in parents negatively affect their children's behaviors. The results also align with the studies conducted by Bloch (2018) and Umphrey et al. (2020), which found that self-compassion is one of the adaptive strategies that help mothers reduce negative feelings and create positive feelings.

The increase in the dimensions of mindfulness, self-kindness, and common humanity compared to the other dimensions is attributed to the mothers' acceptance, focus, and attention to their current experiences with children with learning disabilities. They are aware, concerned, and attentive to their actions with their children inside and outside the

family. They fully accept the child, understand the nature of their child's disability, and adopt logical and rational thinking. They confront painful events and situations as they are in reality in a balanced manner. This finding is in line with Mansour's study (2016), which emphasized that self-compassion includes experiencing painful self-negative experiences with mental alertness and understanding without excessive emotional involvement. However, when emotions and negative thoughts about the self prevail during moments of pain, self-compassion turns into self-pity. The results also align with Salim's study (2020), which found that mothers' openness to the ideas, feelings, painful experiences, and empathy with their children's experiences and full acceptance of the child without fear for the child's future helped them focus on, tolerate, and interact with the present moment in dealing with their children without excessive concern about the future. It also helped them avoid reacting to internal feelings and naturally accept the reality.

The results related to the second question, which states: "Are there statistically significant differences in the self-compassion levels among mothers of students with learning disabilities in Oman attributed to variables (student gender, mother's age, mother's employment)?". To answer this question, the following statistical methods were used: means, standard deviations, Independent T-Test for the gender and mother's employment variables, One-Way ANOVA for the experience variable, and LSD test to detect the source of differences.

Student Gender

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations, and the t-test for self-compassion levels based on the student gender variable.

Table 2 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-test for Self-Compassion according student gender

Dimension	Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Self-Kindness	Male	42	3.83	0.69	0.087	140	0.931
	Female	100	3.82	0.72			
Self-Judgment	Male	42	3.39	0.71	0.018	140	0.986
	Female	100	3.39	0.76			
Common Humanity	Male	42	3.82	0.70	-0.709	140	0.479
	Female	100	3.91	0.73			
Isolation	Male	42	3.03	0.83	-0.58	140	0.957
	Female	100	3.04	0.68			
Mindfulness	Male	42	3.99	0.57	0.812	140	0.418
	Female	100	3.89	0.68			
Over-Identification	Male	42	3.24	0.37	-0.85	140	0.345
	Female	100	3.31	0.49			
Overall self-compassion	Male	42	3.45	0.34	0.05	140	0.961
	Female	100	3.44	0.39			

The t-test results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences due to the student gender variable in the overall self-compassion scale and its dimensions.

The current researchers attribute this result to the fact that the gender of the student with learning disabilities does not significantly influence the self-compassion levels of their mothers. The high self-compassion of mothers remains the driving factor for improving the behavior of students with learning disabilities, regardless of the gender of their children.

This result aligns with the study by Jenaabadi & Abaasi (2020), which indicated that the behavior of students with learning disabilities is directly related to the mothers' feelings and self-perception, their view of themselves, their lives, and their ability to deal with negative experiences. This importance increases when the child has learning disabilities. This result is also consistent with the findings of Al-Nawajah (2019), which concluded that there are no differences in self-compassion levels among mothers of Down syndrome children and that the requirements and needs of children with learning disabilities are similar between genders. Mothers, by nature, do not differentiate in their interactions between their sons and daughters.

According to mother's employment, Table 2 displays the means, standard deviations, and the t-test for self-compassion levels based on the mother's employment variable.

Table 2 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-test for Self-Compassion according mother's employment

Dimension	mother's employment	N	M	SD	t-value	df	Sig.	The t-test results indicate that there are no
Self-Kindness	Employment	65	3.76	0.74	-.964	140	.337	
	Unemployment	75	3.88	0.68				
Self-Judgment	Employment	65	3.45	0.67	.858	140	.393	
	Unemployment	75	3.34	0.80				
Common Humanity	Employment	65	3.90	0.74	.271	140	.787	
	Unemployment	75	3.87	0.71				
Isolation	Employment	65	3.16	0.69	1.871	140	.063	
	Unemployment	75	2.93	0.74				
Mindfulness	Employment	65	3.95	0.65	.340	140	.735	
	Unemployment	75	3.91	0.65				
Over-Identification	Employment	65	3.30	0.44	.359	140	.720	
	Unemployment	75	3.28	0.48				
Overall self-compassion	Employment	65	3.42	0.37	-.832	140	.407	
	Unemployment	75	3.47	0.38				

statistically significant differences attributed to the mother's employment variable in the overall self-compassion scale and its dimensions. This suggests that a mother's employment does not significantly impact her self-compassion levels. In other words, the feeling of self-compassion is an internal emotion that varies among individuals and is influenced by different situations and painful experiences, regardless of whether the mother works or not. This aligns with the findings of the study by Al-Nawajah (2019), which stated that self-compassion is a human trait that leads individuals to understand themselves and have a comprehensive awareness of the pressures and suffering they go through. It emphasizes that individuals cannot avoid suffering and must learn to cope with and accept their reality.

According to the mother's age, Table 3 provides the means and standard deviations for the mother's age variable, along with the one-way ANOVA analysis in Table 4.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for Self-Compassion according to Mother's Age

Dimension	Gender	N	M	SD
Self-Kindness	30 or younger	31	3.90	0.62
	31 to 40	68	3.91	0.69

The results from Table 3 indicate some apparent	Self-Judgment	41 or older	43	3.64	0.77
		30 or younger	31	3.35	0.79
		31 to 40	68	3.38	0.73
	Common Humanity	41 or older	43	3.44	0.74
		30 or younger	31	3.98	0.76
		31 to 40	68	3.95	0.67
	Isolation	41 or older	43	3.70	0.76
		30 or younger	31	3.02	0.85
		31 to 40	68	3.01	0.67
	Mindfulness	41 or older	43	3.09	0.73
		30 or younger	31	3.86	0.73
		31 to 40	68	3.92	0.59
	Over-Identification	41 or older	43	3.99	0.67
		30 or younger	31	3.31	0.45
		31 to 40	68	3.23	0.43
	Overall self-compassion	41 or older	43	3.37	0.51
		30 or younger	31	3.49	0.43
		31 to 40	68	3.46	0.33
		41 or older	43		

differences in means based on the mother's age. To confirm whether these differences are statistically significant, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted as shown in Table 4.

Degrees of Freedom Mean Square

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA for Self-Compassion according to Mother's Age

Dimension	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value
Self-Kindness	Between Groups	2.08	2	1.04	2.113	.125
	Within Groups	68.389	139	0.492		
Self-Judgment	Between Groups	0.162	2	0.081	.145	.865
	Within Groups	77.66	139	0.559		
Common Humanity	Between Groups	1.978	2	0.989	1.913	.151
	Within Groups	71.859	139	0.517		
Isolation	Between Groups	0.167	2	0.084	.158	.854
	Within Groups	73.532	139	0.529		
Mindfulness	Between Groups	0.298	2	0.149	.354	.702
	Within Groups	58.55	139	0.421		
Over-Identification	Between Groups	0.56	2	0.28	1.331	.267
	Within Groups	29.227	139	0.21		
		29.787	141			

Overall self-compassion	Between Groups	0.2	2	0.1	.710	.493	Table 4 reveals that there are no statistically significant
	Within Groups	19.597	139	0.141			
		19.797	141				

differences in the overall self-compassion and its dimensions based on the mother's age variable. The current researchers attribute this to the fact that self-compassion in mothers of students with learning disabilities is not influenced by the mother's age. They also suggest that there is relatively uniform variation in self-compassion across different age groups. Furthermore, the current researchers explain that most of the sample mothers fall within a middle age range, characterized by cognitive and emotional stability, which contributes to the stability of self-compassion. This results aligns with the study by Al-Nawajah (2019), which emphasized that self-compassion is a personality trait unaffected by chronological age. It also corresponds to the research conducted by Jenaabadi & Abaasi (2020), which highlighted the direct link between mothers' emotions, self-perception, and their ability to cope with negative experiences and the behavior of students with learning difficulties.

Conclusion

The current study identified the level of self-compassion among mothers of students with learning disabilities in the sultanate of Oman. The level of self-compassion was high. The current study also found that the variables under investigation (student's gender, mother's age, mother's employment) had no significant impact on the level of self-compassion. In other words, these variables did not lead to meaningful differences in how mothers perceived and practiced self-compassion in the context of their children's learning disabilities. In light of the current study's results, the researchers recommend the concerned authorities to maintain the continuity of maternal self-compassion through counseling, training, cultural, and developmental programs that help mothers maintain positive self-compassion feelings towards their children. This can positively influence the adaptive behavior of their children. In addition, the researchers suggest activating the Parents' Council and focus the efforts of the Ministry of Education towards mothers, as their active participation in raising their children can play an important role in achieving children's behavior that is in harmony with society. Pay special attention to students with learning disabilities and provide dedicated support for them by experts with experience in this field should be taken into consideration. This can contribute to improving the behavior of these students and enhancing their academic performance. The current researchers encourage other researchers to conduct further research and examine maternal self-compassion in various regions of Oman to understand the factors that affect the level of self-compassion among mothers, they can use the self-compassion scale in research and studies in Omani society, given its good psychometric properties. This will help guide efforts toward developing more effective programs and strategies to support mothers and their children. Last but not least, the researchers recommend to expand the scope of research to include other categories of students with special needs, such as visually impaired, hearing-impaired, physically challenged students, and those with autism spectrum disorders, to understand the impact of self-compassion on their lives, behavior, and development. These recommendations aim to support mothers and students with disabilities in the Sultanate of Oman and improve the quality of their education and daily lives.

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