

# **Social stigma and its relationship to social and psychological stress among families of mentally disabled: a comparative study between Saudi and Egyptian societies**

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## Abstract

The study aimed to determine the level of feelings of social stigma, and its relationship with stress, among families of the mentally disabled. It also aimed to determine the differences in feelings of social stigma and stress in Saudi and Egyptian societies, a descriptive study was conducted using a Scale of a non-probability snowball sampling technique. A sample of (109), in Egypt (59) and Saudi Arabia (50). The results of the study indicated that the level of feeling of social stigma in the sample was Moderate, while it was weak in the Saudi sample, and Moderate in the Egyptian sample. and also indicated that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between a social stigma and both social stress, psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in the sample, in addition to the presence of statistically significant differences between Saudi Arabia and Egypt in the feeling of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress and all of them In favor of Egypt, The results indicated that there is a poor statistically significant relationship between feelings of social stigma, stress, and some demographic characteristics of the disabled in both Saudi and Egyptian samples.

**Keywords:** *social stigma, social stress, psychological stress.*

## Introduction

Disability is one of the phenomena The familiar, and hardly a society is devoid of them and received attention from societies, institutions, and international organizations, and in the last years of this century, an international agreement emerged to erase any terms about mental retardation. or mental deficiency or mental subnormal weakness, the more recent term is the mentally disabled, as it expresses a positive trend in the perception of this category (Mutually, 2015, p. 9).

Although the concept of the mentally disabled is used as a modern concept that expresses the positive trend in the perception of this category, the view of the society members for the mentally disabled is still some of them are characterized by the negativity that transmits and affects the behavior and feelings of the disabled.

The societal view of these individuals has evolved through stages ranging from misunderstanding associated with either the use of violence, contempt, or exclusion, to isolation in residential institutions to satisfy their primary needs, to the recognition of their rights to all types of care, to the adoption of a new philosophy based on integration and the provision of opportunities for normal daily lives

that are available to ordinary people, and to participate in its activities, allowing them to develop and invest what they have in light of environmental conditions characterized by the least possible psychological and social restrictions and limitations (Al-Quraiti, 2005, p. 12).

But it seems that the integration of the disabled person within the community and his interaction with the surrounding individuals to practice various activities results in many interactions that may vary in quality between negative or positive on the part of the members of society. and affect negatively or positively on the degree of his integration or withdrawal from society.

This was confirmed by a study Ali, Zeitoun, and Nagy, (2014), which found that social security workers abused beneficiaries in some social units, while in other units the treatment was good, which led to a decrease in the negative feelings of the beneficiaries.

The disabled person does not suffer from a disability as much as he suffers from the view of the surrounding society. When he receives looks of sympathy, disgust, or contempt from those around him, this affects his self-adaptation in accepting his disability (Ali, 2000, p. 249: 250).

but if the disabled person realizes the acceptance of others, he accepts them and works to gain their approval (Al-Sharqawi, 2015, p. 3).

This is explained by the ecological perspective, as the interaction between the organism and the environment causes both of them to change, and the best interactions are those that allow the growth and development of the individual (Elizabeth, and others, 2002, p. 22: 23).

The study of Abdat, (2007), indicated that the presence of a disabled child in the family affects the external and internal relations of its members, and this effect results in many negative feelings.

The level of negative feelings experienced by the families of the mentally disabled is related to the society's view and the way it deals with this group and their families, which differ from one society to another due to the different culture of the society and its capabilities and the degree of attention and care provided to them.

The study Datta, (2002), indicated that family care for mentally disabled, children is often associated with feelings of embarrassment. The family was embarrassed it was not related to the level of disability but was related to the caregiver's cognitive assessment of the child's condition.

It seems that the environment plays a key role in what a disabled person can be in terms of his self-acceptance, the extent of

his ability to rely on himself, adapt to his capabilities, and be compatible with the members of his community in which he lives, as the environment with its human and material elements and the processes that occur in it morale that affects, in one way or another, the extent of his self -acceptance, the practice of his life affairs, and the normal practice of his roles (Ismail, 2006, p. 20).

A mental disability among one of its members, and depends on the extent of the family's knowledge of the disability and the needs of the disabled and ways to deal with it, as well as the customs and traditions of the community.

This was confirmed by a study Al-Baili, (2013), which concluded that families' lack of awareness of the basic requirements for caring for children, and lack of skills and knowledge of the child's natural growth characteristics, led them to not realize that there is a disability in the child, parents did not accept the idea of disability in the child and the use of punishment excessive behavior as a means of modifying a child's behavior, and customs and traditions are a major factor in the family's denial of recognition of a child's disability as a stigma.

This feeling of stigma leads to avoiding living, avoiding social interaction, and avoiding working with people with mental disabilities, especially severe mental disabilities. The stigma stands in the way of seeking health care and leads in its greatest degree to discrimination, abuse, and humiliation, and it stands in the way of the full participation of the disabled in society (Report of senior physicians, department of health and human services, 2000. Quoted by al-Ghanim, 2001. P. 79).

Social stigma is the strong rejection of a person or group of people distinguished by the majority so that a specific person or more is marked by it and distinguished from the rest of the community, and social stigma can cause the existence of prevailing beliefs and concepts about a disease, phenomenon, or individual or collective behavior (AlSherbini, 2018, p. 6).

The severity of the stigma varies according to several dimensions, including the degree of disturbance, aesthetic characteristics, cause or origin, changes over time, the degree of potential danger to others, and the ability to hide it (Green. G. 2009. P 15).

Mental disability is one of the social phenomena in which many negative beliefs and concepts may prevail on the part of members of society, and which the disabled and his family may be

aware of, and this may be due to lack of awareness of disability, its causes, and ways of dealing with the disabled.

The results of previous studies differed about the level of stress for families of the mentally disabled, between high, moderate, and weak, and this may be due to the different nature of the society in which it was applied, its culture, and the level of its interest in the category of mentally disabled in society.

A study Rayner, (2007), indicated that families with a disabled child are exposed to higher levels of stress compared to families with normal children.

While the study Al-Aqnam, (2021), indicated that mothers of children with mental disabilities had a moderate level of social stress. The study Al-Essa, (2017), indicated a weak level of psychological stress among parents of children with mental disabilities.

Among the stress that the family is exposed to is the bitter feeling of embarrassment, sensitivity, and discomfort in social situations and occasions as a result of the noticeable divergence between the level of performance of the disabled child and the performance of his ordinary peers, in addition to the negative impressions of his condition on friends and acquaintances, which leads the parents to avoid these situations and occasions, so he's feeling increases loneliness, isolation, and frustration (Al-Quraiti, 2005, p. 278).

As indicated by a study Baxter, (1989), the stress faced by parents of mentally disabled children resulting from social situations, including stress related to the child's speech and behavior, and behavior management problems, as they are closely related to parental stress. It also is a stress factor. The study also referred to painful reactions from others, such as Staring and showing inappropriate discomfort, ignoring the child, and drawing attention to him are also stress factors.

As indicated by a study Abdul Aziz, (2012), that exposes families of the mentally disabled too much psychological stress, whether at the level of internal social relations (between the disabled and his brothers and sisters, or between the couple) or the level of external social relations (with relatives, friends, and neighbors).

This can be explained in the light of the ecological perspective, with the effect of the family as a system on the society in which it lives as a larger system than it, Including culture, people, and services.

It is clear from the previous presentation the different level and manifestations of social and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled, which may be due to the different culture of each society, and by highlighting the Saudi and Egyptian societies, the study Al-Aqnam, (2021), and Al-Essa, (2017), indicated the moderate and weak level of stress on Saudi families, while Al-Quraiti, (2005), explained that Egyptian families experience a bitter feeling of embarrassment and sensitivity.

The researcher adopts the ecological perspective as her guide in this study, as the mentally disabled family You live within the framework of the community system, and the affected by it and affected by it, and therefore the community with all its individuals, culture, services and care And the attention that has an impact on the family, the more positive the aspects of care and attention to the disabled and the more services he and his family need, the more positively this is reflected on him and his family and the extent to which they feel a social stigma, and stress.

Based on the foregoing, the study problem was identified in the following questions:

What is the relationship between the feeling of social stigma and stress among the families of the mentally disabled? What are the differences between the Saudi and Egyptian societies in the relationship between social stigma and stress?

**Objectives:**

- 1- Determining the level of : feelings of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- 2- Determining the relationship between feelings of social stigma, and social stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- 3- Determining the relationship between feelings of social stigma, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- 4- Determining the differences in feelings of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in Saudi and Egyptian society.
- 5- Determining the relationship between the personal and family variables of the disabled child and the feeling of social stigma, and stress.

**Concepts:****social stigma:**

Social stigma is a characteristic that denigrates a person or people in the eyes of others (Mason, 2001, p 2).

It is also defined as the negative perceptions and behaviors of ordinary people of individuals who are different from them (Robert, 2015, p 1).

A Stigma is the social rejection of a person or group of people as a result of social reasons characteristic of the majority so that one or more specific people is marked by it and distinguished from others in the community (El-Sherbiny, 2018. P. 6).

It is also defined as the prejudice and discrimination experienced by individuals who have relatives with mental disabled. (Larson, 2008, p 90).

It is also defined as any negative characteristic given to an individual, group of individuals, or societies, directly or indirectly, which leads to their belittling or contempt. (Wadany, 2020, 407).

Social stigma in this research means the behavioral indicators that appear on the mentally disabled family as a result of undesirable names being attached to one of its members by those around them. It is measured through the degree of the social stigma dimension on the Scale of the social stigma, the social stress, and psychological stress of families of the mentally disabled.

**Social stress:**

Social stress is those internal or external changes that an individual goes through, causing him disturbances, anxiety, and tension that hinder the serenity of his daily life and make him feel stressed (Al- Dhafiri, 2015, p. 359).

It is the interaction of a group of internal and external forces and influences, the extent of the individual's awareness and response to them, and the resulting psychological and behavioral effects and threats that affect the life of the family (El-Sherbiny, 2020, p. 310).

And social stress in this research means the social symptoms that the mentally disabled family suffers from as a result of one of their children suffering from a mental disability. It is represented in changing the internal and external social roles and relationships of the family, and it is measured through the degree of the social stress dimension on the Scale of the social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress for families of the mentally disabled.

### **Psychological stress:**

Psychological stress is defined as a state of imbalance caused by the individual's exposure to bad psychological emotions characterized by tension, anxiety, distress, and exhausting thinking about the events of his life, which results in harmful physiological disorders (Zaidi, 2021, p. 16).

It is defined as an imbalance perceived by the individual between the demands of reality and his personal capabilities, which occurs as a result of internal or external changes (Ramoul, 2020, p. 20).

It is also known as stressful external factors and internal reactions of the individual to this stress, which makes the individual feel tense and unbalanced (Somaya, 2020, p. 20).

Psychological stress in this research means the psychological symptoms that the mentally disabled family suffers from as a result of one of their children being mentally disabled. As a result of the increase in external demands in a way that exceeds the personal capabilities of the mentally disabled family, it is measured through the special degree of the psychological stress dimension on the Scale of the social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress for the families of the mentally disabled.

### **Methodology**

#### **Study Design**

In this study, the researcher relied on the descriptive method, to describe the relationship between feelings of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

#### **Hypotheses**

- 1- There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between the feeling of social stigma, and the social stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- 2- There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between the feeling of social stigma, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- 3- There are no statistically significant differences in social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in Saudi and Egyptian society.
- 4- There is a statistically significant relationship between the personal and family variables of the disabled child and the feeling of social stigma and social and psychological stress.

## Sample

The study relied on the non-probabilistic sampling method (snowball), where (109) answers were received from families of the mentally disabled, the sample included (50) in Saudi Arabia (59) in Egypt, from the following institutions: (International Rehabilitation Team Center) in Saudi Arabia, and (Yes I Can institution - Al Basma institution - Hikayat institution - Tomooh institution - Al Amal Center- Social Rehabilitation institution for the Disabled - Women's Association – Teach Center) in Egypt.

The reason for applying the study in these institutions was the acceptance of the officials in these institutions to apply the scale and help in that, as many other institutions were contacted, but there was no response.

The selection of the study sample was according to the following conditions:

- Agreeing to cooperate with the researcher in the data collection process.
- The disabled person should be receiving services from a mentally disabled care institution.
- The person taking care of him should be a member of his family (mother, father, sisters or brother).
- The family must be Saudi or Egyptian.

Officials in the aforementioned institutions were contacted, and A link to a Scale was sent to be filled out from families who receive care services from these institutions, In the introductory section, the objective of the study was explained, the confidentiality of data was confirmed, it was also confirmed that there are no questions through which the participant's identity may be revealed. Freedom to participate was also ensured by choosing either to "accept" or "refuse" to participate in the study.

### **Data collection:**

The study was applied in the period from (15-6-2021): (24-12-2021), During this period, the communication of the sample members (families of the mentally disabled) with the institution was through remote communication without hesitation to the institution, as some families did not have the ability to technically communicate with the institution, which caused the difficulty of collecting data greatly, Therefore, the number that was responded to fill in the scale was 109 families.

**The characteristics of the study sample:**  
the characteristics of the study sample (1)Table

Personal and family characteristics		Saudi sample 50 =n		Egypt =sample n 59		The sample n=109	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Disabled characteristics							
Gender	Male	24	%48	33	%55.9	57	%52.3
	female	26	%52	26	%44.1	52	%47.7
Age	6Less than			15	%25.4	15	%13.8
	6 -	27	%54	20	%33.9	47	%43.1
	12 -	10	%20	18	%30.5	28	%25.7
	18 -	13	%26	6	%10.2	19	%17.4
Number of brothers	(single)none	4	%8	9	%15.3	13	%11.9
	1-3	18	%36	39	%66.1	57	%52.3
	4-6	18	%36	11	%18.6	29	%26.6
	7 +	10	%20			10	%9.2
Ranking among brothers	(single)none	4	%8	9	%15.3	13	%11.9
	the first	6	%12	13	%22.0	19	%17.4
	the center	16	%32	19	%32.2	35	%32.1
	the last one	24	%48	18	%30.5	42	%38.5
Guardian characteristics							
Relationship with a disabled	Father	7	%14	6	%10.2	13	%11.9
	Mother	39	%78	48	%81.4	87	%79.8
	Big brother or sister	4	%8	5	%8.5	9	%8.3
Age	30under	3	%6	7	%11.9	10	%9.2
	30-	4	%8	14	%23.7	18	%16.5
	35-	7	%14	14	%23.7	21	%19.3
	40 +	36	%72	24	%40.7	60	%55.0
Educational status	illiterate	1	%2	8	%13.6	9	%8.3
	Primary	3	%6	1	%1.7	4	%3.7
	Preparatory/high school	19	38%	27	%45.8	46	%42.3
	university	24	%48	18	%30.5	42	%38.5
	Higher studies	3	%6	5	%8.5	8	%7.3
Status-Job	Have a job	15	%30	30	%50.8	45	%41.3
	Don't have a job	35	%70	29	%49.2	64	%58.7

Table (I) shows the personal and family characteristics of the study sample, where the percentage of males in the Saudi society was (48%), and the percentage of females was (52%), while in the Egyptian society the percentage of males was (55.9%) and the percentage of females was (44.1%), and therefore the percentage of

females was (44.1%), and therefore the percentage of Males in the study sampling (52.3%), and the percentage of females (47.7%).

Distribution of the study sample according to the age of the disabled child, The largest percentage was among the children whose ages ranged from 6 to less than 12, with a percentage of (54%) from the Saudi sample, and (33.9%) from the Egyptian sample, and therefore it was (43.1%) for the sampling.

distribution of the study sample according to the number of brothers It was the largest For brothers from 1 to 3, and from 4 to 6, their percentage were equal in the Saudi sample, 36% for each, while it was 66.1% and 18.1%, respectively, in the Egyptian sample, and therefore in the sampling, the number of brothers from 1 to 3 was 52.3 %, followed by 4 to 6 by 26.6%.

distribution of the study sample according to the Ranking The disabled child among his brothers had the largest percentage of the last one of the child by 48%, 30.5% of the sample of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, respectively, and therefore the last one of the disabled child among his brothers represented the largest percentage in the sampling by 38.5%.

Concerning the distribution of the study sample according to the relationship of the Guardian with the disabled child, the largest percentage in both the Saudi and Egyptian samples was the mother with a percentage 78%, and 81.4 %, respectively, and thus it was 79.8% for the sampling.

distribution of the study sample according to the age of the guardian based on caring for the disabled child, the largest percentage was in the Saudi and Egyptian samples of 40 years and over, at 72% and 40.7%, respectively, and consequently, it was at 55% for the sampling.

distribution of the study sample according to the level of education of the guardian based on the care of the disabled child, the largest percentage was in the Saudi sample of university education by 48%, while in the Egyptian sample the largest percentage was for the level of Preparatory/high school education by 45.8%, and therefore the largest percentage in the sampling guardian's university education level by 38.5%.

Distribution of the study sample according to the job status of the guardian, The largest percentage in the Saudi sample was for those who did not have a job at 70%, while in the Egyptian sample the largest percentage was 50.8% with a job, and therefore the largest percentage for the sampling as was 58.7% without a job.

**Measurement:**

The current study relied on a Scale to measure the level of social stigma, the level of social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled.

**Steps of constructing the Scale:**

In constructing the Scale, the researcher relied on the following steps:

- Reviewing the theoretical framework and previous studies on social stigma, and stress among families of the mentally disabled.
- Using a set of scales and questionnaires related to the field to form the items of this Scale, such as: Abadat, (2007), Al-Haw, (2015), Ahmed, (2016), Othman, (2009).
- The Scale consisted of two parts:

Part One: Preliminary data on the mentally disabled and his family.  
Part Two: includes the basic dimensions of the Scale, and the items related to each dimension, as the number of items in the Scale was (31) items, and it consisted of three dimensions, as follows:

- the first dimension: the feeling of social stigma among families of the mentally disabled, and it consists of (15) items.
- the second dimension: social stress for families of the mentally disabled, and it consists of (8) items.
- the third dimension: the psychological stress of families of the mentally disabled, and it consists of (8) items.

**Rating and interpretation of the score:**

the answer was made to the Scale in light of the triple gradient, all responses are corrected in the positive direction.

the following table the maximum and minimum degree for each dimension, as well as the classification of each dimension into three categories in light of the grades obtained by the respondent. the degrees of social stigma (2)Table , social stress, and psychological stress for families of the mentally disabled.

Domain	No. items	Maximum score	Minimum score	Average	Class length	Interpretation of the score		
						weak	Moderate	High
stigma social	15	45	15	30	10	15-25	26-36	37-45
social stress	8	24	8	16	5.3	8-13	13.4-18.7	18.8-24
Psychological stress	8	24	8	16	5.3	8-13	13.4-18.7	18.8-24

The validity and reliability of the Scale of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress for families of the mentally disabled are as follows:

**Content validity:** The Scale was presented to three academics specializing in social work to express their opinion on the items' phrasing and the relevance of each item to the dimension to which it belongs, made the Scale out of the items agreed upon by the specialists, and some modifications were made in the phrasing.

**Internal construction:** The researcher calculated the correlation coefficient between the degree of each item of the Scale and the total dimension to which it belongs, by applying to a sample of families of the mentally disabled (n=35) from the same study community.

**Table (3) the correlation between items of the Scale and the score of dimensions (n= 35)**

social stigma				Social stress		Psychological stress	
No. Items	Correlation	No. Items	Correlation	No. Items	Correlation	No. Items	Correlation
1	**0.789	9	**0.588	1	**0.853	1	**0.809
2	**0.637	10	**0.605	2	**0.808	2	**0.450
3	**0.604	11	**0.654	3	**0.679	3	**0.703
4	**0.622	12	**0.688	4	**0.775	4	*0.396
5	**0.759	13	**0.731	5	**0.870	5	**0.852
6	**0.681	14	**0.545	6	**0.753	6	**0.638
7	**0.819	15	**0.462	7	**0.808	7	**0.760
8	*0.415			8	**0.869	8	**0.839
** 0.01Significant correlation at				* 0.05Significant correlation at			

Table (3) shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between each item of the Scale and the dimension to which it belongs.

**Cronbach's Alpha and half-split:** To calculate the reliability of the Scale the researcher relied on Cronbach's Alpha and the split-half method using the (Spearman-Brown) formula, by applying to a sample of families of the mentally disabled (n=35) from the same study sample.

**Table (4) The reliability of the Scale (n= 35)**

Domain	No. items	s Alpha'Cronbach	Correlation
social stigma	15	0.894	0.882
social stress	8	0.919	0.907
Psychological stress	8	0.846	0.895

Tables (3) and (4) illustrate the high degree of validity and reliability of the Scale. Thus, it can be applied in the study.

**Results:**

Descriptive statistics for the study variables (5) Table (social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress) among the sample

Sample	Domain	Means	SD	Median	Level
Saudi sample 50 =n	social stigma	22.22	5.73	21	weak
	social stress	12.7	4.09	12	weak
	Psychological stress	13.18	3.46	12	weak
Egypt sample 59 =n	social stigma	30.27	6.18	30	Moderate
	social stress	19.66	3.49	20	High
	sPsychological stres	19.03	2.88	19	High
the sample 109 =n	social stigma	26.58	7.18	25	Moderate
	social stress	16.47	5.13	16	Moderate
	Psychological stress	16.35	4.3	16	Moderate

Table (5) shows the following:

the feeling of social stigma :First, the social stress, and psychological stress of families of the mentally disabled in the sampling, they were all at the Moderate where the average ,level scores on the, Scale for social (16.47) ,for social stigma (26.58)were stress andessfor psychological str (16.35)

the feeling of social stigma :Second, the social stress, and psychological stress of families of the mentally disabled in the Saudi as the average scores on the ,they were all at the weak level ,sample Scale for social (12.7) ,for social stigma (22.22)were stress, and (13.18) for psychological stress.

the feeling of social stigma :Third, the social stress, and psychological stress of families of the mentally disabled in the was in the ,Egyptian sample Moderate g social stigma level of feelin while it was at the high level of both social ,(30.27)with an average of stressand psychological ,(19.66)with an average of stresswith an (19.3)average of

The difference in the level of feeling social stigma, and stress, tween both societies may be due to the different nature and culturebe of each society and the availability of social services to care for the as well as to the ,mentally disabled and their families in each society y and help it integrate withextent of society’s interest in this categor which explains the weak level of stigma As well as ,the environment in the social stress, and psychological stress ,in the Saudi society which may be due to the level of availability of services for the

which may be to a ,and attention to them ,disabled and his family where the feeling of stigma ,greater degree than the Egyptian society was at the Moderate while both ,level social stress and psychological stress which may be due to the lack of ,were at the high level ty of servicesavailabili.

The relationship between social stigma (6) Table, social stress, and psychological stress for families of the mentally disabled

Variables	social stigma		
	Saudi sample (50 =n )	Egypt sample (59 =n )	The sample (109 =n )
social stress	**0.718	**0.638	**0.789
Psychological stress	**0.598	**0.658	**0.760
total family stress	**0.701	**0.702	**0.804
* * Statistically significant at the level of 0.01significance	Statistically significant at a * 0.5significance level of		

Table (6) shows the following: There is a positive relationship with between social (0.01)statistical significance at a significant level and each of the( 0.701 )stigma and stress with a correlation value stresses psychological ,( 0.718 )social stress with a correlation value with a correlation value(0.598), with a sample Saudi Arabia .

statistically significant relationship at a ,There is a positive between social stigma (0.5)significant level , and stress with a (0.702)Correlation value , and ocial stress with a each of the s psychological stress with a correlation value ,(0.638)correlation value (0.658), with the Egypt sample.

statistically significant relationship at a ,There is a positive ss with abetween social stigma and stre (0.5)significant level (0.804) correlation value) and each of the social stress with a (0.789)correlation value of , Psychological stress a Correlation value (0.760), for the sample.

indicated that the first (6) The results of the previous table which is ,the study was accepted hypothesis of "There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between the feeling of social stigma, and social stress among families of the mentally disabled", also indicated the acceptance of the second hypothesis of the study, which is "There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between the feeling of social stigma, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled".

the significance of differences in social stigma (7) Table, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled according to the country

Domains	the country	No.	Means	SD	Mean difference	T	Sig
social stigma	Saudi Arabia	50	22.22	5.73	8.05	7.010	0.01
	Egypt	59	30.27	6.18			
social stress	udi ArabiaSa	50	12.7	4.09	6.96	9.584	0.01
	Egypt	59	19.66	3.49			
Psychological stress	Saudi Arabia	50	13.18	3.46	5.85	9.642	0.01
	Egypt	59	19.03	2.88			

It is clear from the table (7) that there are statistically significant differences between Saudi Arabia and Egypt at the 0.01 level of significance. The t-value was -8.05 and the average difference was (7.010) for social stigma, where the t-value was -6.96 and the average difference was (9.584) for social stress, and the t-value was -9.642 and the average difference was (5.85) for psychological stress, where the t-value was -9.642 and the average difference was (5.85) for psychological stress.

The results of the previous table indicated the rejection of the second hypothesis of the study "There are no statistically significant differences in social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in Saudi and Egyptian society".

the relationship between social stigma (8) Table, social stress, and psychological stress and disabled families for characteristics

Variables	gender			Age			number of brothers			Ranking among brothers		
	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample
social stigma	0.049	0.199	0.044	0.007	0.253	0.022	0.094	0.147	0.126	0.156	0.019	0.063
social stress	0.140	0.053	0.073	0.178	0.264	0.110	0.037	0.233	0.154	0.144	0.143	0.080
Psychological stress	0.080	0.304*	0.019	0.183	0.298	0.097	0.070	0.164	0.182	0.21	0.024	0.135

level of significance .05 Significant at \*

Table (8) shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between the feeling of stigma, stress among families of the mentally disabled, and the personal characteristics of the disabled, whether in the Saudi sample or the Egypt sample, with the exception of a weak relationship (0.304), but it is statistically significant at the level of significance 0.05 between psychological stress and gender as It increases in the event that the disabled is female, and there is a relationship between social stress, and psychological stress and the age of the disabled, which is also weak (0.264) and (0.298), and statistically significant at the level of significance 0.05. The relationship indicates that the higher the age of the disabled, the greater the social stress, and psychological stress for the disabled family, in a sample of Egypt.

the relationship between social stigma (9) Table, social stress, and psychological stress and the guardian's characteristics

Variables	Relationship with the disabled			Age			education status			status-Job		
	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample	Saudi Arabia	Egypt	The sample
social stigma	0.008-	0.174-	0.018-	0.080-	0.108	0.176-	0.065-	0.126-	0.179-	0.014	0.038	0.138
social stress	0.059	0.148-	0.013	0.049-	0.181	*0.232-	0.049-	0.214	*0.244-	0.062-	0.075-	0.065
Psychological stress	0.153-	0.308-	0.120-	0.272-	0.228	*0.220-	0.272-	0.129-	**0.280	*0.310-	0.015-	0.027
significance level .01D at **						level of significance .05Significant at *						

Table (9) shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between the feeling of stigma, stress for the families of the disabled, and the personal characteristics of the guardian of the disabled, whether in the Saudi sample or the Egypt sample, except for the presence of weak relationships (0.310), but it is statistically significant at the level of significance 0.05 between psychological stress and Job-status, where It increases if the guardian has a job in the Saudi sample, and there is a relationship between social stress, and psychological stress and each of the guardian's age (-0.232) (-0.220), as well as the education level (-0.244) (-0.280), which is also weak and statistically significant at the level of Significance of 0.05 and 0.001, and the relationship indicates that the higher the guardian's age, the less the feeling of social and psychological stress, and the greater the feeling of social stress, and psychological stress with the low level of the guardian's education, in the study sampling.

The results of the previous two tables (8) and (9) indicated that the third hypothesis of the study was partially accepted, which is "there is a statistically significant relationship between the personal and family variables of the disabled child and the feeling of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress".

### **Discussion**

The study reached a set of results as follows:

**the level of feeling social stigma:** the results indicated that the level of feeling social stigma in the sampling was at the moderate level, where the feeling of social stigma in the Saudi society was at the weak level, while it was at the moderate level in the Egyptian society.

this is consistent with the study Jahoda, (1988), the study Green, (2003), and the study Larson, (2008), which indicated that the disabled and his family feel social stigma.

**the level of feeling of social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled:** the results indicated that the social stress, and psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled in the sample was at a moderate level, which is consistent with the study Al-Aqnam, (2021), which indicated that the level of social stress among mothers of children with Mental disability was moderate, and it differs with Rayner, (2007), and Al-Essa, (2017), study, where the first indicated a high level of stress among families of disabled children, and the second indicated a weak level of psychological stress among families of the mentally disabled.

While the social stress, and psychological stress in the Saudi society was at a weak level, which is consistent with the study Al-Essa, (2017), which indicated a weak level of psychological stress in families, and it differs from the study Al-Aqnam, (2021), and the study Rayner, (2007), where the first indicated that the level of social stress was moderate, and the second indicated a high level of social stress.

In Egyptian society, the social stress, and psychological stress were at a high level, which is consistent with the study Rayner, (2007), which indicated a high level of social stress, and it differs from the study Al-Aqnam, (2021), and the study Al-Essa, (2017), where the first referred to the moderate level of social stress, and the second indicated a weak level of psychological stress among families of people with mental disabilities.

### **the relationship between social stigma and stress for families of the mentally disabled:**

The results of the study indicated that there is a positive, statistically significant relationship between social stigma and the stress among families of mentally disabled, in a sample of Saudi society, Egyptian society, and the study sampling.

This is explained by the theoretical framework on which the study relied, where the ecological perspective indicates that environmental factors may be responsible for the problems and obstacles faced by the client, as the ecological perspective focuses on the environmental scope in which people live and their interaction with their environment. (Al-Nouhi, 2007, p. 87)

This refers to the environmental factors represented in the culture of society, its view of the mentally disabled, and the extent of interest in providing services to him and his family, and their impact on the disabled family, which are affected and effected by him, This explains the results of the study, as the mentally disabled family's feeling of social stigma had an impact on the social stress, and psychological stress the family is exposed to.

**the differences between the Saudi and Egyptian societies in the level of feelings of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress:** The results indicated that there are statistically significant differences between Saudi Arabia and Egypt in terms of feelings of social stigma, social stress, and psychological stress, all in favor of Egypt.

**the relationship between social stigma, stress for families of the disabled and the personal characteristics of the disabled:** the results indicated that there was no statistically significant relationship between the feeling of stigma, and stress among families of the disabled and the personal characteristics of the disabled in both Saudi and Egyptian societies, with the exception of a weak but statistically significant relationship between both From psychological stress and gender, which increases if the disabled is a female, and social stress, psychological stress and the age of the disabled, the higher the age of the disabled, the greater stress of the disabled family, in the Egyptian sample.

This is consistent with the study Al-Balah, (2018), in the aspect of feeling stigma and age, which indicated that there are differences in social stigma in favor of females.

**the relationship between social stigma, the stress of families with disabilities and the personal variables of the guardian based on the care of the disabled child:** the study indicated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the feeling of stigma, stress among families of the mentally disabled and the personal variables of the guardian of the disabled in both Saudi and Egyptian societies, while there are Weak relationships, but they are statistically significant between both psychological stress and job- status, which it increases if the guardian has a job in the Saudi sample, and stress, both the age of the guardian and the level of education, where the stress decreases with the increase in the guardian's age, and increases as the level of education of the guardian decreases, and that in the study sampling.

#### **Limitation:**

The small size of the study sample is due to the difficulty of accessing the sample vocabulary, which resulted from two main reasons:

- 1- The families of the mentally disabled communicated with the institutions through remote communication during the study period.
- 2- sensitivity of this class, and the inability of some families to communicate technically with institutions.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **The study recommends the following:**

- Working with families of the mentally disabled to alleviate their stress.
- Working with the families of the mentally disabled to alleviate the feeling of social stigma.
- Studying the trend towards the mentally disabled from the point of view of society members and its relationship to the demographic characteristics of individuals.
- Studying the rational and irrational ideas associated with mental disability from the perspective of both families and society.

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