

Lived Experiences of the Outcomes of Compassion among Teachers of Children with Autism

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Abstract

Introduction: Teachers of children with autism encounter numerous physical and mental challenges, yet many choose to approach their work with compassion. This compassionate approach, while essential, presents significant difficulties. This study aimed to explore the outcomes of compassion on teachers of children with autism.

Methods: This study was conducted using conventional content analysis on 18 teachers working with children with autism in centers affiliated with welfare and education organizations in Kerman, Iran. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with participants who were selected via purposive sampling until saturation was achieved. The collected data were analyzed using the conventional content analysis method proposed by Graneheim and Lundman with MaxQDA software (version 10).

Results: Data analysis led to the identification of two central themes including *desperation in an influx of challenges and personal growth amidst adversity*. The first central theme was further divided into five main themes including *negative mental reflections, a sense of living within physical limitations, negative job consequences, self-depreciation, and inadequate adaptation*. The second central theme was categorized into two main themes including *enhanced capabilities and spiritual development*.

Conclusion: The educational journey, marked by ups and downs, has left many teachers feeling helpless and experiencing compassion fatigue. The results of this study highlighted the complex consequences of teaching children with autism, suggesting that education managers should improve the quality of teaching as well as the psychological well-being of teachers by providing them with targeted training and support initiatives.

Keywords: Compassion, Teachers, Autism, Content analysis, Qualitative research

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Introduction

Throughout human history, suffering has been an ever-present companion and an undeniable reality, often regarded as the universal language of humanity. It encompasses a wide range of afflictions, including discomfort caused by illness or accidents, economic and social hardship, and the inherent challenges of human existence (1).

Witnessing the suffering of others naturally evokes compassion (2). According to Quaglia et al., compassion is a multidimensional process that comprises four key elements including awareness of suffering (cognitive/empathetic awareness), compassionate attention to suffering (emotional element), a genuine desire to alleviate suffering (thoughtfulness), and readiness to respond and provide assistance (3). Thus, compassion is not solely an emotional reaction; it is also a reasoned, wise response framed within a moral context, aimed at liberating others

from suffering (4).

Within the realm of organizational behavior, compassion has emerged as a significant area of study. Researchers have delved into the topic of compassion in the workplace, exploring its origins and the resulting outcomes (5). In educational settings, compassion involves recognizing and addressing the suffering experienced by students and engaging in compassionate actions to alleviate it. Teachers demonstrate compassion towards students who may be grappling with challenges such as difficulties at home, chronic illnesses, exam-related anxiety, or special educational needs (6, 7). A notable example of going beyond mere compassionate thoughts and fostering compassionate behavior can be observed in teachers' interactions with children with autism.

Autism, one of the most prevalent neurodevelopmental disorders, affects individuals throughout their lives (8, 9). Its prevalence ranges from 1.09 to 436 per 10,000, with a



median of 100 (10). Autism manifests in challenges related to social interaction, communication, and the presence of stereotyped or obsessive behavior patterns (11). Additionally, individuals with autism often experience difficulties such as hyperactivity, impulsive behaviors, self-harm, and aggression, which can significantly affect their daily activities and hinder their educational progress (12). In light of these circumstances, teachers, driven by their sense of duty, strive to alleviate the suffering of these individuals and embark on a path of empathy.

In helping professions, it is essential to share moments of collective suffering (13). However, the outcomes of such compassion can vary depending on factors such as time, place, and individual capacity. Sometimes, conflicting emotions may arise, including compassion fatigue, while in some cases a sense of fulfillment may prevail (14).

When exposed to constant suffering and traumatic experiences, caregivers may encounter a shift in their feelings about helping others, leading to frustration (14). This phenomenon, known as compassion fatigue, is characterized by symptoms such as physical and mental exhaustion, anxiety, anger, aggression, feelings of sadness (13), reduced empathy, and indecisiveness (15). Various factors contribute to the development of compassion fatigue, including work environment, age, gender, education level, and changes in management systems, which have been identified as predictors of compassion fatigue among nurses (16).

Numerous studies have highlighted compassion fatigue as a consequence of compassion in patient care. For instance, Jin et al. conducted a systematic review that reported moderate to high levels of compassion fatigue among nurses (14,17). Furthermore, nursing staff in CCU, ICU, and dialysis centers experience high levels of compassion fatigue.

Another group warranting study concerning compassion fatigue is mothers who serve as home caregivers for exceptional children. Al Barmawi et al. found that nurses in critical care units experience compassion fatigue and high psychological distress while attending to their patients' suffering (18). Similarly, compassion fatigue has been identified as an outcome experienced by individuals caring for their sick parents (19).

Teaching, by its very nature, is considered a helping profession (20), which positions teachers to form close emotional bonds with their students while shouldering the responsibility of caring for them (21). Sometimes, teachers' compassion for vulnerable children and the socioemotional and academic challenges faced by their families can lead to compassion fatigue (20). Moreover, teachers must navigate the delicate balance of interpersonal demands within the classroom and strive to adapt their instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students, particularly those with special needs. The challenges associated with meeting these demands also put teachers at risk of experiencing compassion fatigue (22). The loss of empathy can result in emotional, behavioral, and cognitive changes for teachers, ultimately leading to

potential departure from the profession and depriving students of effective support (23).

Ormiston et al. conducted a study on teachers working in impoverished schools and found that they experienced high levels of compassion fatigue (24). Similarly, Ziaian-Ghafari et al. explored the experiences of teachers working with exceptional children in Canada and identified compassion fatigue as a socioemotional phenomenon stemming from their compassionate behavior (23). It has been noted that approximately 50% of teachers reported experiencing compassion fatigue as a consequence of their compassion, with older teachers showing higher levels compared to their younger counterparts (25).

However, serving individuals with disabilities is not always associated with negative consequences. Compassion satisfaction refers to the positive emotions that caregivers derive from their ability to help others. This pleasurable feeling motivates caregivers to continue their service despite potential negative consequences (26). Qualitative research indicates that mothers of children with disabilities often report experiencing compassion satisfaction as a result of their compassionate behavior, often utilizing spiritual or individual strategies (27). Besides, a study highlighted the significance of creating social support networks, including supportive management and positive feedback, to help teachers cultivate compassion satisfaction (24).

The relationship between compassion and its outcomes in educational settings is influenced by several factors, including personality traits, organizational and family support, field of activity, and teaching experience (17). In the context of this study, children with autism are taught by a team consisting of occupational therapists, speech therapists, art therapists, and teachers. Training is also influenced by cultural and individual values as well as available facilities and resources, and may vary from one society to another. Consequently, generalizing such behaviors across different societies is not feasible. Accordingly, conducting qualitative research grounded in the specific cultural and contextual frameworks in which teachers operate is essential. Given that no study has yet explored this issue among Iranian teachers, the present study aimed to investigate the outcomes of compassion in teachers of children with autism, addressing a significant gap in the literature.

Methods

This qualitative study used a conventional content analysis approach to explore the outcomes of compassion among teachers of children with autism. The theoretical foundation of this method is rooted in the understanding that human communication is inherently interpretive. This approach allows for the examination of not only the explicit content of interview texts but also the extraction of hidden meanings and concepts with varying levels of abstraction (28).

There are five education and care centers for children with autism in Kerman. At these centers, training is

provided by a team consisting of teachers, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and art therapists. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select participants from three of these centers, which collectively educate 120 children. The participants included principals, teachers, speech therapists, and occupational therapists working with children with autism in educational centers in Kerman, Iran (Table 1). Both the education and welfare organizations were taken into consideration for participant selection. The study was conducted from April 2022 to March 2023.

The inclusion criterion was having at least one year of experience working with children with autism. The exclusion criterion included non-cooperation in completing the interviews.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 18 participants, with three individuals interviewed twice. Before the interviews began, the objective of the study was explained to each participant, and their voluntary participation was sought. The interviews commenced with a general question, "Would you describe a typical day at work?" and were guided by subsequent questions based on the participants' responses (Table 2).

Exploratory questions, such as "Can you provide an example?" and "How did you feel in that situation?" were used to elicit more detailed information. As the interviews progressed, questions were derived from the text of previous interviews and incorporated into subsequent interviews. The duration of each interview ranged from 45 to 60 minutes.

The interview setting was determined with the consent of the participants in various locations, including parks, school offices, and the interviewees' homes. In addition to the interviews, field notes were taken, explanations were recorded after the interviews, and relevant documents were reviewed when necessary. The data collection process continued until data saturation was reached,

indicating that no new information was obtained, and that the collected data replicated previous findings.

Data were analyzed using the approach outlined by Graneheim and Lundman (28), via MaxQDA software (version 10). The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by one of the researchers, followed by multiple reviews to ensure a comprehensive and accurate understanding of the data.

The initial phase of analysis involved open coding, where participants' responses were coded without any preconceived notions or biases. The interview text was then divided into meaning units, extracting their hidden meaning. The meaning units were abstracted and assigned codes. These primary codes were further organized into subcategories and main categories based on similarities and differences. Finally, the main categories were identified through a comparison of the categories and a deep reflection on the content embedded in the data. Moreover, data analysis was conducted continuously and simultaneously with the data collection process.

To ensure data trustworthiness, the researchers applied the criteria proposed by Guba and Lincoln (29). By engaging in the research process for a prolonged period, establishing effective interactions with the participants, and collecting accurate information, the researchers aimed to increase data credibility. Dependability was assessed through the repetition of data collection and analysis steps, as well as subject matter expert review and feedback. To enhance confirmability, the researchers sought approval from faculty members and incorporated their additional comments. To enhance transferability, the researchers provided a rich description of the research process, facilitating the evaluation and potential application of the findings in other settings.

Results

The study involved 15 participants, including two

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

No.	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Education level and field of study	Work experience (year)	Position
1	35	Female	Single	M.A. in Nursing	10	Principal
2	34	Male	Married	M.A. in Physical Education	13	Principal
3	26	Male	Married	M.A. in Psychology	12	Teacher
4	38	Female	Married	M.A. in Psychology	12	Teacher
5	35	Female	Married	M.A. in Educational Sciences	13	Teacher
6	24	Male	Single	B.A. in Education for Exceptional Children	3	Teacher
7	42	Female	Married	B.A. in Nursing	15	Teacher
8	34	Female	Married	B.A. in Educational Sciences	11	Teacher
9	32	Female	Single	M.A. in Physiology	13	Occupational Therapist
10	40	Female	Married	M.A. in Psychology	13	Teacher
11	38	Female	Married	M.A. in Islamic Studies	15	Teacher
12	43	Female	Married	B.A. In English Language	20	Teacher
13	28	Female	Single	Diploma	2	Mother's helper
14	23	Female	Married	B.A. in Education for Exceptional Children	4	Teacher
15	127	Male	Single	B.A. in Speech Therapy	1	Speech Therapist

Table 2. Interview guide

Questions
1. Would you describe a typical day at work?
2. What strategies do you employ to communicate with children in a compassionate manner?
3. What steps do you take to address the problems faced by these children?
4. How does the working environment affect compassion?
5. What obstacles have you encountered while trying to show compassion towards these children?
6. What were the outcomes for you and your family as a result of practicing compassion?

principals, one occupational therapist, one speech therapist, one mother's helper, and ten teachers, all of whom worked with children with autism. Among the participants, four were male and the remaining eleven were female. On average, they had 10 years of work experience and were aged between 23 and 43 years.

Through data analysis, two central themes emerged including desperation in an influx of challenges and personal growth amidst adversity (Table 3).

Desperation in an influx of challenges

This central theme was further divided into five main themes: negative mental reflections (reduction of resilience, mental preoccupation, descending beyond disability, depression), a sense of living within physical limitations (encountering a tired body, suffering injuries caused by child attacks), negative job consequences (feelings of regret regarding career choice, educational confusion, leaving the workplace, job dissatisfaction), self-depreciation (feeling unhelpful, feeling guilty due to a lack of efficiency), and inadequate adaptation (inability to accept the situation, inability to control the child).

Negative mental reflections

The demanding work environment had a detrimental impact on the mental well-being of these teachers. Factors such as low managerial support, limited facilities, insufficient knowledge and skills, the characteristics of children with autism, and inadequate support from parents and families contributed to challenging working conditions for teachers.

This main theme was divided into four subthemes including reduction of resilience, mental preoccupation, descending beyond disability, and depression.

"The challenges of my daily work leave me exhausted, making it difficult for me to handle my children's tasks at home. I find it overwhelming to even tolerate the sound of the TV" (Participant 4).

"Upon returning home, the concerns and challenges related to these children persistently occupy my mind. They continuously swirl in my mind, and often, I feel helpless as I am unable to provide the necessary assistance" (Participant 3).

"I regularly think about the future of these children. I often find myself wondering about the potential outcomes if their parents are no longer present to support them" (Participant 10).

"Working with these children can be incredibly

Table 3. Central themes, main themes, and subthemes of the study

Subthemes	Main themes	Central themes
Reduction of resilience		
Mental preoccupation	Negative mental reflections	
Descending beyond disability		
Depression		
Encountering a tired body	A sense of living within physical limitations	
Suffering injuries caused by child attacks		Desperation in an influx of challenges
Feelings of regret regarding career choice		
Educational confusion	Negative job consequences	
Leaving the workplace		
Job dissatisfaction		
Feeling unhelpful	Self-depreciation	
Feeling guilty due to a lack of efficiency		
Inability to accept the situation	Inadequate adaptation	
Inability to control the child		
Utilizing available resources and facilities	Enhanced capabilities	
Using the experience of the peer group		Personal growth amidst adversity
Reduction of ingratitude	Spiritual development	
A firm belief in the existence of a higher power		

challenging. Gradually, it takes a toll on your strength and resilience, until one day you realize that you are unable to carry on" (Participant 5).

"During the initial stages of my career, I experienced a period of depression. Also, we become deeply involved in the lives of the children and their families. Each day, we bear witness to the child's painful journey and lend an ear to the parents' problems" (Participant 9).

A sense of living within physical limitations

Many children with autism exhibit aggressive behaviors, such as biting and hitting. The consequences of this challenging environment were the issues that teachers had to deal with.

This main theme was divided into two subthemes including encountering a tired body and suffering injuries caused by child attacks.

"I was entrusted with a few students, under the belief that I was patient and had the ability to handle them. However, the working conditions proved to be incredibly challenging, to the extent that I was admitted to the CCU on two occasions" (Participant 5).

"I work with aggressive children who frequently bite my hands. As a result, when I return home, my hands are often bruised and injured. My son, upon seeing my hands, becomes upset and exclaims, 'Mom, you got hurt again'" (Participant 7).

Negative job consequences

The educational conditions for children with autism differ significantly from those of their typically developing peers. The presence of students with various physical and mental injuries, multi-grade classes, inadequate support systems, behavioral problems, cultural and financial poverty

within some families, and a lack of necessary resources have created an uneven playing field for teachers.

This main theme was categorized into four subthemes including feelings of regret regarding career choice, educational confusion, leaving the workplace, and job dissatisfaction

"The underlying principle of rehabilitation is to work with individuals facing difficulties and provide them with assistance. However, when I worked with these children and witnessed their limited progress, I began to feel regretful about my choice of profession" (Participant 9).

"I presented a picture of a cow to my student, and she successfully learned its name. We then discussed the cow's food during the class, and by the end, the student comprehended everything. However, the following day, the student referred to the picture of the cow as a 'circle!'" (Participant 6).

"I faced extremely challenging working conditions that took a toll on both my physical and mental well-being. I did not find any joy in my work, which led me to make the decision to return to my previous workplace" (Participant 4).

"I previously held the position of head of an educational group, where I was always seeking new research and staying up-to-date. High school students' expectations from teachers are high, and it is crucial for teachers to be well-informed. However, in my current situation, I feel a sense of stagnation. It seems as though my role mainly revolves around taking care of the children from morning until noon" (Participant 11).

Self-depreciation

This main theme was classified into two subthemes including feeling unhelpful and feeling guilty due to a lack of efficiency.

"The negative feedback I receive from these children drains my energy. When I attempt to teach a child a basic color in the morning, and they fail to grasp it, it feels as though my efforts were in vain" (Participant 14).

"The tangible results of my efforts are not always apparent. There have been moments when I questioned whether I was merely passing time at school. This led to a sense of guilt, even making me doubt whether my income was halal" (Participant 8).

Inadequate adaptation

In certain instances, teachers can become so overwhelmed by environmental challenges that they lose their capacity to effectively cope with stressful situations.

This main theme was categorized into two subthemes including inability to accept the situation and inability to control the child.

"Once, a student had a strong affection for me and often expressed it through hugs. However, one day while I was working, she unexpectedly punched me in the eye, causing my glasses to break. I couldn't help but cry uncontrollably. I knew it was not intentional, but accepting and processing this incident proved to be a

challenging task for me" (Participant 8).

"I pursued a major in psychology, believing that it would equip me to handle this job. However, I found it increasingly difficult to endure the frequent physical assaults. There were instances where I even fainted after being attacked by one of the children" (Participant 4).

Personal growth amidst adversity

This central theme encompassed two main themes including enhanced capabilities (utilizing available resources and facilities, using the experience of the peer group) and spiritual development (reduction of ingratitude, a firm belief in the existence of a higher power).

Enhanced capabilities

Even in the most challenging situations, some teachers remained steadfast and unwavering in their commitment to their goals.

This main theme was divided into two subthemes including utilizing available resources and facilities and using the experience of the peer group.

"The abundance of colors in books often confuses the children. To address this, I utilize educational cards as a teaching tool for certain topics" (Participant 7).

"When a class is assigned to me, I receive information about each student from the previous teacher. This includes guidance on how to handle individual students when they become agitated or disruptive, allowing me to effectively help them calm down" (Participant 14).

Spiritual development

Some teachers underwent an inner transformation that resulted in a shift in their attitude towards their surroundings.

This main theme was categorized into two subthemes including reduction of ingratitude and a firm belief in the existence of a higher power.

"Through my experience of working with these children and witnessing the challenges faced by their families, I have developed a greater sense of gratitude for the blessings bestowed upon me by God. As a result, I find myself complaining less about my own problems" (Participant 10).

"I personally witnessed events that heightened my awareness of God's presence. For instance, there was a day when a swirl roundabout wheel collapsed, yet miraculously, no one was even scratched. This experience solidified my belief in God's will" (Participant 15).

Discussion

The present study explored the outcomes of compassion among teachers working with children with autism. The findings revealed both negative outcomes, such as desperation in an influx of challenges and positive outcomes, including personal growth amidst adversity.

Teachers reported experiencing various physical and mental health issues as a result of their compassionate

work. These findings align with the results of the study by Emery et al., which indicated that special education teachers exhibited higher levels of physical symptoms, anxiety, sleep disorders, and depression (30). These findings are also consistent with the results reported by Huk et al., showing that interactions between children and teachers could lead to physical and mental strain, negatively affecting the teachers' overall health (31). Similarly, Taresh et al. demonstrated that teachers working in schools with children with autism experienced higher levels of work pressure compared to their counterparts in regular schools, contributing to the development of psychosomatic illnesses (32). Due to the nature of their disease and the social and communication problems they have, children with autism need trained teachers with special skills. Nevertheless, the lack of specialized training among teachers in the present study led to teacher burnout.

Another issue highlighted by teachers was the burden of constant mental preoccupation, leading to a distressing internal conflict related to the problems faced by children and their families. This experience aligns with the findings reported by Indriasari who observed similar behavioral patterns in mothers of children with intellectual disabilities, and suggested that such preoccupations can result in a pessimistic outlook on life and hinder problem-solving abilities (33). The slow progress of children with intellectual disabilities, similar to that of children with autism, likely exacerbates the difficulties faced by both teachers and families.

Furthermore, teachers expressed a sense of descending beyond their capabilities. Similarly, Al Barmawi et al. referred to a psychological syndrome known as 'emotional exhaustion', characterized by feeling emotionally drained, which was witnessed among nurses who interacted with injured individuals (18). Both this study and the present study involved participants facing hard working conditions. The tensions of managing patients in critical conditions and the unpredictability of some incidents in the hospital shared similarities with the conditions of teachers of children with autism.

The findings regarding negative mental reflections and the experience of living in a situation with physical limitations align with Figley's theoretical framework, which identified symptoms of compassion fatigue such as sleep disorders, lack of concentration, irritability, and reduced resilience (34). Jo et al. also mentioned mental health problems, including depression, as symptoms of compassion fatigue (35). Barton et al. suggested that teachers, particularly those invested in the success of exceptional students, may experience distress similar to other human service professionals, such as nurses (22).

Therefore, teachers require practical training to learn how to regulate the extent and intensity of their emotional connection with students. They also need to acquire skills in self-care and mindfulness. Besides, relevant institutions must plan and implement effective psychological training workshops to address these needs.

Another issue highlighted by the participants was the negative consequences associated with their jobs. This finding aligns with those of the study by Pazim, which revealed low levels of job satisfaction among male teachers in exceptional schools (36). It is also consistent with Kasalak et al.'s study reporting higher job satisfaction among teachers of typical students compared to teachers of students with intellectual disabilities (37).

Lessner et al. highlighted the stressful conditions faced by teachers of children with autism, noting that insufficient training on autism spectrum disorder often leaves these teachers lacking the necessary skills to effectively enhance their students' learning. This knowledge gap might contribute to feelings of hopelessness among teachers (38). Such feelings could explain some of the issues raised by participants, such as educational confusion, diminished professional enjoyment, and a sense of career stagnation. The frequent use of the term "babysitting" by teachers, which implies a lack of educational responsibility, illustrates the challenges they faced in perceiving opportunities for professional development negatively impacted their job satisfaction.

Fute et al. argued that the absence of effective resources exacerbates compassion fatigue. One contributing factor was the lack of knowledge among teachers regarding their specific fields, which falls under the category of personal resources (39). Ziaian-Ghafari et al.'s study involving teachers in exceptional schools also highlighted the limited resources available to support success as factors contributing to compassion fatigue (24). This suggests that officials should prioritize addressing the educational needs of teachers in terms of knowledge and skills related to interacting with children with autism. In addition, revising academic curricula for exceptional teacher education can help enrich content and better prepare teachers for their roles.

Participants in the study also expressed feeling unhelpful and guilty due to a perceived lack of efficiency. These experiences align with the findings of the study by Ziaian-Ghafari et al., in which teachers expressed a sense of ineffectiveness in adequately supporting the academic and socioemotional needs of their students. The researchers concluded that the negative outcomes of their efforts contributed to the development of feelings associated with compassion fatigue (24). Fute et al. also highlighted the lack of positive feedback as a factor exacerbating compassion fatigue (39). This issue can be attributed to the inherent characteristics of autism spectrum disorder. Children with autism often resist new experiences and interventions, making it challenging for teachers to witness proportional progress in their students. Consequently, this can lead to feelings of inadequacy among teachers (32).

Another significant finding was the inability to accept the challenging situations encountered by teachers. Similarly, the results of the study by Payne demonstrated that exceptional school teachers scored significantly higher than their counterparts in regular schools

regarding reactions to failure and feelings of helplessness toward change (40). Ormiston et al. also discovered the concept of “loss of control” during interviews with exceptional school teachers, which they described as consistent with the conceptual definition of compassion fatigue. According to their findings, compassion fatigue can manifest suddenly and strongly, leading to symptoms such as helplessness and disorientation (23). A possible explanation for this phenomenon can be found in Bjorklund et al.’s study, positing that a person’s beliefs and thoughts play a crucial role in shaping their behavior. Accordingly, one’s behavior is not directly determined by an activating incident, but rather by the beliefs and thoughts that intervene between the incident and the individual’s response (41). Therefore, such behaviors are rooted in the beliefs held by teachers.

Despite these challenges, some teachers approached their work with a positive mindset, actively seeking to enhance their knowledge and experience, even with limited resources and support from colleagues. The personality traits of these teachers, referred to as psychological capital, include commitment and a strong drive to succeed in their work. Such individuals view challenges as opportunities for personal growth (42). This aligns with the findings of Oliver-Kerrigan et al.’s study, which highlighted the positive outcomes of utilizing the support of experienced colleagues (43).

Furthermore, Ozcetin et al. found that resilience plays a significant role in enabling mothers of children with disabilities to enhance their performance and overcome challenges (44). Besides, optimism allows individuals to evaluate stressful situations from a more positive perspective and fosters a greater belief in their ability to solve problems. This component has also been shown to positively impact the lives of mothers with disabled children (45).

Conclusion

The frequent negative experiences reported by teachers working with children with autism in this study indicate that these teachers are significantly susceptible to compassion fatigue. However, a few teachers have managed to grow and thrive despite challenging working conditions, thanks to their positive personality traits. These findings underscore the importance of implementing structured planning to provide training courses aimed at promoting the well-being of these teachers. Moreover, the results highlight the need to review the selection criteria for teachers in special education centers to ensure that individuals with the necessary qualities and high resilience are chosen for these roles.

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Competing Interests

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval

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