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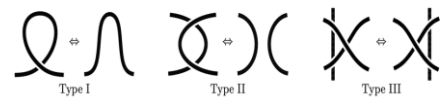
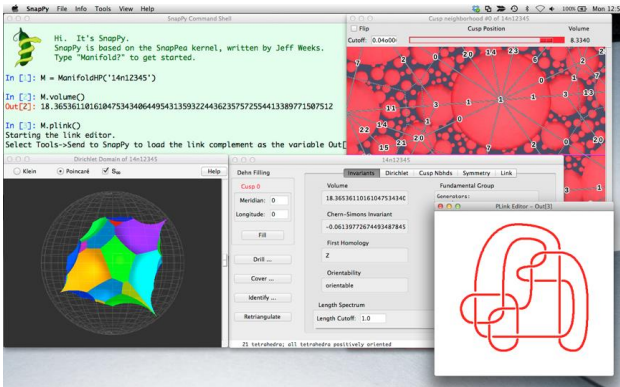
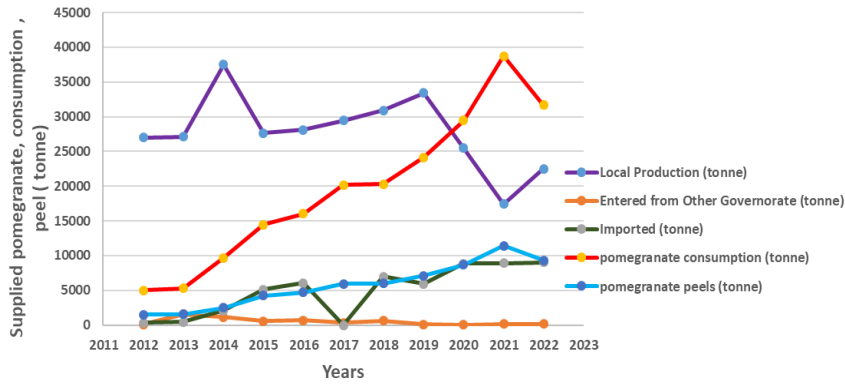
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Public Stigmatization of Mental Illness in Sulaimaniyah City, Iraq

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Abstract

Background: Individuals who have mental illness and other mental health challenges often encounter stigma, discrimination, and significant societal disadvantage. The negative implications and erroneous beliefs associated with mental health disorders may be as damaging as the disorders themselves. Disorders like Schizophrenia can conjure images of aggression and incapacity for self-care.

Objective: To determine the proportion of people who have wrong views of mental illness.

Methods: We designed a 20-question questionnaire that asked people's opinions about people with mental illness. We analyzed the data using statistical approaches, including Cronbach's alpha, to ascertain the final reliability result. Information was gathered from 200 respondents to enhance the accuracy of their responses, yielding a reliability value of 0.892.

Results: Individuals with mental health conditions can encounter significant stigma and prejudice.

Conclusions: Stigma engenders several severe issues for those who have mental illness. The problem originates from the public's insufficient understanding of mental disease.

Introduction

Individuals who have mental illness and other mental health disorders sometimes encounter stigma. The detrimental implications and erroneous beliefs associated with mental health disorders may be as damaging as the conditions themselves. Depression evokes notions of lethargy and substance misuse. The societal stigma restricts opportunities for those with severe mental health disorders. Stigma is a crucial factor in comprehending the progression of disease and its consequences for individuals with mental disorders. The stigmatisation linked to mental health often correlates with worse mental health outcomes and heightened premature death rates. The stigma surrounding mental health is linked to worse results than the mental disease itself. Stigma and prejudice impact individuals with mental health conditions, as well as their friends and family. In poor countries, stigma and shame are more prevalent than in wealthy nations. This results from cultural disparities, insufficient access to health education, and constrained financial resources [1].

Mental health stigma refers to the disgrace, social rejection, or social discrediting of those with mental health issues. Literature delineates many facets of mental health-related stigma, including self-stigma, public stigma, professional stigma, and institutional stigma. Self-stigma refers to an individual's poor views towards their mental illness, often known as internalised stigma. Self-stigma has been associated with adverse outcomes, including barriers to treatment access, disempowerment, diminished self-efficacy, and a decline in

quality of life. Public stigma denotes the unfavourable perceptions of individuals with mental illness held by society at large [2,3] and is often rooted in misunderstandings, fear, and bias. Perceived stigma, along with public stigma, is described as an individual's thoughts about others' attitudes towards mental illness. Research has shown the considerable effect of public stigma, including discrimination in companies and other institutions. Mental illnesses are markedly underdiagnosed, and patients often delay seeking professional assistance owing to the pervasive stigma associated with these conditions. It significantly influences therapy and the overall quality of an impaired existence. Mental disorders are, to some degree, characterised differently from physical disorders. Compared to physical ailments, mental disorders are seen as primarily untreatable, rendering them a lifelong condition [4].

Stigma is described as a branding process associated with social alienation and the rejection of stigmatisation, accompanied by emotions of shame in the affected person. Individuals with mental illnesses are seen as rigid and hazardous, impoverished and less bright, or that mental illnesses stem from personal frailty and are untreatable [5,6]. Stigma may manifest as prejudices and hatred, perhaps resulting in the discrimination of individuals or whole groups. Subsequently, discrimination may be the primary impediment to early diagnosis and treatment of a patient. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of mental health problems and the attitudes towards individuals with such diseases among Sulaimaniyah inhabitants, as well as the prevalence of negative beliefs and worries around mental illnesses in Sulaimaniyah City, Iraq.

Materials and methods

To determine the proportion of people who have wrong views of mental illness, we designed a questionnaire of 20 questions. Then, we started distributing this questionnaire to university students and other people who had different professions; the questions of this questionnaire are all appropriate, which means there is nothing immoral; for example, one of the questions is whether you think people with mental illness are dangerous, and you feel ashamed if you visit psychological clinics. We've also set up age, gender, literacy, and vocational levels to see how much they impact people's thinking. The sample population consisted of 792 students consented to participate in the research. Data were gathered using the Information Form, the Beliefs Towards Mental Illness (BMI) scale, and the Stigma scale over email.

Statistical analysis

All statistical computations are augmented via the statistical software SPSS 24. The data has been encoded, organised, and shown in a descriptive format. The statistical methodology used to ascertain the outcomes of the current investigation comprised Descriptive Statistics (Frequency, Percentage), Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha), Independent Samples T-test, and a Chi-Square Test. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the final reliability outcome. Data from the questionnaire was collected from participants on two occasions to enhance the accuracy of the responses, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.892. The questionnaire responses were reliable.

Results

This section discusses the outcomes of data analysis using statistical techniques, depending on how the sample responded to the following study objectives. The result is (0.892) by the Alpha Cronbach method from 200 samples.

Table (1) shows the association between (Students & Different professions) in sociodemographic characteristics. Most participants of the students (78%) were female, and only (60%) were female in different occupations. The predominant age range of students is between 20 and 40 years, comprising 60% of the total, whereas just 4% of individuals from other professions are under 20 years old. 76% of the students had a moderated economic state, 22% had a bad economic state, and 62% of the different professions had a moderated economic state. 34% of the different professions have a terrible financial state. Regarding the level of education in students, the majority of the education was graduated from Institute & College 86%,

while 64% were (college) university certificates and 16% from secondary school in different professions. 14% of the different professions were working as Self-employed, and 6% were working as nurses.

Table 1. Association between (Student & Different profession) in socio-demographic characteristics.

| Items | | Student (N=100) | | Different profession (N=100) | | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------|------------------------------|-------|------------|---------|
| | | Fr. | % | Fr. | % | | |
| Gender | Male | 22 | 22.00 | 40 | 40.00 | 7.574 | 0.006 |
| | Female | 78 | 78.00 | 60 | 60.00 | | |
| Age | < 20 | 38 | 38.00 | 4 | 4.00 | 71.177 | 0.000 |
| | 20 – 40 | 60 | 60.00 | 48 | 48.00 | | |
| | > 40 | 2 | 2.00 | 48 | 48.00 | | |
| economic status | Good | 22 | 22.00 | 34 | 34.00 | 4.658 | 0.097 |
| | Moderate | 76 | 76.00 | 62 | 62.00 | | |
| | Bad | 2 | 2.00 | 4 | 4.00 | | |
| Education Level | Primary | 2 | 2.00 | 10 | 10.00 | 19.131 | 0.000 |
| | Secondary | 12 | 12.00 | 16 | 16.00 | | |
| | Institute & College | 86 | 86.00 | 64 | 64.00 | | |
| | Illiterate | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 10.00 | | |
| Job | Student | 100 | 100.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 200.001 | 0.000 |
| | Nurse | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 6.00 | | |
| | Self job | 0 | 0.00 | 14 | 14.00 | | |
| | Management | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 2.00 | | |
| | Active Environment | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 4.00 | | |
| | Lawyer | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 2.00 | | |
| | Lecture | 0 | 0.00 | 28 | 28.00 | | |
| | Employ | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 12.00 | | |
| | Housewife | 0 | 0.00 | 6 | 6.00 | | |
| | Engineer | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 4.00 | | |
| | Police | 0 | 0.00 | 12 | 12.00 | | |
| | Doctor | 0 | 0.00 | 10 | 10.00 | | |
| Total | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | | |

The findings indicate a significant difference between students and various professions concerning gender, age, certification, and employment ($p < 0.05$). Nonetheless, there was no significant difference between students and multiple professions concerning economic position ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think persons with mental illness ‘would talk absurd and gibberish).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 7 | 8 | 9.631 | 0.008 |
| | % | 7.0% | 8.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 88 | 73 | | |
| | % | 88.0% | 73.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 5 | 19 | | |
| | % | 5.0% | 19.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The table above illustrates the association between students and various professions regarding the perception that individuals with mental illness "would talk absurdly and gibberish." The results indicate a significant difference between these groups ($p < 0.05$).

Table 3. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness would mumble to themselves).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 23 | 9 | 7.298 | 0.026 |
| | % | 23.0% | 9.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 68 | 80 | | |
| | % | 68.0% | 80.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 9 | 11 | | |
| | % | 9.0% | 11.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The table above illustrates that the association between students and various professions regarding the belief that individuals with mental illness would mumble to themselves reveals a significant difference ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness would indulge in flights of fancy).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 44 | 28 | 12.502 | 0.002 |
| | % | 44.0% | 28.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 52 | 54 | | |
| | % | 52.0% | 54.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 4 | 18 | | |
| | % | 4.0% | 18.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the results of the above table, there was a significant difference between students and different professions to the question, "Do you think people with mental illness would indulge in flights of fancy?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness would shout and scream).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 20 | 6 | 8.668 | 0.013 |
| | % | 20.0% | 6.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 70 | 82 | | |
| | % | 70.0% | 82.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 10 | 12 | | |
| | % | 10.0% | 12.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results of the study indicate that there was a significant difference between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think people with mental illness would shout and scream?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 6. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness are dangerous).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 4 | 8 | 7.066 | 0.029 |
| | % | 4.0% | 8.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 72 | 54 | | |
| | % | 72.0% | 54.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 24 | 38 | | |
| | % | 24.0% | 38.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the above table, there Was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think people with mental illness are dangerous?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness living in the community would be endangered).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 12 | 14 | 0.729 | 0.695 |
| | % | 12.0% | 14.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 34 | 38 | | |
| | % | 34.0% | 38.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 54 | 48 | | |
| | % | 54.0% | 48.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results indicate that there was no significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think people with mental illness living in the community would be endangered?" ($p > 0.05$).

Table 8. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Is it scary to have mental illness in a place of residence).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 6 | 4 | 0.636 | 0.727 |
| | % | 6.0% | 4.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 56 | 54 | | |
| | % | 56.0% | 54.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 38 | 42 | | |
| | % | 38.0% | 42.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results of the study indicate that there was no significant difference between students and different professions about the question, "Is it scary to have mental illness in a place of residence?" ($p > 0.05$).

Table 9. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think Mental health facilities should be kept out of residential).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 28 | 43 | 6.631 | 0.036 |
| | % | 28.0% | 43.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 32 | 32 | | |
| | % | 32.0% | 32.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 40 | 25 | | |
| | % | 40.0% | 25.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the results of the above table, there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think mental health facilities should be kept out of residential?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 10. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness are mad or brain damaged).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 17 | 0 | 20.567 | 0.000 |
| | % | 17.0% | 0.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 25 | 21 | | |
| | % | 25.0% | 21.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 58 | 79 | | |
| | % | 58.0% | 79.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the results of the above table, there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think people with mental illness are mad or brain damaged?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 11. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Are you using the word mad for someone with mental illness).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 6 | 4 | 10.057 | 0.007 |
| | % | 6.0% | 4.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 46 | 26 | | |
| | % | 46.0% | 26.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 48 | 70 | | |
| | % | 48.0% | 70.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results of the Study indicate that there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Are you using the word mad for someone with mental illness?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 12. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (anyone with mental illness should be excluded from political work).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 66 | 66 | 1.308 | 0.52 |
| | % | 66.0% | 66.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 28 | 24 | | |
| | % | 28.0% | 24.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 6 | 10 | | |
| | % | 6.0% | 10.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the above table, there is a correlation between students and different professions, and anybody with a mental condition should not work in politics. The findings indicate that there was no significant difference between students and other professions about the recommendation that people with mental illnesses not work in politics ($p>0.05$).

Table 13. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you think people with mental illness are less capable than others).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 24 | 12 | 8.453 | 0.015 |
| | % | 24.0% | 12.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 39 | 58 | | |
| | % | 39.0% | 58.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 37 | 30 | | |
| | % | 37.0% | 30.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the results of the above table, there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do you think people with mental illness are less capable than others?" ($p<0.05$).

Table 14. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do people with mental illness appear incomplete).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 12 | 4 | 14.471 | 0.001 |
| | % | 12.0% | 4.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 72 | 58 | | |
| | % | 72.0% | 58.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 16 | 38 | | |
| | % | 16.0% | 38.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results of the study indicate that there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "Do people with mental illness appear incomplete?" ($p<0.05$).

Table 15. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Do you believe anything people with mental illness say).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 8 | 12 | 1.133 | 0.567 |
| | % | 8.0% | 12.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 66 | 66 | | |
| | % | 66.0% | 66.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 26 | 22 | | |
| | % | 26.0% | 22.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The after table above reveals the association between students and different professions in the question, "Do you believe anything people with mental illness say?" The results indicate no significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about this question ($p > 0.05$).

Table 16. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (If you visit psychological clinics, you feel ashamed).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 12 | 2 | 8.197 | 0.017 |
| | % | 12.0% | 2.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 14 | 12 | | |
| | % | 14.0% | 12.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 74 | 86 | | |
| | % | 74.0% | 86.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The table above illustrates the relationship between students and different professions in the statement, "If you visit psychological clinics, you feel ashamed." The findings indicate a significant difference between students and professionals concerning this statement ($p < 0.05$).

Table 17. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (If you have a mental illness, does that mean you're not expected).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 6 | 14 | 8.334 | 0.015 |
| | % | 6.0% | 14.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 48 | 30 | | |
| | % | 48.0% | 30.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 46 | 56 | | |
| | % | 46.0% | 56.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The results of the study indicate that there was a significant difference (or association) between students and different professions about the question, "If you have a mental illness, does that mean you're not normal?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 18. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (If someone in your family has a mental illness, will you let people around you know that).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 12 | 26 | 9.199 | 0.01 |
| | % | 12.0% | 26.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 48 | 50 | | |
| | % | 48.0% | 50.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 40 | 24 | | |
| | % | 40.0% | 24.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the chart above, there is a correlation between students and various professions in (would you disclose to everyone around you that a member of your family has a mental illness?) The findings indicate that there was a significant difference (or relationship) between students and various professions about the question, "Will you tell those around you if someone in your family has a mental illness?" ($p < 0.05$).

Table 19. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Would you like relatives whose child has incomplete emotional behaviour to participate in the family).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 46 | 54 | 1.517 | 0.468 |
| | % | 46.0% | 54.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 40 | 36 | | |
| | % | 40.0% | 36.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 14 | 10 | | |
| | % | 14.0% | 10.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

According to the above table, there was no significant difference (or association) between students and people of different professions regarding the question, "Would you like relatives whose child has incomplete emotional behaviour to participate in the family?" ($p > 0.05$).

Table 20. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Is it easy for you to have a relative whose child has the emotional and behavioural disorder).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 52 | 56 | 0.844 | 0.656 |
| | % | 52.0% | 56.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 38 | 32 | | |
| | % | 38.0% | 32.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 10 | 12 | | |
| | % | 10.0% | 12.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The study indicates that there was no significant difference (or association) between students and different professions in the question, "Is it easy for you to have a relative whose child has an emotional and behavioural disorder?" ($p > 0.05$).

Table 21. Association between (Student & Different profession) in (Are you positively thinking of a child with emotional and behavioural disorders).

| Items | | Student | Different profession | Chi-Square | p-value |
|-----------|-----|---------|----------------------|------------|---------|
| Never | Fr. | 58 | 52 | 0.789 | 0.674 |
| | % | 58.0% | 52.0% | | |
| Sometimes | Fr. | 36 | | | |
| | % | 36.0% | 42.0% | | |
| Always | Fr. | 6 | 6 | | |
| | % | 6.0% | 6.0% | | |
| Total | Fr. | 100 | 100 | | |
| | % | 100.0% | 100.0% | | |

The study's results indicate that there is a significant difference (or association) between students and people of different professions in the question, "Are you positively thinking of a child with emotional and behavioural disorders?" ($p > 0.05$).

Table 22. Comparison between (Student & Different profession) in Stigmatization of mental illness in Sulaimaniyah.

| Items | Student | Different profession | T-Test | p-value |
|-------|---------|----------------------|--------|---------|
| Mean | 41.02 | 42.34 | -2.295 | 0.023 |
| S.D | 3.92088 | 4.2073 | | |

The table above illustrates the relationship between the stigmatisation of mental illness in Sulaimaniyah and students from different professions. The findings indicate a significant difference between these groups ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion

In our study, We have focused more on the difference between stigma views among students and stigma views among different jobs. To do so, we randomly distributed our questions to the age of those who filled out the questionnaire, and the number of pages was not equal, which means the number of people under the age of 20 who filled out the questionnaire was not equal to the number of people over 20 years of age and is not equally divided into people with dire economic conditions and those who have sound economic conditions. Moreover, the number of various professionals is different because it is unknown what kind of job the person who filled out the form had before it was distributed. The questionnaires are distributed simultaneously, so in this sense, the different professions are all written together in one row in one table. We have compared 100 forms of data with different occupations and 100 forms of those who are students.

For the first question, which is (Do you think persons with mental illness 'would talk absurd and gibberish?') Of 200 respondents, 15 said *never*, 161 said *sometimes*, and 24 said *always*. The number of people who have always said was more than those who have *never*. For the second question, which is (Do you think people with mental illness would mumble to themselves?) Of the 200 respondents, 32 said *never*, 148 said *sometimes*, and 20 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* was more than those who have said *always*. For the third question, which is (Do you think people with mental illness would indulge in flights of fancy?) Of 200 respondents, 72 said *never*, 106 said *sometimes*, and 22 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* is more than those who have said *always*. For the fourth question, which is (Do you think people with mental illness would shout and scream?) Of 200 respondents, 26 said *never*, 152 said *sometimes*, and 22 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* was more than those who have said *always*. For the fifth question, which is (Do you think people with mental illness are dangerous?) Of the 200 respondents, 12 said *never*, 126 said *sometimes*, and 62 said *always*. The number of people who have always said was more than those who have *never*.

The sixth question is (Do you think People with mental illness living in the community would endanger the community?) Of 200 respondents, 26 said *never*, 72 said *sometimes*, and 102 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* was more than those who have said *never* because our society

has little information about mental illness and considers it dangerous and that anyone with mental illness is risky regardless of the level, type, and degree of the disease. For the seventh question. which is (Is it scary to have mental illness in a place of residence?) Of 200 respondents, ten said *never*, 110 said *sometimes*, and 80 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* was more than those who have said *never*. As we mentioned in the previous question, our society negatively thinks of people who have mental illness and considers them dangerous. For the eighth question (Do you think people with Mental health conditions should be kept out of residential areas?) Of the 200 respondents, 71 said *never*, 64 said *sometimes*, and 65 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* is more than the number of people who have said *never* because they think dangerously about mental illnesses. Hence, most of them preferred that the places dedicated to treating mental illnesses be entirely out of resident areas. For the ninth question (Do you think people with mental illness are mad or brain damaged?) Of the 200 respondents, 17 said *never*, 46 said *sometimes*, and 137 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* is more than the number of people who have said *never* because our society, in general, thinks that anyone with mental illness or depression in any situation has lost consciousness or has a brain injury.

For the tenth question (Are you using the word mad for someone with mental illness?), out of 200 respondents, ten said *never*, 72 said *sometimes*, and 118 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* was more than those who have said *never*. Unfortunately, in our society, the word crazy is a common word for those who have mental illness. They use the word crazy even though this word is not scientific and does not exist in psychological science. Still, our society, unfortunately, imposes this word on those who have any mental illness. For the eleventh question (anyone with mental illness should be excluded from political work?), out of 200 respondents, 132 said *never*, 52 said *sometimes*, and 16 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* is more than those who have said *always* and *sometimes*. It seems that most participants here have expected those with mental illness to participate in work Politically, and some of them thought that sometimes it means that according to the condition of their illness, they can participate. A few of them felt that they should not participate in political work in any way and should be removed entirely.

For the twelfth question (Do you think people with mental illness are less capable than others?), out of 200 respondents, 36 said *never*, 97 said *sometimes*, and 67 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* was more than those who have said *never*. Here, some participants thought that people with mental illness were not less capable than others. They, like any other human being, have the ability, and most participants thought they were less capable in some situations, given the psychological conditions they live in. However, others believed that patients were entirely less able than ordinary people and thought that, in any case, they could not demonstrate their abilities. For the thirteenth question (Do people with mental illness have abnormal appearance?), out of 200 respondents, 16 said *never*, 130 said *sometimes*, and 54 said *always*. The number of people who said *always* and *sometimes* was more than those who had said *never*, meaning that a large number of participants thought that people with mental illness seemed completely incomplete or, in some situations, could be at a time when the surrounding pressures were more significant on the patient or any other person and a small number of participants thought that patients did not appear incomplete and were as ironic as any other human being.

For the fourteenth question (Do you believe anything people with mental illness say?), out of 200 respondents, 20 said *never*, 132 said *sometimes*, and 48 said *always*—the number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* more than those who have said *never*. The participants seem to be generally sceptical about what the patients say or talk about. His may stem from a shared belief in society that patients often misinterpret their experiences or communicate in meaningless ways. However, some participants do recognise that individuals with mental illness can maintain awareness and have valuable insights to share.

For the fifteenth question (If you visit psychological clinics, do you feel as ashamed?), out of 200 respondents, 14 said *never*, 26 said *sometimes*, and 160 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* and *sometimes* more than those who have said it's *never* " because our society is relatively closed and has little information about mental illness and thinks anyone has mental illness or Is depressed and visits the

hospital means that the person has completely lost their minds or has gone crazy to our common words so most of them are ashamed to see the psychological clinics for treatment and don't think that mental illness is typical like any other disease and how physical diseases need treatment and go to the doctor without shame this needs it.

For the seventeenth question (if someone in your family has a mental illness, will you let people around you know that?) Of 200 respondents, 38 said never, 98 said sometimes, and 64 said *always*. The number of people who have said *always* more than those who have never. For the eighteenth question (Would you like relatives whose child has incomplete emotional behaviour to participate in the family?) Of 200 respondents, 100 said *never*, 76 said *sometimes*, and 24 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* was more than those who have said *always*.

For the nineteenth question (Is it easy for you to have a relative whose child has an emotional and behavioural disorder?) Of 200 respondents, 108 said *never*, 70 said *sometimes*, and 22 said *always*. The number of people who have said *never* was more than those who have said *always*. In response to the twentieth question (Are you positively thinking of a child with emotional and behavioural disorders?), of the 200 respondents, 110 indicated 'never,' 78 responded 'sometimes,' and 12 answered 'always.' The number of individuals who answered 'never' exceeds those who answered 'always.' Other surveys have been created to evaluate stigmatising attitudes among healthcare professionals towards individuals with mental illness, such as the Mental Illness Clinicians' Attitudes (MICA) Scale [7] and the Opening Minds Stigma Scale for Health Care Providers (OMS-HC) [8]. However, we opted not to utilise these scales, as we concluded that students are at a different developmental stage with distinct experiences compared to working professionals. Our questionnaires are more general and suitable for broader populations, whereas the scales above are not tailored to healthcare providers and may lack sensitivity to healthcare contexts.

To our knowledge, only a limited number of research have investigated healthcare students' views towards individuals with mental illness and physical impairments. Wang et al. investigated both explicit and implicit stigma associated with individuals who have mental illness among medical and non-medical students [9]. The two groups exhibited comparable levels of explicit and implicit stigma at baseline. For medical students, explicit stigma dramatically diminished, although implicit stigma remained consistent during a one-month psychiatric clerkship; in contrast, non-medical students exhibited no change in stigma levels after one month. Comparative research examined occupational therapy students' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities throughout Australia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and the United States [10]. The findings revealed that occupational therapy students from Taiwan had more discomfort in social interactions with persons with impairments than their counterparts from the other three nations. The findings of this research, together with ours, validate the presence of stigmatising views and underscore the need to investigate and confront explicit and implicit stigma among healthcare students.

The literature supported the findings, verifying the initial hypothesis. Ramon (1978) said that individuals with mental illness are often assessed less favourably regarding attributes such as fairness, strength, cleanliness, intelligence, non-aggressiveness, peacefulness, and social desirability. Moreover, the media usually generates erroneous and negative portrayals of persons with mental disorders, thereby exacerbating these sentiments [12]. Furthermore, individuals with mental illness often encounter discrimination in (a) housing, (b) insurance plans, (c) education, and (d) work. The questionnaire inquired about these qualities, and the replies supported both hypotheses. Our results revealed that stigma associated with mental illness also affected patients' relatives. This aligns with the findings of Nurjannah et al. [13], which indicated that mental health stigma adversely affects the health and well-being of patients and their families. Numerous effects on the relatives of individuals with mental illness have been recorded, including sleep disturbances, changes in interpersonal interactions, deterioration of well-being, and worse quality of life [14].

Additionally, it has been noted that some families who have a family with a mental illness feel ashamed since others hold them accountable for the sickness [15]. If others in the community are aware that a family member has a mental condition, the family may also feel embarrassed. Three stereotypes—blame, contamination, and shame—have been linked to family stigma [16]. Our research indicates that parents were

held responsible for their children's mental illness, resulting in feelings of shame. It was observed that family members refrained from visiting patients throughout their hospitalisation. When nurses performed house visits, family members disputed the presence of hospitalised relatives. Furthermore, we discovered that family members sometimes inflicted violence on relatives who have mental illnesses. Participating patients said that their relatives confined them via pacing or secluded them in a room due to directives from community members or out of humiliation or fear of potential violence from the patient [17-19]. Stigma engenders several severe issues for those who have mental illness. Education has shown efficacy in diminishing stigma and enhancing knowledge about mental illness. The problem arises from the public's insufficient understanding of mental disease, leading to stigmatising and unfavourable attitudes towards those with mental health conditions [20].

Conclusions

Individuals who have mental illness and other mental health difficulties often encounter stigma, discrimination, and significant societal disadvantages. The detrimental implications and erroneous beliefs associated with mental health disorders may be as damaging as the illness itself. Stigma is a crucial factor in comprehending the progression of disease and its consequences for individuals with mental disorders. Stigmatisation related to mental health: individuals with mental health conditions can encounter significant stigma and prejudice. To ascertain the percentage of individuals with negative perceptions of mental illness, we must gather data on this issue, so we administered a questionnaire with the assistance of our supervisor, who has facilitated this process. We sent this questionnaire, consisting of 20 questions, to the department for evaluation and approval.

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