

## ABSTRACT

Stigma is a serious impediment to the well-being of those who experience it. It affects people while they are ill, while they are in treatment, and healing, and even when a mental illness is a distant memory. Families discriminated against due to their relative's experience of mental illness; they are also an important source of that discrimination.

**Aims:** The study aims to assess the perceptions of stigma of mental illness & Coping ways of patients and their families toward stigma.

**Materials and methods:** the study was conducted at out- patient clinics of psychiatric patients in El- Abbasia psychiatric hospital. The number total of the patients and their families was (80). **Data were collected** through; **A)** Socio- demographic interview sheet, designed by the researcher based on the available literature. **B)** Psychometric measures: Patients and their families were assessed using questionnaire which focused on perception about discrimination against mental illness, and ways of coping with stigma.

**Results:** revealed that, most of the participants were aware of the stigma associated with mental illness; more than (52%) of the studied patients and family members had a negative Perception, also show no significant difference between perception of patients were having mean score (35.2+9.6) and family were having mean score (19+5.7). As well degree of coping shows that more than 51.3% of the studied cases had a negative coping, according the patient were having mean score (34+6.9) study findings the use of secrecy was the most frequently endorsed way of coping with stigma, while their families were having mean score (37+10) use avoidance.

**Conclusion:** Stigma can pose a threat to the self-esteem, relationships and job opportunities of psychiatric patients and their families. Adequate information may demystify mental illness and help to reduce the fear and prejudice surrounding it.

**Key Words:**

Stigma, mental illness, coping,