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Academic Stress
(A Case of the learning disability students)

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to identify the sources of academic stress among students with learning difficulties. The sample of study consisted of (300) students with learning disabilities. The Academic Stress Scale prepared by the researcher was used. The results of study indicated that the sources of stress came within four dimensions, namely: the emotional dimension followed by the physiological dimension followed by the behavioral dimension and finally the cognitive dimension, and that there are significant differences in the sources of academic stress attributed to sex only in the behavioral responses dimension in favor of males. In light of the results, some recommendations were made.

Keywords: Stress, Learning Difficulties.

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Introduction:

Stress is part of life regardless of social, economic, ethnic, or cultural standing, however in the modern world, which reportedly is a world of achievement; it is also a world of tension. One finds stress everywhere, whether within the family, work, school, or any other social or economic activity. Stress may appear in various forms and for various reasons. Unfortunately, stress is a common part of life with the start of the new millennium; it is something that only a few of us can completely avoid. It is of interest to note that stress can have both positive and negative effects on people (Lal, 2014). This means that stress may be a natural response to the threat whose role is to signal and prepare individuals to take defensive measures. For example, fear of things that pose real threats motivates individuals to deal with or avoid them. Most psychologists assert that moderate stress stimulates individuals to achieve and nurture creativity, although stress may hinder individuals from performing difficult tasks. Stress is defined as a set of burdens, pressures, anxieties, and fears. Each of us has likely experienced one or more of these symptoms in his daily life.

When talking about students today, we find that they face new challenges in education that call for greater effort. In addition, there are many and complex demands from society on students to perform different roles, many of which are unspecified, inconsistent, and unattainable in the current socio-cultural, economic, and bureaucratic contexts in our society, which causes severe pressure on students mainly and on students with learning difficulties in particular. One of the most common causes of stress and fatigue is the pressure that parents and teachers put on a student to improve their academic performance. The student often feels very concerned about many things such as homework, preparing for the exam; this type of pressure is good because it encourages the student to get better grades in school. However, if it affects his cognitive ability and mental health, it is necessary to reduce the psychological pressure on him and to direct the students in a way that limits him. Academic stress comes as it creates mental stress in relation to some expected frustration associated with academic failure or even a lack of awareness of the possibility of such failure.

Academic stress among students with learning difficulties is believed to result from meeting many academic requirements, for example, the school exam, answering questions in the classroom, and showing progress in school subjects, understanding the content that the teacher teaches, competing with his classmates, and fulfilling the academic expectations of teachers and parents; in addition to social problems, family problems, and problems surrounding them. student with learning difficulties also face stress because they sometimes fall into the trap of making decisions that follow rules and orders, or achieving achievements that exceed their capabilities and correspond to the expectations of their teachers and parents who prepare them to compete in the social system where society is scrambling towards modernization so that they are not left behind. If this is not well managed, stress may lead to mental disorders when it arises. These disorders will lead to more psychological problems for students with learning difficulties in the future if they are not overcome now. To ensure the physical

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and psychological health of these students, stress becomes an important subject for research and study.

The Problem and Importance of Study:

The current study came to uncover the sources of academic stress among students with learning difficulties, and to identify how students perceive academic stress and how they deal with it on a daily basis, and how they strive to reduce its negative effects on their physical and psychological health and thus their academic performance. Also, stress can lead to serious problems if not managed effectively. Moreover, when a person experiences chronic stress, he is likely to be exposed to both physical illnesses (including heart disease) and mental illnesses (such as anxiety disorders). In addition to the significant achievement requirements (Elkind, 1981) that all students face, learning for children with learning disabilities may be at greater risk of stress due to the frustration caused by:

An imbalance in the self- concept resulting from the vast gap between the ability to keep up with the classroom in some patterns (including oral discussion, group work, artistic and creative expression, etc.) and disproportionately weak academic performance in other settings (such as reading, writing, classroom work, achievement tests, etc.).

Academic officials and teachers may be unaware or insensitive to the struggles of students with learning difficulties as if they choose not to perform, while in reality they cannot perform at the level of their ability. Thus, they do not provide these students with suitable accommodations.

Relying on a special education teacher about staying with their peers in the regular class and worrying about being separated from it.

Official and unofficial labels given by these teachers and students to these children, isolation and rejection associated with their presence in any special educational class.

Hesitate to ask questions and clarifications due to fear of further criticism.

These frustrations increase the stress related to achievement in students with learning disabilities and put them at special risk because of the low achievement associated with stress.

Academic stress can be considered a key factor for such difficulties, as it has a direct impact on the child's behavior and thus can contribute to school failure.

The field of health psychology focuses in part on how stress affects physical performance and how people can use stress management techniques to prevent or reduce diseases. In my opinion, it is extremely important for students with learning disabilities to learn how to deal with academic stress, even if they cannot get rid of it.

Study questions:

The following research questions have been proposed:

– What are the main sources of academic stress as viewed by students with learning disabilities?

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– Are students with learning disabilities perceptions of academic stress affected by gender?

Objectives of study:

The present study aims to:

– Disclosure of the sources of academic stress among students with learning difficulties.

– Identifying the effect of the gender variable on the perceptions of students with learning difficulties of academic pressure.

Terminology of study:

Stress: A negative emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological process that occurs when a person tries to adapt or deal with stress (Bernstein, et al. 2008).

While (Auerbach & Grambling 1998) define it as conditions that disrupt or threaten to disrupt individuals' daily workflow and force people to make adjustments.

It is defined operationally as the degree that the student obtains on the academic stress scale used in this study.

Learning difficulties: They are formed in those students who suffer from a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes that involve understanding or using the language, whether orally or in writing. This disorder appears as a failure to listen, speak, read, write, spell or calculate. There are problems that cannot be included under the name of Learning Difficulties represented by educational problems that are mainly due to mental, auditory, visual, behavioral or motor disabilities, or environmental or economic deprivation (Hallahan & Mock, 2003).

Students with learning difficulties are defined procedurally as: those students who were classified as having educational difficulties in regular schools, based on the diagnostic and classification principles used in schools, including the application of standardized and non-standardized tests, as well as methods of collecting information that include teacher observations, case studies, and family interviews.

Limitations of Study:

Time limits: First semester 2019/2020.

Spatial boundaries: Directorate of Education in Irbid Governorate.

Human frontiers: Students classified as having learning difficulties and enrolled in public schools.

Theoretical framework and previous studies:

Theoretical framework:

Stress: Stress does not constitute an environmental stimulus nor a psychological response; it is a relationship between environmental requirements and the ability to deal with them. Since stress is usually seen as an interaction between the individual and the environment, there are two important processes that make up this treatment:

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psychological assessment and interaction, respectively. Psychological evaluation is seen as the continuous evaluation by individuals for the situation and the resources available to be able to deal with them. When individuals encounter a potentially stressful situation, they evaluate the amount of potential risk in addition to their resources to deal with the risk. Moreover, individuals are exposed to stress when the anticipated threat exceeds the available resources conceived to deal with them.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) consider stress as a dynamic process involving individuals and the environment. However, the environment does provide the initial incentive, but the main determinants of stress are the way individuals perceive the environment and how they use the available frontline resources to deal with it.

Sources of stress: Sources of stress are defined as every circumstance or event that threatens to disrupt people's daily work and causes modifications. These sources of stress are called "pressures" which are demands made by the internal or external environment that destabilize the individual balance, and thus affect physical and psychological health and require taking procedures to restore balance (Bernstein et al. 2008). However, the degree, intensity, and duration of stress vary from person to person. What may be stressful for a person, may not constitute stress for another person.

Catastrophic events (wars, floods, hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, sexual assaults), major life changes (job loss, divorce, disease, death of a spouse or family member, imprisonment), and daily troubles are major categories of stressors that create demands that people must adapt to. Most of the stress people face in their daily lives is the result of daily troubles in the form of irritability, tension and inconvenience. They may not be a lot of stress on their own, but their cumulative effects can be significant, given that they may be related to individual jobs, everyday living conditions, and personal relationships (Bernstein et al. 2008).

Effects of stress: due to the stress experienced by the individual, he may have anxious thoughts or difficulty in concentrating or remembering. Stress can also change people's behavior and create alternative behaviors, such as chewing fingernails, rapid breathing, gritting the teeth, and rubbing the hands. They may also feel cold hands and feet, stomach pain, and sometimes an increased heart rate; all of which are common physiological effects of stress, which can be linked to feelings of anxiety (Auerbach & Gramling, 1998).

Dealing with stress: Stress does not affect all people equally, but stress can lead to illness and negative experiences. Therefore, dealing with stress is an important factor, as it affects whether people seek medical care and social support and how they trust the advice of professionals (Passer & Smith 2007).

There are two important types of assessment that distinguish how individuals deal with stress. The first type is a person's stress assessment, also known as the baseline assessment, which is the examination or assessment of a potential threat when facing a stress. A baseline evaluation is described as an individual assessment of the main effects of an event. It is also described as stressful, positive, controllable, difficult, or

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irrelevant. The second type is the person's evaluation of the available social and cultural resources in order to use them to reduce stresses (Cohen, 1984).

Previous Studies

Study of Narwal & Sharma (2018) aimed to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress from the perspective of visually impaired students. Using descriptive research, the study sample consisted of (50) students. Data was collected using the Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Student Academic Stress Scale. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the academic stress in visually impaired students.

Whereas, a study conducted by (Santos et al, 2016) aimed to compare the signs of stress appearing in children with learning difficulties (with and without language interference) with children without learning difficulties, and to determine the signs of stress appearing between groups according to the sex of the participants. The study included (25) children with learning difficulties. Children's academic stress scale was applied. The results indicated that (43%) of children with learning disabilities without intervention, (56%) of children with learning disabilities with intervention and (83%) of children without learning difficulties showed signs of warning of stress. These differences were not statistically significant. In addition, no gender differences were found. In all groups, there was a rise in warning signs of stress in children, which indicates that this may not be a decisive factor in academic achievement in the study sample.

Study of (Lal, 2014) was on academic stress among adolescents and its relationship to intelligence and demographics. The study sample consisted of (200) students. The results showed that there is little effect for intelligence on reducing academic stress in the study sample. Likewise, there was no effect for the academic level (primary, secondary) and the type of schools (public, private) on reducing academic stress among the study sample. The results indicated that there is an effect for rural areas compared to cities on the level of academic stress, and that all high school students suffer from the same level of academic stress.

Study of (Zia, 2012) discussed the relationship between cultural pressure and academic stress and its relationship to the psychological well-being of international students. Participants consist of (652) international students and (562) German students, who are mainly recruited with the support of student affairs offices of universities across the country. Cultural Stress Scale, Academic Stress Scale, Anxiety Scale, Depression Scale, and Welfare Index were used to collect data. A socio-demographic questionnaire was also used for each of the sub-samples. The results showed that homesickness is the most common cause of stress, while fear of insecurity is the least stressful cause. Multiple regression analysis found that age variables, continent of origin, mastery of the German language, time spent in Germany and previous travel experience are important predictors of stress. Contrary to the hypotheses, the study found that international students had a lower level of

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symptoms of stress and academic stress (including anxiety and depression), and a higher level of positive impact compared to German students.

Method and Procedures: A presentation will be made of the study methodology, the method of selecting the study sample, the tools used in data collection, study procedures, and statistical treatment methods.

Study approach: The present study is based on the descriptive analytical approach, which aims to describe the phenomenon, define the problem, justify circumstances or practices, or evaluate or compare. It is an appropriate method of scientific research to achieve the objectives of study.

Study community: The study population consisted of all resource rooms students (learning difficulties) in the First Directorate of Education in Irbid Governorate who are registered during the academic year 2019/2020, and they were (650) male and female students.

Study Sample: The study members consisted of (300) male and female students, distributed as (150) male and (150) female students from the grades of the upper basic stage. They were chosen by stratified random method from the total size of the study population. (30) individuals from the study community were chosen for the purpose of the pilot samples. Table (1) shows the distribution of the study sample individuals according to their variables.

Table (1) Distribution of study sample individuals

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	150	%50
Female	150	%50
Grand total	300	%100

Study Tools:

Academic Stress Scale: By reviewing the literature and previous studies, the researcher developed a scale that consists of (46) items covering four dimensions: behavioral responses (11 clauses), emotional responses (13 clauses), physiological responses (10 clauses), and cognitive responses (12 clauses). It is corrected by giving three degrees, in the case of answering with: always apply, giving two grades in the case of answering with: sometimes apply, giving one degree in the case of answering with: rarely apply, and giving zero degree in the case of answering with: never apply to all paragraphs of the scale. Thus, the lowest theoretical degree of the scale is (46); the highest degree is (138); and the hypothetical mean of the total degree of the scale is (69).

The hypothetical mean of scale is extracted by adding the values of the four alternatives (0 + 1 + 2 + 3) and dividing them by the number of alternatives: four, so

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the result will be one and a half, and then multiplied by the number of paragraphs of the scale (46), then the hypothetical average is (69). All clauses are phrased in a negative direction, meaning that the higher the degree on the scale, the stronger the evidence that the individual suffers from symptoms of psychological stress.

If the subject gets more than 138 degrees, he suffers from severe stress.

If the subject gets a degree from 92 to 138, he suffers from high psychological stress.

If the subject gets a degree from 46 to 92, he suffers from low psychological stress.

If the subject gets a degree less than 46, he does not suffer from stress.

The validity of the scale is directly dependent on the sincerity of its terms, because any increase in the validity of the terms leads to an increase in the validity of the scale. The validity of vocabulary is measured by calculating the coefficients that relate to the internal scale, which is called the internal consistency of the scale because it measures the coherence of the terms with their scale.

The formative validity of the scale was verified by applying it to a random sample of students with learning difficulties, which numbered (30) male and female students from outside the study sample.

The scale was presented to a number of professors of psychology and special education at the National University of Ajloun, the Yarmouk University and the University of Jadra. It was also presented to a number of specialists with learning difficulties and a psychologist to express an opinion in terms of that:

- The scale items are free of cultural elements alien to Jordanian society.
- How well the terms are in terms of language.
- The suitability of the items to measure what was actually intended to be measured.
- The extent to which the dimensions of academic stress agree with the goal of the scale.
- Determine whether or not the clauses belong to the dimension.
- See if the number of items is sufficient.
- Add any new clauses that they think should be added.
- Delete any clauses they think should be deleted.
- The suitability of the clauses with the age of the sample under study.

The researcher has conveyed the opinions of the arbitrators in tables, and then excluded the clauses that were agreed upon less than 80%. The researcher has made amendments and formulated some clauses based on the opinions of the arbitrators and conducted a final terms review.

The scale invariance factor was calculated by re-applying the test with a two-week time interval on a pilot sample of 30 individuals. It was considered that the application conditions should be somewhat close to the first time. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the results of the two applications, and the correlation coefficient was (0.91), which is a high coefficient.

Table (2) shows the stress scale reliability coefficient.

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Table (2): Academic stress scale reliability coefficient by re-application method

Scale	Number of clauses	Number of individuals	Coefficient of Reliability	Significance level
Academic stress	46	30	0.87	0.01

The table shows that the scale reliability coefficient is a positive correlation coefficient, and it has a significance at the level of 0.01, which indicates the strength, and validity of the scale.

The reliability of psychological stress scale was also calculated by the Cronbach's alpha method. The results were as in Table (3):

Table (3): The reliability of the academic stress scale in Cronbach's alpha

Scale	Number of clauses	Number of individuals	Variation of degrees	Coefficient (α)	Significance level
Academic stress	46	30	43.78	0.83	0.01

It was found through the table that the coefficient of the psychological stress scale in the Alpha Cronbach method is (0.83) that is an appropriate coefficient, which allows the use of the scale utilized in the current study.

Results

This chapter deals with the analysis of study results, arranged by study questions. The following is an explanation of these results:

Answer to the first question: What are the main sources of academic stress as perceived by students with learning disabilities? To answer this question, the means, standard deviations and the weighted mean for each dimension were calculated as shown in Table (4) where the sources of responses related to academic stress in relation to the scale as a whole came as follows.

Table (4): Response mean, standard deviation and percentage of each dimension

No.	Dimension	Terms No.	Mean	standard deviation	weighted mean
1	Behavioral responses	11	46.959	13.103	3.612
2	Emotional responses	13	49.982	8.895	4.165
3	Physiological responses	10	51.554	12.738	3.966
4	Cognitive responses	12	44.941	13.060	3.457
	The scale as a whole	46	193.436	47.796	3.613

From Table (4), it appears that the order of the dimensions is descending according to the weighted means, as follows: The second dimension ranked first in the sources of stress and its value was (m = 4.165). These sources relate to emotional responses. The third dimension was ranked second in the sources of stress, and its value was (m =

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3.966). This dimension relates to physiological responses. The first dimension came in the third rank and its value was (3.612), which is represented by behavioral responses. The fourth dimension came in the fourth place and its value was (m = 3.457), which relates to cognitive responses. Given the weighted means of all dimensions of the scale, they range from (3.457-4.165), and therefore all values clearly exceed the hypothetical mean (3). This indicates that these dimensions collectively represent real problems that constitute sources of academic stress for students with learning disabilities. Likewise, the overall weighted mean of the scale as a whole was (3,613), which reflects the importance of these dimensions that need efforts to provide solutions.

The mean of the scale terms and their corresponding percentages, as well as the weighted means for each dimension of the scale were calculated. The following tables (7,6,5,8) show these results:

First Dimension: Behavioral Responses

Table (5): response mean per clause, deviation and percentage of the first dimension, behavioral responses.

No.	Clause	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
1	I bite my nails during the study period	3.157	1.359	63.16
2	I study late at night	3.707	1.149	74.14
3	I deal with stimulating drinks frequently during the study period	3.734	2.395	74.68
4	I have difficulty balancing study and the requirements of everyday life.	3.734	1.618	74.68
5	I lack strong relationships with others	3.581	1.229	71.621
6	I feel unwilling to eat during the study period	3.374	1.408	67.48
7	I do not participate in social events because of the study	3.802	1.224	76.04
8	I have trouble sleeping due to the study.	3.784	1.251	75.68
9	I do not want to establish social relationships with others	3.469	1.261	69.38
10	I eat a lot during the study period	3.414	1.283	68.28
11	I drink water frequently during the study period	3.459	1.271	69.18

Table (5) shows that the results of the first dimension analysis related to behavioral responses are confined between a high mean of (3.8) with a percentage of (76.04) and

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a low mean of (3.15) with a percentage of (63.16). The order of the phrases in terms of stress was as follows: (7, 8, 3, 4, 2, 5, 9, 11, 10, 6, 1).
"I do not participate in social events because of the study" topped the problems related to behavioral responses, followed by (I have trouble sleeping due to the study).

Second Dimension: Emotional Responses

Table (6): Response mean per clause, deviation and percentage in relation to the second dimension: emotional responses

No.	Clause	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
1	I suffer from persistent concern about my studies	3.374	1.294	67.48
2	I feel unwilling to continue my studies	3.423	1.287	68.46
3	I feel very bad about the academic requirements	3.613	1.197	72.26
4	I am constantly concerned about my parents 'reactions to my results	3.892	1.096	77.84
5	I suffer from the severity of emotions in the period of tests	3.676	2.652	73.52
6	I feel dissatisfied with my academic performance	3.770	1.354	75.40
7	I suffer from study nightmares	3.752	1.261	75.04
8	I feel unsure of my abilities	3.239	1.379	64.78
9	I am afraid of tests	3.455	1.264	69.10
10	I am concerned about teachers 'expectations	4.144	1.628	82.88
11	I am disappointed by the test results	3.662	1.232	73.24
12	I am afraid of reviewing some of the courses	3.586	2.734	71.72
13	I face difficulty relaxing	3.374	1.237	67.48

From Table (6), it is clear that the results of the second dimension analysis related to emotional responses are between a high arithmetic average of (4.144) with a percentage of (82.88) and a low arithmetic average of (93.23) with a percentage of (64.78). The order of clauses in terms of severity of problems was as follows: (10, 4, 6, 7, 5, 11, 3, 12, 9, 2, 1, 13, 8). "I'm concerned about teachers' expectations" topped the stress resources of emotional responses dimension.

Third Dimension: Physiological Responses

Table (7): Response mean for each clause, deviation and percentage for the third dimension, physiological responses

No.	Clause	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
1	I suffer from persistent pain in the stomach	4.099	1.225	81.98
2	I feel a rapid heart rate during the study	4.243	2.299	84.86
3	I suffer from skin allergy during tests	3.649	1.284	72.98

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No.	Clause	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
4	I suffer from a headache during the testing period	3.892	2.471	77.84
5	I feel constantly tired	4.261	1.611	85.22
6	I have problems with digestion	4.090	1.106	81.80
7	I suffer from intermittent sleep	4.086	1.049	81.72
8	I suffer from joint pain	3.905	1.136	78.10
9	I suffer from muscle spasms while studying	3.878	1.149	77.56
10	I feel difficulty breathing	3.951	2.280	79.02
11	I have more sweating and urination while studying	3.878	1.121	77.56

It is clear from Table (7) that the results of the third dimension analysis are confined between a high arithmetic average of (4,261) with a percentage of (85.22) and a low arithmetic mean of (3,649) with a percentage of (72.98) in stress sources related to physiological responses. The order of the clauses in terms of severity of problems was as follows: (5, 2, 1, 6, 7, 10, 8, 4, 9,11,3). "I feel constantly tired" topped the stress resources of physiological responses dimension.

Fourth Dimension: Cognitive Responses

Table (8): Response mean for each clause, deviation and percentage for the fourth dimension, cognitive responses

No.	Clause	Mean	Standard deviation	Percentage
1	I am preoccupied with the tests and their results	3.176	1.566	63.52
2	I suffer from the inability to focus	3.518	3.713	70.36
3	I have thoughts of harming myself	3.234	1.294	64.68
4	I'm concerned of my future	3.374	1.218	67.48
5	I doubt my ability to do well in the study	3.509	1.290	70.18
6	I am thinking of dropping out and leaving school	3.545	1.509	70.90
7	I have difficulty remembering what I have learned	3.410	1.345	68.20
8	I am preoccupied with my performance compared to that of my colleagues	3.910	1.188	78.20
9	I have difficulty regulating study time	3.437	1.323	68.74
10	I am having difficulty solving problems	3.158	1.384	63.16
11	I think I will not achieve what I wish	3.532	1.286	70.64
12	I think I am unable to perform the duties and tasks assigned to me	3.297	1.329	65.94

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Table (8) shows that the results of the fourth dimension analysis are confined between a high arithmetic average of (3.910) with a percentage of (78.20) and a low arithmetic mean of (3,158) with a percentage of (63.16). The order of the clauses in terms of severity of problems was as follows: (8, 6, 11, 2, 5, 9, 7, 4, 3, 1, 10). "I am preoccupied with my performance compared to that of my colleagues" topped stress sources of cognitive responses.

Through a review of the above, the sources of academic stress, which topped each of the four dimensions discussed, are as follows:

-I do not participate in social events because of the study
-I'm concerned about teachers' expectations
-I feel constantly tired.
- I am preoccupied with my performance compared to that of my colleagues

The answer to the second question that states: Are the perceptions of students with learning difficulties of sources of academic stress affected by gender? To answer this question, the mean and standard deviations for the responses of the study sample were extracted on the scale as shown in Table (9).

Table No. (9): The mean and standard deviations for the study sample responses on the scale according to the gender variable.

Dimension	Gender	Number	Mean	Standard deviation
Behavioral responses	Male	150	26.06	4.656
	Female	150	22.96	4.809
Emotional responses	Male	150	27.53	4.339
	Female	150	25.88	4.576
Physiological responses	Male	150	27.69	4.584
	Female	150	26.68	4.347
Cognitive responses	Male	150	29.28	4.199
	Female	150	27.76	4.055

It is noted from Table (9), according to the arithmetic averages, that there are apparent differences between students with learning difficulties in the sources of academic stress in all dimensions. To find out the significance of these differences, test (T) was used for the independent samples. Table (10) shows the results of these differences:

Table (10): (T) test for independent samples

Dimension	Gender	Means	Means difference	(T) Value	Degree of freedom	Significance level
Behavioral responses	Male	26.06	3.103	2.800	87	.006
	Female	22.96				

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Emotional responses	Male	27.53	1.651	1.589	87	.116
	Female	25.88				
Physiological responses	Male	27.69	1.008	.945	87	.347
	Female	26.68				
Cognitive responses	Male	29.28	1.521	1.551	87	.125
	Female	27.76				
	Female	24.80				

Table (10) shows that there are significant differences in the sources of academic stress attributable to gender only in the first dimension: behavioral responses in favor of males, while there were no differences attributed to gender in the rest of the dimensions.

Discussion of Results:

The results of answering the first question about the main sources of academic stress as viewed by students with learning difficulties, showed the following: The second dimension ranked first in the sources of stress and its value was (m = 4.165). These sources relate to emotional responses. The third dimension was ranked second in the sources of stress, and its value was (m = 3.966). This dimension relates to physiological responses. The first dimension came in the third rank and its value was (3.612), which is represented by behavioral responses. The fourth dimension came in the fourth place and its value was (m = 3.457), which relates to cognitive responses. Given the weighted means of all dimensions of the scale, they range from (3.457-4.165), and therefore all values clearly exceed the hypothetical mean (3). This indicates that these dimensions collectively represent real problems that constitute sources of academic stress for students with learning disabilities. Likewise, the overall weighted mean of the scale as a whole was (3,613), which reflects the importance of these dimensions that need efforts to provide solutions. The researcher attributes these results to the nature and characteristics of students with learning difficulties; they are more sensitive to the surrounding environmental conditions represented by the school and home atmosphere, which are sources of the emergence of emotional responses for them. What also appears here is their concern about teachers 'expectations due to their feelings of deficiency and incompetence, which leads to continuous concern about the family's reactions to their results, so they are preoccupied with their thinking about their academic performance and try to reconcile the requirements of study with their daily life. This prompts them to exert more effort and study late at night and to take stimuli, and this all constitutes stress that appears in their emotional responses. Emotional responses are automatically reflected in the physiological nature of the individual; this is what appeared here, as the physiological responses came second after the emotional responses, through the individual's feeling constantly tired in the body, acceleration of the heartbeat, and stomach pain. In turn, the individual's physiological responses are reflected in the behavioral responses of not participating

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in social events, difficulties in sleeping due to taking stimuli. Through the logical sequence, behavioral responses will affect the cognitive responses of the individual, as shown in the results, when a student with learning difficulties is busy comparing his performance with his colleagues. This makes him feel inferior, and therefore think of dropping out and leaving school because of his inability to keep up with his classmates and to achieve what he aspires to; this loses him the ability to focus. This is confirmed by (Bernstein et al. 2008), (Santos et al, 2016), and (Auerbach & Gramling, 1998).

The results of the second question answer, which was about the influence of the perceptions of students with learning difficulties of the sources of academic stress on gender, showed that there were no differences due to gender in all dimensions except for behavioral responses in favor of males. The researcher attributes this result by referring to the behavioral female nature of less severe responses to stress sources. For example, we find that females tend to participate social different occasions more than males. They are far from having stimulant drinks or showing unwanted behaviors. They may eat large quantities of food as a way to reduce stress-related tension.

Recommendations:

In light of the results of study, the researcher made several recommendations, most notably:

- The need for teachers to be well prepared by relying on scientific and pedagogical grounds to be able to deal with students with learning difficulties.
- The necessity of creating the school and family environment as an important support for students with learning difficulties.
- The capabilities of students with learning difficulties should be understood and dealt with realistically within what their abilities allow.

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