

**“How social media empowers physical disabled influencers for inclusive communities in Egypt: A quantitative survey on users’ perspectives”**



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**Abstract:**

Social media offers new ways of communication on the internet and allow interactive activities through different platforms and applications like: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok.

Social media also allows users the possibility of constructing, at least in part, their personal identity in a way that is different from what happens in physical reality.

The main aim of the study is to explore how social media empowers physical disables (Mentally/ Physiology/ Down syndrome) influencers to be socially included in the society and how they can inspire audience, and how audience accept them as a part of the community.

Disability inclusion means understanding the relationship between the way people function and how they participate in society and making sure everybody has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires. The study will depend on conducting a survey which will be applied on (300) respondents males/females from age 18 to 55, from different social categories.

**Keywords:** Social inclusion, physical disable, influencers, social media

## وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وتمكين الأشخاص ذوو الإعاقة لتحقيق الدمج المجتمعي

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### ملخص الدراسة:

توفر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي طرقًا جديدة للتواصل على الإنترنت وتسمح بالأنشطة التفاعلية من خلال

منصات وتطبيقات مختلفة مثل الفيسبوك، تويتر، انستجرام، يوتيوب، وتيك توك.

كما تتيح وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي أيضًا للمستخدمين إمكانية بناء هويتهم الشخصية، جزئيًا على الأقل، بطريقة

مختلفة عما يحدث في الواقع المادي.

تستهدف الدراسة الكشف عن كيفية مساعدة وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي على تمكين الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة

الجسدية عقليًا، فسيولوجيًا، ومتلازمة داون من الاندماج اجتماعيًا في المجتمع وكيف يمكنهم إلهام الجمهور،

وكيف يقبلهم الجمهور كجزء من المجتمع.

طبقت الدراسة على عينة عددها ٣٠٠ مفردة من الذكور والإناث من عمر 18 إلى 55 سنة، من مختلف الفئات

الاجتماعية.

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

الإدماج الاجتماعي، الإعاقة الجسدية، المؤثرون، وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

## **Introduction:**

Social media offers new ways of communication on the internet and allow interactive activities through different platforms and applications like: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok.

Social media also allows users the possibility of constructing, at least in part, their personal identity in a way that is different from what happens in physical reality.

The main aim of the study is to explore how social media empowers physical disabled (Mentally/ Physiology/ Down syndrome) influencers to be socially included in the society, how they can inspire audience, and how audience accept them as a part of the community.

When we talk about inclusion, we're talking about how many people with disabilities are accepted and acknowledged as individuals with authority, enjoy interpersonal relationships, engage in leisure and social activities, have suitable living conditions, are able to contribute in a positive way, and have the necessary formal (Jones ,2010).

The main elements of social inclusion include having a fair and equal attitude towards individuals with disabilities, ensuring their involvement in all aspects of life.

Disability inclusion means understanding the relationship between the way people function and how they participate in society, and making sure everybody has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires.

Nowadays there is a huge social inclusion of the physical disabled ones on social media. Not only showing their success stories, but also benefitting them in sort of getting information, enjoyment and creating friends without movement (Lee, 2019). One can say that social media helped them to be heard and get online social interactions which lessen their sense of social exclusion and being less than others. This will motivate them and affect their mental health positively (Lindsay, 2018). The social media platforms have implied a significant improvement of people's life quality with dis-ability, giving them better access to education, enhancing their leisure time, and improving their relationships with the society (Bonilla et al, 2022).

### **1.2 Importance and Aims of the study:**

The significance of this study is to shed the lights on how the disabled people in Egypt are portrayed in the social media and how this finally affects their social inclusion in the society. This topic should be considered from the most important topics because it protects the rights of the Egyptian disabled which are human rights' issue and talking a huge part of the SDGs of the 2030 Egypt's plan. Also, what is new in this paper is that the authors get variety of famous disabled or less advantaged people and show their success stories and how inspiring they are. In addition, the paper tackled untitled perspectives of social media portrayal for the disabled in Egypt, such as whether they are seen in a negative way such as victims, or people who need economic support. It also shed the lights on how the social media recently

had shifted the portrayal and image of the disabled ones to be seen as success stories and inspiring heroes. Finally, the paper had some recommendations to better enhance the image of the disabled pale in Egypt through the social media portrayal.

### **1.3 The problem statements:**

How can the power of the social media empower physical disables (Mentally/ Physiology/ Down syndrome) influencers to be socially included in the society and how they can inspire audience, and how audience accept them as part of community.

Social media helped physical disabled to be socially included with different forms like social identity, support, relationships, happiness and enjoyment

#### **1.3.1 Social Identity:**

The ‘home pages’ of people with Down Syndrome have been used as a means of speaking up about their lives, their feelings, wants and needs, with home page users often describing themselves by making reference to their friends, family and favorite activities (Seale, 2007; Seale & Pockney, 2002).

#### **1.3.2 Support:**

Kydland et al. (2012) examined what support people with intellectual disability would require to use the website Flickr. They found that participants needed support with: logging in, uploading pictures, commenting on photos and searching.

### **1.3.3 Relationships:**

The ability to make new friendships and maintain existing friendships online was a theme that arose in number of research. (Holmes & O’Loughlin, 2014; Kydland et al., 2012; Löfgren-Mårtenson, 2008; McClimens & Gordon, 2008, 2009; Seale & Pockney, 2002).

### **1.3.4 Happiness and Enjoyment**

Happiness and enjoyment were also gained by the increase in self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of learning new skills such as reading comprehension (Holmes & O’Loughlin 2014; Löfgren-Mårtenson, 2008; McClimens & Gordon, 2008, 2009). Self-esteem was also reported to have been increased through having an outlet to talk and voice opinions about activities, feelings, hobbies, wants and needs (Holmes & O’Loughlin, 2014; Kydland et al., 2012; McClimens & Gordon, 2009).

### **1.4 Research questions:**

- Is there a correlation between the representation of physical disable social media influencers in public events, which makes them more inclusive in the society?
- Is there a correlation between the Content that is displayed on social media, and the credibility of the influencer?
- When people get information about people with disability from the social media, do they think social media frame the disabled people as special people or victims?

- Do people think there is a shift now in the social media framing the disabled people as with success stories?
- Do people think social media frame disabled people as disadvantaged and in need for economic support?

### 1.5 Hypothesis

**H1:** There is positive correlation between representation of physical disable social media influencers in public events, which makes them more inclusive in society.

**H2:** There is a positive correlation between the Content that displayed on social media, and the credibility of the influencer.

**H3:** The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as victims.

**H4:** There is a shift now in the social media framing the disabled people as with success stories.

**H5:** The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as disadvantaged and in need for economic support.



## 1.6 Methodology of the study:

The analysis was done through an inductive approach. It used descriptive and correlation analysis using SPSS 26. There were two measures of correlation coefficients used in the study. Spearman correlation and Kendall tau correlation are non-parametric measures of association between two variables. They are used when the data may not meet the assumptions of normality required for parametric correlation measures like Pearson correlation.

### 1. Spearman Correlation:

- Rank the values of each variable separately.
- Compute the differences in ranks for corresponding pairs of values.
- Square these differences and sum them.
- The Spearman correlation coefficient is then calculated as,  
where  $d_i$  is the difference in ranks for each pair and  $n$  is the number of pairs

### 2. Kendall Tau Correlation:

- Count the number of concordant pairs (pairs with the same order) and the number of discordant pairs (pairs with different order) in the data.
- The Kendall tau coefficient is given by, where  $n$  is the number of pairs.

Both Spearman and Kendall tau are less sensitive to outliers compared to Pearson correlation, and they are suitable for ordinal or ranked data. Kendall tau is used for nominal data as well where order can be meaningless.

### **1.7 Sampling Technique:**

The sampling technique applied was convenient sampling technique. According to Simkus (2022), convenient sampling technique is reasonable method to use especially

when research's goal is to understand a new phenomenon. In addition, the researcher should obtain large sample size to decrease the bias of sampling errors.

The sample size is decided based on Cochran (1963) formula; therefore, the sample needs to exceed 385 respondents to obtain a margin of error of 0.05.

### **1.8 Tools of the study:**

This paper incorporates the quantitative approach to study the research objectives. Sampling has been done effectively and the tool that has been employed to work on the data collection is particularly questionnaires where the questions were close ended and open ended. A survey was conducted to target age bracket (18-60). The sample has been taken from different sectors of social media users. In all, 486 questionnaires were field and reciprocated enthusiastically by the respondents. They were asked a total of questions.

The researcher also applied an analytical survey study which attempts to describe and explain two or more variables and examine and investigate research questions and test the research hypotheses.

## **2. Theoretical framework:**

### **2.1 Cultivation theory:**

It is a theory is a sociological and communications framework to examine the lasting effects of media. It is about the over exposure of to certain themes in media, will make the audience overestimate and believe in certain themes being portrayed. This is tied to this research that now days there is a shift in portraying the disabled people in the social media in a positive way, which will definitely affect the people's attitudes and perception towards the disabled ones. Thus, the more the social media portrays the physical disabled ones in a positive or a negative way hold a view of reality closer to television's depiction. (Gross et al, 1994)

### **2.2 Use and gratification theory:**

The UGT is a well-utilized theoretical framework for explaining the different motives and reasons behind the use of any given medium (Gan, 2017). The UGT assumes that consumers are active, selective, and motivated to use a given medium (Quan-Haase and Young, 2010). Scholars have utilized the theory to understand the different U&Gs that are sought from the use of a specific medium (Dhir, 2016, Dhir et al., 2017). Moreover, UGT is applied to explain why people tend to use a specific medium to satisfy their needs (Katz et al., 1974).

Media scholars have reasoned that the UGT provides a user-centered viewpoint on the different social and psychological motives sought from a given medium (Leung and Wei, 2000). Despite being a theory that originated in the pre-digital boom era,

scholars recently invoked UGT in studies related to the Internet and SMP adoption (Dhir, 2015, Dhir et al., 2015, Dhir and Tsai, 2017). Furthermore, scholars have utilized it to study the motives behind the use of most recent forms of media use (e.g., photo-tagging, photo-sharing, specific features of new media, and instant messaging) (Dhir, 2016, Dhir et al., 2017, Gan and Li, 2018, Malik et al., 2015). Prior research shows that the U&Gs of SMPs have a significant influence on continuation intentions (e.g., Yen et al., 2018), purchase intentions (e.g., Aluri et al., 2016), use intentions, and actual use behavior (e.g., Gan, 2017).

## **2.3 Operational definition:**

### **2.3.1 Social inclusion:**

Social inclusion is the process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities – that everyone, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential in life.

### **2.3.2 Physical disabled:**

Physical disability indicates any physical limitations or disabilities that inhibit the physical function of one or more limbs of a certain person.

### **2.3.4 Influencers:**

Someone who affects or changes the way that other people

### **2.3.5 Social media:**

Interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

## **3. Literature review:**

### **3.1 Social inclusion:**

As per the definitions of the United Nations, Social inclusion is defined as the process of enhancing the terms and conditions of societal participation, particularly for people who are less advantaged on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status. This happens through upgrading opportunities, more and better access to resources, voice and respect for rights in all aspect of life. <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/2016/chapter1.pdf>

One can say in the simple words that social inclusion requires the efforts that aim to eliminate alienation or deprivation of people from the basic's social life. This can take place through urging societies to overcome the inequalities and to eliminate discrimination for the less advantaged individuals. Thus, everyone can fully participate in his/her society without any barriers to achieve their goals. It is important to note that social inclusion for disabled doesn't not only benefit the people with disability but also their families, friends and the community in general at the end of the day. This will promote societal health and wellbeing.

### 3.2 Social Inclusion and sustainability:

Nowadays sustainability is closely related to disability and inclusivity. Goal no. 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries” (SDG) strives to reduce inequality in the societies by empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all. This means to include all the minorities in all the societal activities and to have equal rights like the majority. It calls for countries to reduce inequalities and to have fairness and justice in income as well as those based on age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic or other status within a country. It mainly promotes and encourages the social, economic and political inclusion of all individual’s despite of their type of the disability.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

### 3.3 Social inclusion in Egypt and in the world:

According to Egyptian report of disability <https://disabilityin.org/country/egypt/>, The term of disability under the Rehabilitation Law is ‘any individual who became unable to depend on him/herself in performing his/her work or another type of work and remains in it. The individual’s inability to do so is the result of physical, mental, sensory or congenital impairment’. Thus, one can say that the social inclusion is mainly about enhanced opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights for the disabled ones.

According to Article 81 of Egypt’s 2014 constitution, it indicates that the state shall help the disabled have better quality in the health, economic, social, cultural,

entertainment, sporting and educational rights of persons with disabilities strive to provide them with job opportunities, and to allocate a percentage of job opportunities to them, and adapt public facilities and their surrounding environment to their special needs. This happens under the umbrella of the equality and equal opportunities among the citizens. <https://disabilityin.org/country/egypt/>

### **3.4 Disability types and numbers in the world:**

Disability is defined as a physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in daily life activities normally. There are Five main categories that define disabilities: First, Behavioral disorders include anxiety disorders, dissociative disorders, disruptive or impulsive behaviors, and pervasive development disorders. Still, the Emotional disabilities are a type of behavioral disability, but that's because our emotions and feelings often influence and affect our actions. An emotional disability often relates to a disability that prevents a person's ability to maintain or build interpersonal relationships.

They can also struggle to control their emotions and often feel unhappy in their life. Second, Sensory impaired disorders; this disability is in the form of lacking or difficulty in the senses like hearing, smell, taste, touch and sight. Thus, the senses are no longer at the usual levels that others experience. Third Physical disability. A physical disability is a condition that impacts a person's physical abilities, stamina, mobility and their ability to move and use their hands. Here they will need to depend on someone else to help them move. Fourth, developmental disability refers to

conditions that occur during early years of childhood, as they affect a person's ability to develop in the same way as others. Fifth, mental health conditions: this is a general group of illnesses that affect the person's brain or mind. In addition, such mental problems affect can lead to the behavioral and emotional disability as it affects how a person thinks, feels, acts (Chandrashekar et al, 2010).

Physical disability is that which affects the locomotors system, especially the limbs, resulting in an impairment caused by the physical condition of the person that prevents them from moving with full functionality of their motor system in a permanent and irreversible manner (Observatori de la Discapacitat Física, n.d.). The majority of people with physical disabilities (around 80%) acquire the disability after birth, either due to common conditions or an accident, while a smaller percentage of them become disabled during pregnancy. This disability can be reflected by decrease or lack of coordination of movement from disorders in muscle tone or balance.

According to the WHO has identified over 1 billion disabled people, 20% of whom live with great functional difficulties in their day-to-day lives. According to this report of the WHO conducted in 2011, 253 million people are affected by some form of blindness and visual impairment. This represents 3.2% of the world's population. In the same report it was mentioned that 466 million people have a disabling deafness and hearing loss. This represents 6% of the world's population. Also, it was mentioned that 200 million people have an intellectual disability (IQ below 75). This represents 2.6% of the world's population. Furthermore, 75 million people need a



wheelchair on a daily basis. This represents 1% of the world's population. So, as the numbers seem shocking, it is obvious that it is a widespread phenomenon that needs international concerns to make these less advantaged people have a better quality of life. <https://www.inclusivecitymaker.com/disabled-people-in-the-world-in-2021-facts-and-figures/>.

### **3.5 Disability numbers in Egypt:**

Since we have just talked about the main types of disability, here comes the disability numbers in Egypt. According to the United Nations, there are almost 12 million persons with disabilities in Egypt. This statistic was done in 2006 where 1.8% of the Egyptian population is living with disabilities. Hence, it is not uncommon that the disability of one person in the family affects the entire family. Thus, there are about 36 million persons (in terms of families who have a member with disability) who are affected by disability in Egypt, which makes up 35% of the total population.

## **4. Social Media Representations of People with Disabilities:**

These platforms enable users to create and share their own material as well as interact with and spread the content of others, which constitutes a significant alteration of the communication processes (Aguaded; Jaramillo-Dent; Delgado-Ponce, 2021). By building their identities in the network and sharing interests that highlight their presence and protagonist through self-representation and self-exhibition, users essentially transform into consumers (Pérez-Daza, 2021).

According to Durante (2011), social networks give users the opportunity to create, at least in part, their own identity in a way that differs from what occurs in physical reality. Therefore, the decision users make regarding the sectors of their lives, as well as their self-confidence and sense of self, may all have an impact on the information that is conveyed and shared. Therefore, the decision a user makes regarding which aspects of their life to share, how much importance they place on privacy, or their desire for popularity, among other things, may have an impact on the information that is transmitted and shared (Durante, 2011). Since the stigma associated with physical disabilities can sometimes create barriers for this group in the development of sincere friendships, social networks provide the opportunity for people with disabilities to control how and when they disclose information about their disability on these digital platforms (Furr; Carreiro; McArthur, 2017). According to Bassey et al. (2021), social networks encourage group social interaction, as well as promote disability visibility and social awareness.

The authors believe that the social media platforms are the main gate for the physical disabled to show their success stories. Thus, the social media platforms make the audience live in the daily life of the disabled influencers knowing how determined and inspiring they are. The authors believe that the social media platforms can be acting as the window for such inspiring successful stories. The disabled champions or the influencers can easily show their moments of triumph on the social media platforms engaging the audience with them in their moments of pride. Thus, they can

show of their experiences and challenges they have faced to show their real determination (Näslund & Gardelli, 2013). The authors believe that such experiences show how far the parents and the people around the disabled ones have endured the difficult times to allow their disabled kids to reach these successful moments.

#### **4.1 The Victim portrayal of the Physical disabled ones on social media**

Sometimes the disabled people are seen as victims because of their disability that they can't be engaged in the life activities of the non-disabled ones (Njogu ,2009). They can be seen victims of the accidents that caused the type or victims of faith. In other words, they are seen as people with fewer qualities even if they just miss out in one piece of the infected organ or body part. Hence, they are seen as pitted weak people. Yet, the authors believe that the new social media tools aren't showing the disabled perspective of pity or awe but rather from recognition of their individuality. Thus, if the voices of the disabled ones are heard alongside those who are able-bodied, families and community members start seeing disability not as a disease but as a condition that anybody can have (Njogu ,2009). Hence, disability is seen as a blessing and not a curse.

The physical disabled people have been always portrayed in the media as “super human” that they are able to live a regular life of regular human's despite of their disabilities (Haller, 2014).

Yet, the authors believe that nowadays with rapid change in the technology and with the social media power, this negative stereotyping and stigmatization of the physical

disabled people has been slightly changed. The social media is portraying the people with disability in more positive way, in sense of achievements and accomplishments. Nowadays, in Egypt we see many people with disability are becoming influencers in their field and are accomplishing sports medals and many educational positions.

#### **4.2 Economic need portrayal of the disabled ones in the social media:**

It is not uncommon that people with physical health problems will be believed to have high risk of income poverty as they won't be able to work a full working day. Thus, consequently they won't be able to afford for the basic needs of life. It is crystal clear that the poverty life of the disabled people isn't only about their inability to work, but also for the cost of their health care, aids and devices needed to help them have a regular physical life (Lussier-Desrochers et al. 2017). Also, according to Chadwick et al. (2013), it was mentioned that the disabled people face not only political barriers on social media, but also an economic barrier. This can be explained because their need for the help of the others in the forms of a nurse or a shadow person to move them and help them in their daily life activities? Thus, there were always economic problems revolving around the disabled ones. Hence, one can say that the disabled people face economic instability mainly because of their unemployment conditions.

### **4.3 The positive switch of social media portrayal of Influencers with disabilities:**

The term influencer is not new and did not appear along with the appearance of SNs since, according to Castelló-Martínez (2016), influencers in the 1960s were defined as famous people or celebrities who influenced consumers regarding purchasing recommendations. Presently, they are defined as individuals with a high number of followers and a high level of engagement, meaning that they create loyalty in their followers through the creation of solid relationships.

As seen by the growing number of influencers with disabilities who are followed by millions of users, social media platforms are seen as a chance to socially normalize disability. Whether a person has an intellectual or physical impairment, social media platforms are providing them with the chance to showcase their skills. As a result, social media platforms enable people to communicate with their audience, participate in the digital world, and make their interests visible, all of which have a good effect on society. Furthermore, such actions unquestionably foster respect for diversity (Bonilla et al., 2022). As a result, social media platforms are positioned as potent instruments for spread of inclusive values and empowerment of disabled persons.

Thus, social media platforms are tools that make the disabled ones feel they are normal without discrimination where they can share their lives, and people comment to them (Näslund& Gardelli, 2013). So, they just feel they are normal as others. So, it is a way that help the disabled overcome their disabilities and even feel victorious and more talented than the normal ones by showing their successful moments. So,

the disabled ones feel they can contribute to the society and are part of it through using the social media tools (Teng, 2023). Social media gives them sense of self satisfaction. Hence, social media can empower people with disabilities (Teng, 2023).

#### **4.4 Influencer's Credibility:**

The credibility of the communicator is crucial in persuading the audience (Hovland et al., 1951). "Micro-endorsers" is a term used to describe social media celebrities. Endorsers usually play the same function in commercials as the source of the message does in the persuasive process. In prior studies, source credibility was utilized to assess the effect of the source on the message's productivity (Giffen, 1967). The influence of endorsers on customers was investigated in prior studies (Dwevidi et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2015). Expertise and trustworthiness are two predictors of source credibility, according to a study (Hovland, 1954). Several earlier studies have employed trustworthiness and attractiveness to determine the reliability of source expertise (Ohanian, 1990; Lafferty et al., 2000). Other characteristics, such as trustworthiness and likability, have been employed in earlier studies to assess source credibility (Keller, 1998; Clow et al., 2006). Expertise is a source's competence or qualification to make such claims on a given subject or issue, including the source's knowledge or abilities (McCroskey, 1966). The recipient's assessment of the source as trustworthy, genuine, or sincere is included in the source's trustworthiness (Giffin, 1967). Similarly, the likeness between the communicator and the receiver is referred to as the dimension of believability. The perceived appeal of

source, i.e. face, physical attractiveness, sensuality or sexuality, and source liability that conveys the message, is referred to as source attractiveness (Kahle et al., 1985). Yet, the authors believe that the disabled influencers have more credibility than the regular influencers as they are known to be kind people of no financial interests like the rest. Nowadays, disabled influencers may be advertising ambassadors based on empowerment, playfulness, resistance, and responsibility to present themselves as neither victims nor superhuman agents but as human beings with hard life.

### **5. Examples of disabled influencers in Egypt:**

As mentioned above that the social media platforms act as the main option to show and portray the challenges and inspirations of the disabled people. So, the authors decided to have a look of some disabled influences or champions who used the social media platforms to show their skills and talents. They chose to show the world how successful and determined they are. The social media platforms not only show their talents but also their barriers, challenges and hardships they have faced till they have reached this place. The authors believe that the social media platforms make the disabled influencers or champions as challenged and successful role models. They act as some ones who have irregular life but decided not only to pass it, but also to excel and be prominent and seen in their places. Such stories show resilience, persistence and determination.

Here are examples of physical disabled influencers that we depend on them as a sample for the study:

- Rania Hesham Wasfi, physical disabled blogger.
- Rahma Khaled: Rahma Khaled is one of the most well-known Egyptian women who have demonstrated courage and tenacity in pursuing their goals, making her a source of pride and inspiration.
- Sama Ramy: She is a 19-year-old down syndrome famous lady, who was there in the presidential speech.
- Ibrahim El-Khouly: Ibrahim El-Kholy is the first ever Egyptian Down Syndrome to be appointed as teaching assistant.
- Yehia Kandil: diagnosed as down syndrome, he is a professional swimmer, he is a member in Special Needs National team from 2008 till now.
- Eslam Abou Ali: He was 23 years old when a car accident paralyzed him in January 2012 and became a wheelchair user since that time. After spending around a year in the hospital, he decided to move on and figure out a way to resume my life in a different way using my wheelchair.



## 6. Results of the study:

### 6. 1. Descriptive Statistics

**Table (1.1): frequency table for demographic variables**

Variable	Categories	Freq	Percent
Gender	Female	413	85%
	Male	73	15%
Age	18 to 25	235	48.4%
	26 to 32	42	8.6%
	33 to 39	26	5.3%
	40 to 46	84	17.3%
	46 to 54	54	11.1%
	54 to 60	45	9.3%
Which of the following social media platforms do you use the most?	Facebook	167	34.3%
	Instagram	193	39.7%
	LinkedIn	25	5.1%
	Tiktok	86	17.7%
	Twitter	15	3.1%
How often do you spend time on social media per day?	1 hr	71	14.6%
	2 – 4 hrs	238	49.0%
	6 hrs	96	19.8%
	more than 6 hrs	81	16.7%
Following any physical disabled social media influencer?	No	270	55.6%
	Yes	216	44.4%
Rahma Khaled the Tv presenter	No	228	46.9%
	Yes	258	53.1%
Rania Wasfy the Fb blogger	No	309	63.6%
	Yes	177	36.4%
Yehia Kandil the swimming champion	No	311	64.0%
	Yes	175	36.0%
Sama Ramy FB blogger attended presidential speeches	No	475	97.7%
	Yes	11	2.3%
Ibrahim El Khouly first TA with down syndrome	No	404	83.1%
	Yes	82	16.9%
Eslam Abou Ali back wheel champion and swimmer	No	397	81.7%
	Yes	89	18.3%
What attracted you to follow physical disable influencers?	Awareness	169	34.8%
	New content	33	6.8%
	Determined successful people	166	34.2%
	Knowing how they deal with life	112	23.0%
	Having friends with similar cases	6	1.2%

Source: Based on calculation of the surveyed sample from Mass media firms

Observing table (1.1), 85% of the females (413) and only 15% of the sample were males (73). More than half the sample aged younger than 32 years (277). While, only 5% of the sample were aged from 33-39 (26). The sampled individuals used most of the time Facebook (167), Instagram (193) and Tiktok (86). The majority of the sample representing 49% reported they use social media 2-4 hours (238). 36.5% of the sample use social media for 6 hours or more (177). Around 44.4% of the sample follow physical disabled social media influencers. The majority of sample followed Rahma Khaled. While, the other influencers were not followed by the majority of the sample as Rania Wasfy followed by 177, Yehia Kandil followed by 175, Sama Ramy followed by 11, Ibrahim el Khouly followed by 82 and Eslam about Ali followed by 89. The main reason that attracts them to follow physical disabled influencers was the awareness (169) and their determination to be successful (166).

## 6.2 Correlation Analysis

Table (1.2): Spearman correlation coefficient

	Hypothesis	Correlation Coefficient	P-value	Decision
H1	There is positive relationship btw representation of physical disabled social media influencers in public event and their inclusion in society.	.362**	.000	Accepted
H2	There is positive correlation btw Content displayed on social media, and credibility of influencer.	.267**	.000	Accepted
H3	The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as victims.	.460**	.000	Accepted
H4	There is a shift now in the social media framing the disabled people as with success stories.	.482**	.000	Accepted
H5	The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as disadvantaged and in need for economic support.	.347**	.000	Accepted

Source: Calculations based on data in sample using SPSS 26

- There was a moderate significant positive relationship between representation of physical disable social media influencers in public event and inclusion in society at 99% confidence level. Thus, at significance level 0.01, the more represented physically disable social media influencers are, the more they will be included in society. The first hypothesis is accepted.

- There was a weak significant positive relationship between the Content that displayed on social media, and the credibility of the influencer at 99% confidence level. Thus, at significance level 0.01, the more the content displayed on social media the more the influencer become credible. The second hypothesis is accepted.

- There was a moderate significant positive relationship between the more people get information about people with disability from the social media and the more they think social media frame the disabled people as special people or victims at 99% confidence level. Thus, at significance level 0.01, The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as special people or victims. The third hypothesis is accepted. These results support the study Njogu (2009) where it was mentioned that the disabled people are seen as victims because of their disability that they can't be engaged in the life activities of the non-disabled ones. It was supported also in the study of Lynch & Thomas (1999), which indicated that the public press and media channels embedded the idea that the disabled are victims. Also, this result is supported in the research of Black and Pretes (2007) it was believed that the more

these disabled figures are always figured as people with objects with pity, the more people outside their community will feel pity for them and also this will be how these disabled people will feel about themselves,

- There was a moderate significant positive relationship between shift now in the social media framing and Perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories at 99% confidence level. Thus, at significance level 0.01, The more shifting now in social media framing the more perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories. The fourth hypothesis is accepted. This result is supported in the study of Lynch and Thomas (1999) where it was mentioned that the disabled are seen as super humans with miracles that have an inspirational successful story behind them. This success story is always related to the efforts of their parents or guardians who strongly believe in them. Also, this result is supported by the research of Bonilla et al (2022) where it was mentioned that the growing number of influencers with disabilities who are followed by millions of users, social media platforms are seen as a chance to socially normalize disability It was mentioned that the social media platforms enable disabled people to communicate with their audience, participate in the digital world, and make their interests visible, all of which have a good effect on society . Thus, the social media platforms are positioned as potent instruments for the spread of inclusive values and the empowerment of persons with disabilities. Thus, the social media platforms are positioned as powerful tools for the dissemination of inclusive values and the empowerment of disabled people. Thus,

this eradicates the stigma and usual cliché stereotype of the lack of skills of the disabled people. Also, this result is supported by the research of Teng (2023) where it was mentioned that social media is one of the keys to helping people with disabilities integrate into society and be part of it showing themselves as successful and victorious people but with different abilities. Furthermore, this result is also supported by the study of Näslund & Gardelli (2013) where it was mentioned that social media platforms are tools that make the disabled ones feel they are normal without discrimination where they can share their lives, and people comment to them

- There was a moderate significant positive relationship between the more people get information about people with disability from the social media and the more they think social media frame the disabled people as disadvantaged and in need for economic support. at 99% confidence level. Thus, at significance level 0.01, The more people get information about people with disability from the social media, the more they think social media frame the disabled people as disadvantaged and in need for economic support. The fifth hypothesis is accepted. This result is supported by the research of (Lussier-Desrochers et al. 2017) where it was mentioned that disabled people face economic problems in their daily life. This is disabled people isn't only about their inability to work, but also for the cost of their health care, aids and devices needed to help them have a regular physical life.

Also, this result is supported by Chadwick et al. (2013) where it was mentioned that the disabled people face not only political barriers on social media, but also an economic barrier.

Table (1.3): Spearman coefficients for variables in study with Age

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	P-value
Representation of physical disable social-media influencer in public event	.303	.000
Inclusion of physical disable social media influencers in society.	-.343*	.023
Content Displayed on social media	-.385**	.000
Credibility of the Influencer	-.403*	.023
People Getting Info. about People with Disabilities from social media	-.350**	.000
Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Special or Victims	-.379**	.000
Shift in Social Media Framing of Disabled People	-.264**	.000
Perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories	-.307**	.000
Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Disadvantaged and in Need of Economic Support	.303	.000

Source: Calculations based on data in sample using SPSS 26

- There is significant moderate positive relationship between Age and representation of physical disable social media influencers in public event rate at 90% confidence level. On the other hand, there is significant moderate negative relationship between Age and Inclusion of physical disable social media influencers in society rate at 95% confidence level. While there is significant moderate negative relationship between Age and Content Displayed on social media at 99% confidence level.

While there is a significant weak negative relationship between Age and Credibility of the Influencer rate at 95% confidence level. In addition to that, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Age and People Getting Information about People with Disabilities from social media at 95% confidence level. In addition to that, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Age and Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Special or Victims at 95% confidence level. Furthermore, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Age and Shift in Social Media Framing of Disabled People rate at 99% confidence level. Moreover, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Age and Perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories rate at 99% confidence level. At the end, there is a significant weak positive relationship between Age and Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Disadvantaged and in Need of Economic Support rate at 90% confidence level.

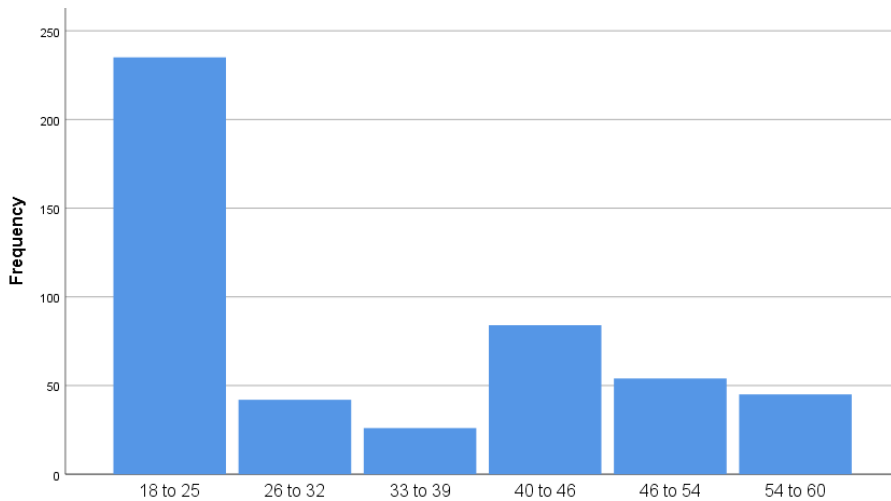
**Table (1.3): Spearman coefficients for the variables in study with Gender**

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	P-value
Representation of physical disable social media influencers in public event	.195**	.000
Inclusion of physical disable social media influencers in society.	-.137**	.002
Content Displayed on social media	.141**	.002
Credibility of the Influencer	-.137**	.002
People Getting Information about People with Disabilities from social media	.156**	.001
Perception of Social Media Framing Disabled People as Special or Victims	.258	.002
Shift in Social Media Framing of Disabled People	.177**	.000
Perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories	.145**	.001
Perception of Social Media Framing Disabled People as Disadvantaged and in Need of Economic Support	-.114*	.012

Source: Calculations based on data in sample using SPSS 26

- There is significant weak positive relationship between Gender and Representation of physical disable social media influencers in public event rate at 99% confidence level. On the other hand, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Gender and Inclusion of physical disable social media influencers in society rate at 99% confidence level. While there is a significant weak positive relationship between Gender and Content Displayed on social media at 99% confidence level. While there is a significant weak negative relationship between Gender and Credibility of the Influencer rate at 99% confidence level. In addition to that, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Gender and People Getting Information about People with Disabilities from social media at 99% confidence level. Also, there is a significant weak positive relationship between Gender and Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Special or Victims at 90% confidence level. Furthermore, there is a significant weak positive relationship between Gender and Shift in Social Media Framing of Disabled People rate at 99% confidence level. Moreover, there is a significant weak positive relationship between Gender and Perception of Disabled People as Having Success Stories rate at 99% confidence level. At the end, there is a significant weak negative relationship between Gender and Perception of social media Framing Disabled People as Disadvantaged and in Need of Economic Support rate at 90% confidence level.

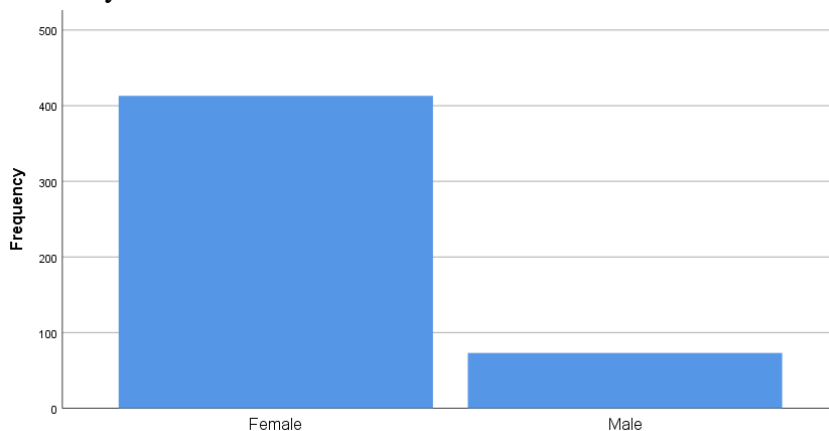




**Figure (1.1): Bar Chart for Age**

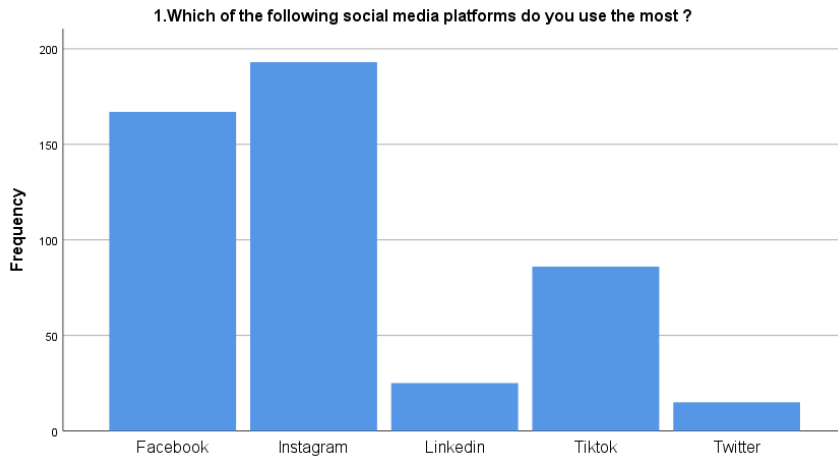
It is observable that the majority of the sample aged between 18-25 and 40-44. While nearly 10% aged between 33-39 and 26-32.

This can be explainable as the young ones has more time to spend on social media. At the same time the bigger age has now less responsibilities as their kids are becoming older and not depending on them, allowing them to spend more time on social media freely.



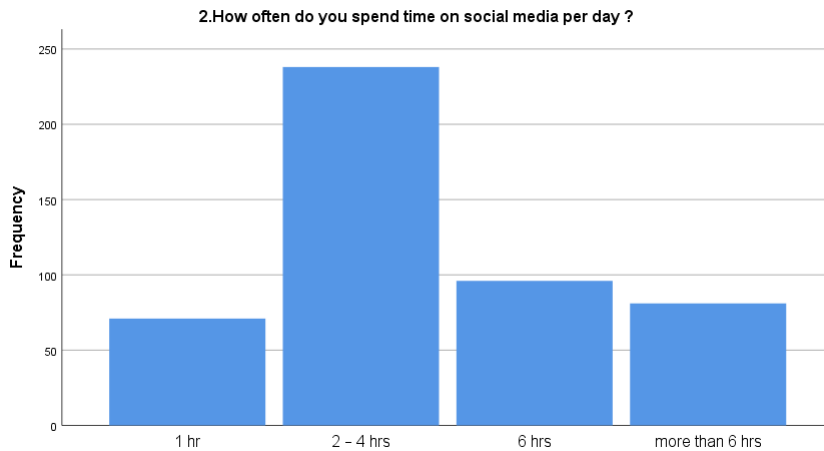
**Figure (1.2): Bar Chart for Gender**

The majority of the sample were Females representing more than half of the sample. This is explainable as females has more time to spend on social media and their needs to follow the trends and fashion.



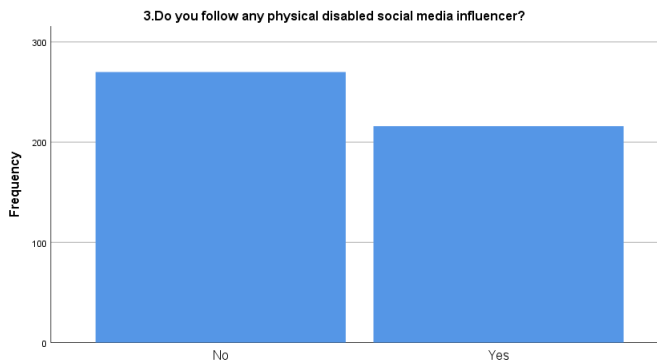
**Figure (1.3): Social media usage**

The majority of the sample were Instagram users representing more than half of the sample while the minority were twitter. This is explainable as the majority of the respondents were females and it was mentioned above that females us Instagram more as it is a visual platform that shows pictures, fashion, and trends.



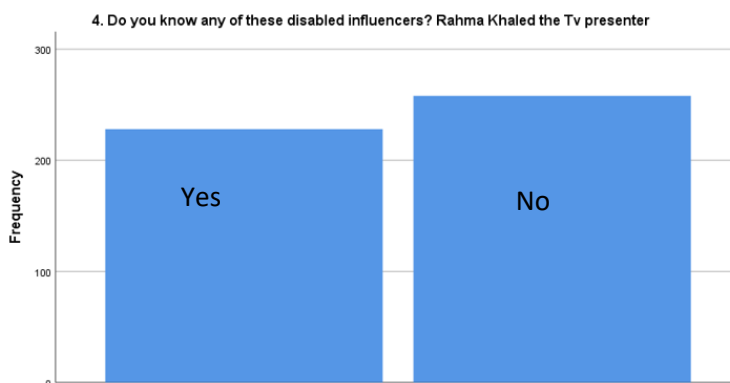
**Figure (1.4): Social media time spending**

The majority of the sample were 2-4 hrs. while the minority were 1 hr. and more than 6 hrs. This is explainable as respondents were whether students who have chores to do, or working people, or females who have house chores. So, 2 to 4 hours after finishing the university day or after finishing work or after finishing the house chores is reasonable number of hours.



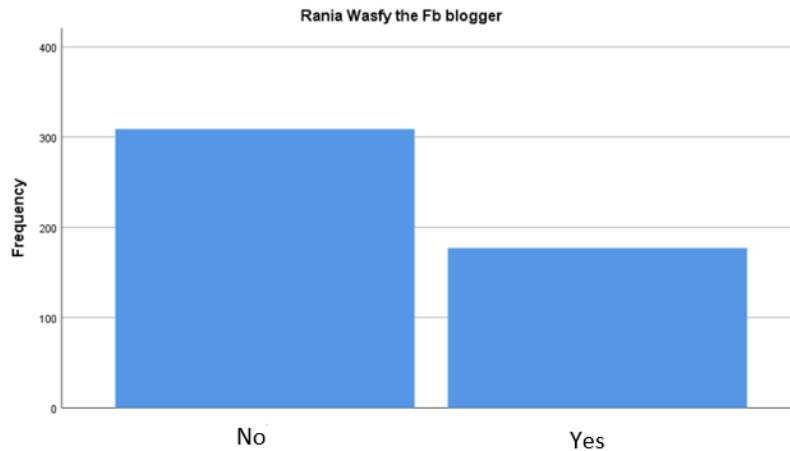
**Figure (1.5): social media disabled influencer followers**

The majority of the sample did not follow any physically disabled social media influencers. However, the difference isn't that much. Still, there is a big percentage of respondents who follow them. Yet, it still means that the physical disabled ones need to be more prominent on the social media platforms showing more of their success stories. They need to do more paid ads to be more appearing to others.



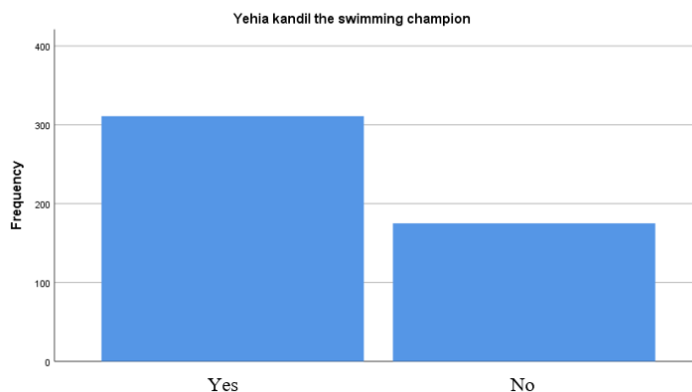
**Figure (1.6): Rahma Khaled followers**

The majority of the sample did not know follow Rahma Khaled. Yet the there was a still a big percentage who know her. So, it is advised that Rahma Khaled just needs more appearance on social media platforms by paid ads or by other influencers mentioning her, to make her more appearing to the audience.



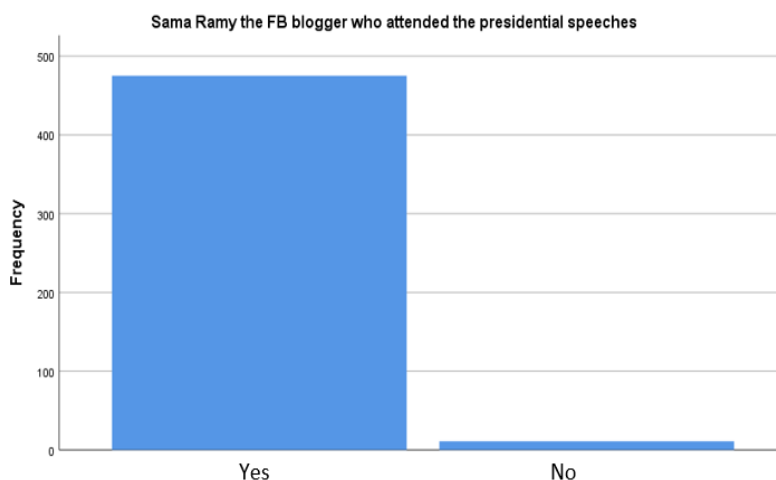
**Figure (1.7): Rania Wasfy followers**

The majority of the sample did not follow Rania Wasfy. This is explainable as Rania Wasfy has a low profile and didn't appear on the TV a lot. In addition, her main blog on Facebook is about cooking which targets only females.



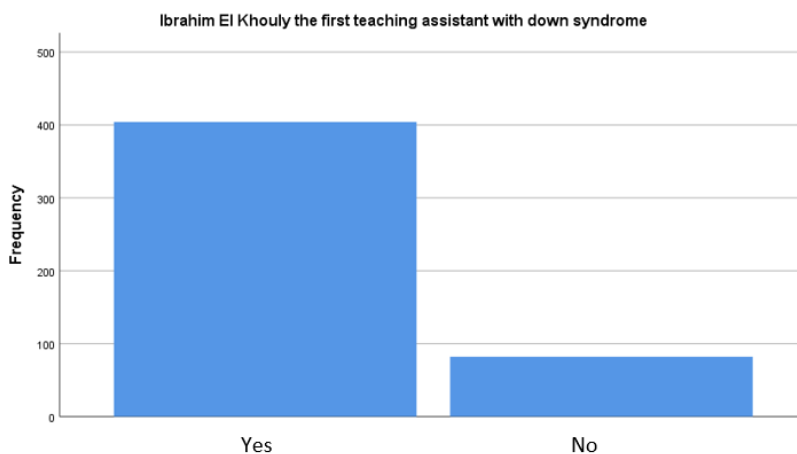
**Figure (1.8): Yehia Kandil followers. This can be explainable**

The majority of the sample said Yes while the minority were No, actually Yehia does great effort beside the continuous help and support from his family to be a social media participant. Yehia has accounts on Facebook and Instagram that post regularly all his achievements, also he is a good speaker who participates in different public events and his school and college graduations ceremonies.



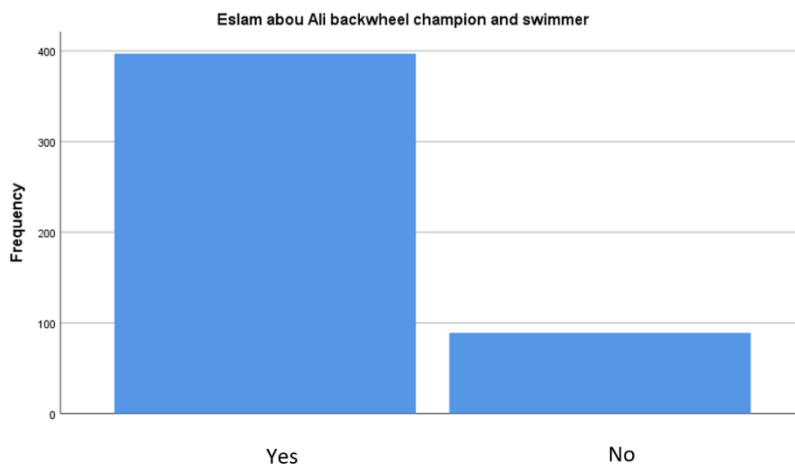
**Figure (1.9): Sama Ramy followers**

The majority of the sample followed Sama Ramy. This can be due to the buzz that happened to her during the presidential speech by our president and that how she is a student now at the AAST although with the presence of her disability.



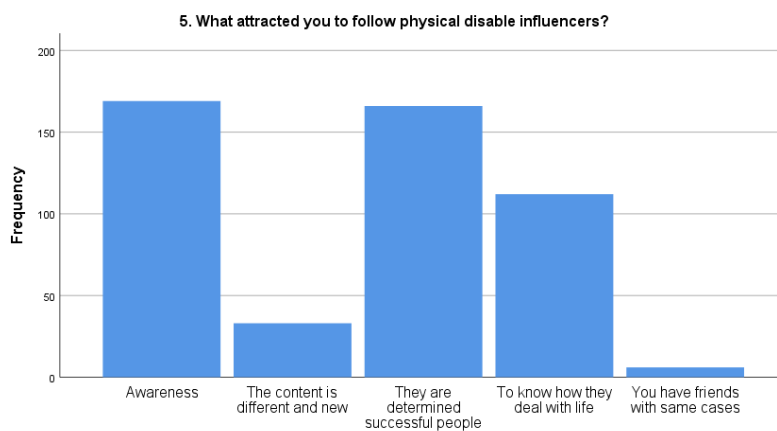
**Figure (1.10): Ibrahim El Khouly followers**

The majority of the sample followed Ibrahim el Khouly. This can be explainable due to being the first one of Down syndrome person to know the academia field in Egypt. So, it was such a new incident to the Egyptian society.



**Figure (1.11): Eslam About Ali followers**

The majority of the sample followed Eslam About Ali champion and swimmer. Eslam inspires lots of social media users and participants, he gives hope to normal and disabled audience. He posts lots of inspirational videos about his competitions, also how he tries to enjoy his social life with friends with happiness and faith.



**Figure (1.12): Influencers attraction**

The majority of the sample believe Awareness and they are determined successful people representing more than half of the sample while the minority were having friends with same cases.

## 7. Conclusion:

The sample consisted mostly of females aged 18-25 or 40-44 (Figure 1.1). Over half of the respondents were Instagram users, with a minority using Twitter (Figure 1.2, 1.3). Most respondents spent 2-4 hours on social media daily, with few spending just 1 hour or more than 6 hours (Figure 1.4). The majority did not follow disabled influencers, though a minority did (Figure 1.5). Most respondents did not follow the influencers Rahma Khaled or Rania Wasfy, but did follow Yehia Kandil, Sama Ramy, Ibrahim El Khouly, and Eslam Abou Ali (Figures 1.6-1.11). When asked about their attraction to influencers, most respondents said it was due to awareness and seeing influencers as successful people; few said it was because they had friends with similar disabilities (Figure 1.12).

So, this explains that the society is attracted more to the sports champions, and most probably the male's ones. This can be explained as the sports championships have more lights shed on them in the newspapers and TV news, and social media platforms. And, still the Egyptian society is more prone to be masculine society encouraging the males more to succeed.

In summary, the sample was predominantly young adult females active on Instagram. While most did not follow disabled influencers, a noteworthy minority did, especially the influencers Yehia Kandil, Sama Ramy, Ibrahim El Khouly, and Eslam Abou Ali. The primary driver for following influencers appeared to be a perception of their success and influence rather than personal connection.

It was clear that people follow the disabled influencers due to the awareness they create about themselves and due to being successful inspiring stories as mentioned in Bassey et al. (2021).

## **8. Recommendation**

The authors will discuss now what can the social media in Egypt do to promote the social inclusion of people with disabilities in all spheres of society. They came up with some recommendations:

First, we need to raise awareness of the challenges and society pressure facing people with disabilities and issues surrounding disability. Second, we need to raise awareness of the factors that contribute to the exclusion and stigmatization of people with disabilities in the Egyptian society. Third, we need to raise awareness that having a child with disability isn't a taboo anymore in 2023. Fourth, ask their parents or guardians to show their journey step by step and their daily life activities till they reach this milestone by overcoming their disability and being success stories. Fifth, we need to show how difficult times and obstacles they overcome, but without victimizing them.

Thus, no need to portray them as victims, or that they need economic support. Sixth, we need to show how bad they are treated, and whether they get bullied from their peers to show how bad it is and how bad they feel. Seventh, we need to feature more examples of successful people with disabilities being champions, or reaching such a



successful position that no “regular one with no disability” can reach. Eighth, we need to publicize their social media platforms and how they have big number of followers and publish interesting information on them. Ninth, we need to encourage the social media users to follow the pages of the less advantaged ones. Finally, we need to create and promote the message that people with disabilities represent a huge number around the world. They are just humans with same range of emotions, interests, talents, skills and behavior as their peers of similar age.

#### **9. Limitations of the study:**

The research was limited only to be collected through online surveys only through Facebook, what Sapp, and emails. It didn’t use any qualitative research methods. Thus, focus group research if used, it would have enriched the results. Moreover, it was concentrating firstly on Facebook as a social medium and secondly for the Instagram and others such as linked in, TikTok. Many others social media platforms were not tested in the research. Furthermore, it also included the upper classes only who speak and understand English. Moreover, the survey was conducted for 3 weeks only due to the time constraints. Also, it was limited to the study of certain less disadvantaged famous Egyptian bloggers and not many influencers.

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