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Parental Perception and Challenges in Raising a Child with Special Needs in Developing Countries

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ABSTRACT

Caring for a child with special needs is a complex caregiving experience with emotional, social, educational, medical and economic implications for parents. In Bangladesh, parents often have to deal with psychological stress, social embarrassment, insufficient educational support, poor access to healthcare and financial difficulties. However, past research has mainly focused on individual topics such as autism, schooling, rehabilitation or carer stress, and there is limited quantitative evidence examining these fundamental caregiving drivers combined, in one model. The present study aims to explore parental perceptions and challenges of raising children with special needs in Bangladesh by investigating psychological stress, social stigma and discrimination, access to education and school support, access to healthcare and professional services and financial burden of caregiving. A quantitative cross-sectional research method was adopted because it permitted data gathering from a large sample at one point in time. Purposive-convenience sample and a structured Likert scale questionnaire were used to collect data from 384 parents and primary carers. The instrument was validated by reliability analysis with Cronbach's Alpha values above the acceptable limit. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 27.0 employing frequency analysis, descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis. Findings indicated that all five independent factors were positively and strongly correlated with parental perspective and caregiving problems. Psychological stress was the most strongly associated, followed by issues in healthcare access and financial load. All five factors were significant predictors according to the regression analyses and accounted for 54.8% of the variation. The research offers a comprehensive quantitative framework for understanding the challenges of caregiving in Bangladesh and underscores the significance of mental health support, inclusive education, accessible therapy, public awareness, and financial help.

INTRODUCTION

In Bangladesh, parents of children with ASD experience significant psychological distress as a result of severe societal stigma, marginalization, and medical incompetence (Karim *et al.*, 2025). Autism has become an increasingly prominent developmental and social concern in Bangladesh, where moms of children with special needs often experience major emotional, social, and caring challenges (Upoma *et al.*, 2020). The general growth and development of children with special needs require continual care, educational support, therapy services, family participation, and social inclusion (Tasnim *et al.*, 2024). Autism spectrum disorder is a developmental illness characterized by limited and repetitive behaviors, hobbies, or activities, as well as deficiencies in social communication and interaction (Akhter *et al.*, 2024). Hence, parenting a kid with special needs is a multi-dimensional job since parents need to handle health care, education, social adjustment, behavioral development and long-term family planning (Haque *et al.*, 2022). Parental viewpoint is crucial as parents frequently recognize the early developmental problems and make the initial decisions concerning diagnosis, treatment, therapy and schooling (Ashrafun *et al.*, 2025). Children with special

needs and their families in Bangladesh face several difficulties relating to knowledge, diagnosis, access to services, education, social acceptance and financial means (Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2023). Parents observe speech delay, bad eye contact, strange behavior, poor social interaction, learning problems or delayed developmental milestones before any formal diagnosis (Ashrafun *et al.*, 2025). Parental knowledge is an essential element in caring for children with special needs as the right knowledge enables parents to comprehend the child's situation and seek needed care (Al Imran *et al.*, 2025). Parents of children with autism in Bangladesh have insufficient knowledge and practice of autism care and intervention (Al Imran *et al.*, 2025). On the additional hand, constant demands of caregiving may bring emotional and psychological burden to parents of children with special needs (Tasnim *et al.*, 2024). Hospital congestion, manual scheduling system, bed shortages, limited digitized data, lack of adequate training and infrastructural limitations may reduce the efficiency of healthcare delivery in Bangladesh. Therefore, the access to the healthcare service is an important issue for the families of children with special needs (Halimuzzaman *et al.*, 2026). Parenting stress is closely associated with the child's diagnosis, daily care

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needs, uncertainty about the future and problems with social adjustment (Haque *et al.*, 2022). In Bangladesh, social stigma, negative attitudes, cultural misconceptions and lack of awareness may cause shame, isolation, blame and exclusion for children with special needs and their parents, and may discourage families from revealing the child's condition, seeking services or engaging in social activities (Uddin & Ashrafun, 2023). Parents of children with special needs in Bangladesh are concerned about education due to the gaps in school-level implementation of inclusive education and the potential barriers faced by children with disabilities in admission, classroom participation, peer interaction, learning materials, trained teacher support, accessibility and individualized attention (Al-Mamun *et al.*, 2023). Strong emotional bonds and personalized communication strategies in special needs parenting might boost parental resilience and better children's developmental results (Rune & Rana, 2024). Home-based learning and daily routine management are crucial for children with neurodevelopmental disorders, who may have issues with learning, communication, behaviour, and emotional health when regular educational support is disrupted, necessitating parents to give repeated instructions, structured routine, and constant supervision at home (Nisha & Bakul, 2024). Another major problem for parents parenting children with special needs in Bangladesh is financial pressure as regular consultation, treatment, medicine, special education, transport and assistive help can become a long-term economic burden on families (Tasnim *et al.*, 2024). The restrictions in the healthcare system may generate further challenges for parents of children with special needs who require a fast diagnosis, regular therapy, professional consultation and continued treatment assistance (Halimuzzaman *et al.*, 2026). In addition to increasing public awareness and teaching people about the advantages of these services, it is crucial to comprehend the reasons why parents of children with disabilities do not use them or might be reluctant to do so (Jalil *et al.*, 2025). Very few studies have been conducted in Bangladesh to explore parents' perceptions about special school services for children with ASD. Studies conducted internationally have shown that parents' engagement and satisfaction with educational support have a significant effect on children's academic and social outcomes (Uddin & Ashrafun, 2023). The primary aim of this study is to explore the parental perception and challenges of caregiving in raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh, namely psychological stress, social stigma and discrimination, access to education and school support, access to healthcare and professional services, and financial burden of caregiving.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parents of children with special needs have many duties and have to face emotional stress, social reactions, educational demands, healthcare needs, financial strain, fatigue, sleep disturbance and physical exhaustion at the same time (Shahali *et al.*, 2024). (Liu *et al.*, 2023) found

that the factors influencing carer burden in parents of children with special needs include the child's condition, the time spent on caregiving, the parents' mental health, family support and access to formal services. Parental perception and caring issues are the result of a combination of psychological, social, educational, healthcare, and financial circumstances (Solaiman *et al.*, 2022). The emotional and mental burden of providing 24/7 care makes parental psychological stress a primary problem in raising children with special needs. The parents of children with autism spectrum disorder in Bangladesh endure a range of psychological burdens, with mothers and housewives experiencing more stress because of their direct engagement in the daily care of the children (Solaiman *et al.*, 2022). Parents with little support, poor coping ability, and uncertainty about the child's future may further compound the stress, and psychological stress is a key independent predictor influencing parental perspective and caring for special children problems (Liu *et al.*, 2023; Solaiman *et al.*, 2022). (Jalil *et al.*, 2025) found that, parents in Bangladesh often view childhood impairment via the lens of traditional beliefs, religious interpretation, family influence, and community views. These cultural and spiritual explanations may influence the way parents accept the child's condition, seek professional treatment and connect with family and society. Thus, social stigma and prejudice remain key variables to consider in assessing parental perception and caregiving issues in the Bangladeshi environment (Jalil *et al.*, 2025). Parents of special needs children in Bangladesh are very concerned about access to schooling and school support. (Ferdous *et al.*, 2024) observed the obstacles facing special needs children in mainstream secondary schools to include limited physical facilities, lack of skilled teachers, poor accessibility and insufficient classroom support. Therefore, lack of school assistance could raise the pressure from parents and affect parents' perception of their child's learning opportunity, future development and social inclusion (Ferdous *et al.*, 2024). Social stigma and discrimination are major concerns influencing parents of children with special needs as unfavorable social views may exacerbate exclusion, emotional pressure and impediments to support-seeking behavior. (Priya *et al.*, 2025) observed that parents can face depression, anxiety, carer load and poor sleep owing to constant caregiving pressure, little psychosocial support and weak community knowledge. Therefore, social stigma and discrimination are essential variables to understand the parental attitude and challenges of caregiving among parents of children with special needs (Priya *et al.*, 2025). (Nuri *et al.*, 2022) explored that access to healthcare and professional services are important for children with special needs because diagnosis, rehabilitation, therapy, disability allowance and professional supervision assist child development and family care. Availability of rehabilitation services for children with disabilities in Bangladesh is contingent upon the availability of the services, institutional capacity, professional assistance and

disability related social protection systems. Limited access to health care and professional services may alter parental perception and enhance caregiving issues in Bangladesh (Nuri *et al.*, 2022). Broader public health research also shows that legal and institutional frameworks influence healthcare access and service outcomes in developing countries, which supports the need to examine how formal service availability affects families raising children with special needs. In addition, the public health literature has shown the significance of legal and institutional frameworks in determining access to health services and service results in poor countries. This highlights the need of investigating the impact of the governmental supply of services on families raising children with special needs (Shubho *et al.*, 2026).

(Bhuiyan & Islam, 2025) in their study explained, financial burden is a major component in having a kid with special needs since families tend to pay more for treatment, therapy, special education, transport, assistive support and daily care. Financial constraints were recognised as a significant consequence for families with children with special needs, as care tasks frequently cause economic challenges (Bhuiyan & Islam, 2025).

The literature study reveals that parents of children with special needs suffer from psychological strain, societal pressure, educational barriers, limited access to healthcare, and financial difficulty.

(Bhuiyan & Islam, 2025; Ferdous *et al.*, 2024; Nuri *et al.*, 2022; Priya *et al.*, 2025; Solaiman *et al.*, 2022). However, most of the recent studies focus on specific issues such as autism, inclusive education, rehabilitation access, carer mental health or financial consequences rather than the combined effect of multiple caregiving variables in one model. There is limited quantitative evidence associating parental psychological stress, social stigma and prejudice, access to education and school support, access to healthcare and professional services, and financial strain to parental perspective and caregiving issues in Bangladesh (Liu *et al.*, 2023). This presents a research gap for a variable-based study that investigates how these five factors impact parental perception and caregiving challenges among parents raising children with special needs in Bangladesh. This study aims to contribute to the literature by providing a combined knowledge framework of parental view and obstacles of caring in a Bangladeshi context. It also supports future policy and institutional planning by identifying the major factors that shape the lived experience of parents raising children with special needs in Bangladesh.

Research Questions

1. How does parental psychological stress impact parental perception and caregiving challenges in parenting a kid with special needs in Bangladesh?
2. How do social stigma and discrimination affect the attitude of parents and the caregiving tasks involved in raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh?
3. What is the impact of access to education and

school support in determining the parental attitude and caregiving challenges in parenting a child with special needs in Bangladesh?

4. What is the impact of access to healthcare and professional services on parental perception and caregiving challenges in parenting a child with special needs in Bangladesh?

5. What is the impact of the financial burden of caring on parental perception and problems of caregiving for raising a kid with special needs in Bangladesh?

Research Objectives

1. To explore the effect of psychological stress of parents on parental perspective and problems of parenting a special needs kid in Bangladesh.
2. To understand the societal stigma and prejudice influencing parental perception and caregiving problems of parenting a kid with special need in Bangladesh.
3. To explore the impact of access to education and school assistance on parental perception of caregiving challenges in raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh.
4. To find out the impact of access to health care and professional assistance on parental perception and challenges in caring in raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh.
5. To assess the impact of financial cost of care providing on parental perception and caregiving obstacles in raising a kid with special needs in Bangladesh.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to evaluate the parental perception and caregiving challenges in raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh. The empirical data were collected from parents or primary care providers of children with special needs who were directly involved in the daily care of their children. The parent focused approach was used in the sample study and data were collected from carers who had direct experience of raising children with special needs but data were collected using a structured questionnaire rather than interviews.

The respondents were selected using purposive-convenient sampling. Purposive sampling was used because the study required participants who were parents or primary carers of children with special needs. Convenience sampling helped to reach out to respondents who were available and willing from special schools, inclusive schools, therapy centers, rehabilitation centers and parent support groups. Inclusion criteria were parents or primary carers living in Bangladesh with a child with special needs and actively involved in the care of the child. Respondents were excluded if they were not directly involved in caregiving or did not complete the survey. A standard sample size of 384 respondents was considered sufficient for this quantitative study at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error for unknown or large population. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire which included demographic data and

Likert scale items. The study had five independent variables: parental psychological stress, social stigma and discrimination, access to education and school support, access to healthcare and professional services, and financial burden of caregiving. The dependent variable was the perception of the parents and the challenges of caregiving in raising a child with special needs. The opinions of the respondents were measured with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. Data were collected and then coded and analyzed using SPSS. The respondents' profile and response patterns were presented using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Demographic profile and response patterns of the respondents were summarized using descriptive statistics. A correlation study to evaluate the strength and direction of the correlations among variables was performed. This methodological structure is in accordance with the guideline of the research methodology section to cover research design, sample, instrument, variables and analytic procedure. Ethical issues were observed by ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality and academic use of the data collected.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section provides the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from the parents and primary carers of children with special needs in Bangladesh. The analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics using descriptive and inferential statistics like frequency analysis, reliability

analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis. The results are organized according to study objectives and variables to explore the influence of parental psychological stress, social stigma and discrimination, access to education and school support, access to healthcare and professional services, and financial burden on parental perception and caregiving challenges. The results are further discussed in light of existing theoretical and empirical literature to draw meaningful conclusions about the factors affecting parents raising children with special needs in the Bangladeshi context.

Demographic Profile of the Respondent

The demographic profile was analyzed to describe the background characteristics of the respondents and the caregiving context of the sample. This table includes gender, age group, relationship to child, child's special need category, child's age group and residence. These characteristics are important because the experience and difficulties in caring may vary according to the family role, child condition and place of residence.

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. Out of the 384 respondents, 64.32% were females and 32.03% were males, signifying that mothers constituted the majority of respondents. The largest age group was 35–44 years (46.61% of the sample) followed by 25–34 years (28.65%). Regarding relationship with the child, 63.54% were mothers and 33.33% were fathers. As regards the child's special need category, autism spectrum disorder was the largest group with 41.67% followed by multiple disabilities at 14.32% and learning

Table 1: Demographic Frequency Distribution

Category	Group	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	247	64.32
	Male	123	32.03
	Prefer not to Say	14	3.65
Age group	Below 25	10	2.60
	25–34	110	28.65
	35–44	179	46.61
	45–54	69	17.97
	55 and Above	16	4.17
Relationship with child	Mother	244	63.54
	Father	128	33.33
	Guardian	7	1.82
	Other Caregiver	5	1.30
Child's special need category	Autism Spectrum Disorder	160	41.67
	Adhd	43	11.20
	Learning Disability	50	13.02
	Physical Disability	30	7.81
	Speech Or Hearing Difficulty	28	7.29
	Multiple Disabilities	55	14.32
	Other	18	4.69

Child's age group	Below 5	59	15.36
	5–10	189	49.22
	11–15	102	26.56
	16 and Above	34	8.85
Residence	Urban	177	46.09
	Semi-Urban	136	35.42
	Rural	71	18.49

disability at 13.02%. Children in the age group of 5-10 years formed the majority of the sample accounting for 49.22%. The residential profile indicates that 46.09% of the respondents were from urban areas, 35.42% from semi-urban areas and 18.49% from rural areas (Table 1).

Descriptive Analysis of Parental Perception and Caregiving Challenges

The study used parental perception and caregiving challenges as dependent variables. This table shows the mean and standard deviation for five items of daily family

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Parental Perception and Caregiving Challenges

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
PCC1	3.92	1.22
PCC2	3.99	1.19
PCC3	4.17	1.14
PCC4	3.78	1.27
PCC5	4.06	1.19
Overall Mean	3.98	1.10

life, time demand, practical difficulties, personal life, and overall caregiving pressure. The descriptive results help to determine the general level of challenge perceived by parents in raising children with special needs.

The overall mean score for parental perception and caregiving challenges was 3.98, signifying that respondents generally agreed that raising a child with special needs is challenging. The highest mean score was found for PCC3 (mean = 4.17), which showed that parents strongly believed that families of children with special needs in Bangladesh face a lot of practical difficulties. PCC5 again scored high (mean = 4.06) showing that caregiving issues are a family affair (Table 2).

Descriptive Analysis of Parental Psychological Stress

Parental psychological stress was one of the primary independent variables of the study. The measures assessed emotional stress, anxiety about the child's future, mental tiredness, and less personal time owing to caring responsibilities. The table helps clarify the degree to which caregiving produces psychological pressure among parents and primary caregivers.

The mean score for parental psychological stress was 3.86, which means that respondents experienced high levels of emotional and mental pressure owing to caring duties. The highest mean was for PSS2 (mean=3.92). This means that the parents were quite apprehensive about the future

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Parental Psychological Stress

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
PSS1	3.79	1.17
PSS2	3.92	1.13
PSS3	3.87	1.15
PSS4	3.87	1.13
Overall Mean	3.86	1.02

development and independence of their child (Table 3)

Descriptive Analysis of Social Stigma and Discrimination

An analysis of social stigma and prejudice was done to understand the social obstacles experienced by parents and children with special needs. The items were centered on community misunderstanding, unpleasant comments,

difficulties in communicating the child's requirements and exclusion from social activities. This table is crucial as social attitudes can influence parental confidence, help-seeking behavior and overall care giving experience.

The mean score of social stigma and discrimination was 3.64 suggesting that respondents moderately believed that negative societal views harmed their experience of caregiving. The highest mean score was on SSD1 (3.87)

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Social Stigma and Discrimination

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
SSD1	3.87	1.12
SSD2	3.62	1.22
SSD3	3.58	1.22
SSD4	3.50	1.24
Overall Mean	3.64	1.06

which means that the community misunderstanding of the child's health was a serious issue. Findings also revealed that parents faced harsh comments, social judgement and difficulties to openly address their child's requirements (Table 4).

Descriptive Analysis of Access to Education and School Support

Access to schooling and school support were examined to explore the educational hurdles faced by children with special needs and their parents. Items examined difficulty in locating appropriate schools, teacher readiness, school

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis of Access to Education and School Support

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
AES1	3.89	1.10
AES2	4.02	1.09
AES3	3.82	1.17
AES4	3.93	1.13
Overall Mean	3.91	0.99

amenities and chances for inclusive education. This table indicates the impact of school-related help on parents' perceptions of their child's learning, development and social inclusion.

The mean score for access to education and school support was 3.91 suggesting that parents generally believed that access to education is a big concern. AES2 scored the

highest mean (4.02), suggesting that parents did not always feel teachers and school staff were appropriately equipped to support children with special needs. AES4 was also rated well with a mean of 3.93, indicating that inclusive educational options remain restricted in many locations (Table 5).

Table 6: Descriptive Analysis of Access to Healthcare and Professional Services

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
AHP1	3.80	1.15
AHP2	3.84	1.16
AHP3	3.83	1.15
AHP4	4.07	1.08
Overall Mean	3.88	1.00

Descriptive Analysis of Access to Healthcare and Professional Services

Service-related challenges experienced by parents in accessing healthcare and professional services were identified. The items measured access to doctors, therapists, experts, diagnosis, therapy, rehabilitation, waiting time, distance and professional counselling. This table is important since frequent healthcare and expert assistance are critical for child development and parental caregiving support.

The mean score of access to healthcare and professional services was 3.88. This showed that parents had difficulty in getting diagnosis, therapy, rehabilitation and professional assistance. The highest mean score was of 4.07 for AHP4 which indicates that parents felt a great

need for additional professional counselling and guidance. The results reveal that dearth of educated specialists, restricted therapy facilities, distance, long waiting time and service shortage are additional challenges for families of children with special needs (Table 6).

Descriptive Analysis of Financial Burden of Caregiving

The economic pressure associated with raising a kid with special needs was explored using the financial burden of caregiving. The items were cost of treatment, therapy, education, special care, travel expenses, income disruption and adequacy of financial support. This table helps identify whether financial pressure is an important role in affecting parental view and caring challenges.

Table 7: Descriptive Analysis of Financial Burden of Caregiving

Measurement Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
FBC1	4.21	1.01
FBC2	4.07	1.08
FBC3	3.86	1.16
FBC4	4.17	1.05
Overall Mean	4.08	0.94

The highest mean score of all independent factors was for financial strain of caregiving (4.08). This suggests that financial strain was one of the most intense obstacles that parents encountered. FBC1 had the highest mean score of 4.21, indicating that treatment, therapy, schooling and special care costs created a substantial financial burden on

families. FBC4 also scored high with a mean of 4.17 which showed that the financial support by the government or institutions was judged to be insufficient (Table 7).

Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was conducted to test the internal

Table 8: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Parental Perception and Caregiving Challenges	5	0.949
Parental Psychological Stress	4	0.912
Social Stigma and Discrimination	4	0.911
Access to Education and School Support	4	0.905
Access to Healthcare and Professional Services	4	0.902
Financial Burden of Caregiving	4	0.897
Overall Questionnaire	25	0.944

consistency of the measurement items in the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for all variables and for the whole questionnaire. This table is crucial because dependable measurement scales are required prior to doing correlation and regression analysis.

Table 8 shows the reliability analysis of the study variables. Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables were above 0.70 indicating acceptable internal consistency. The dependent variable parental perspective and caregiving issues has a

very good reliability value, 0.949. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was 0.944, which indicated that the measuring items were internally consistent and adequate for further statistical analysis (Table 8).

Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the strength and direction of the correlations between the independent factors and the dependent variable. The

Table 9: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Independent Variable	Pearson Correlation with Parental Perception and Caregiving Challenges	Significance
Parental Psychological Stress	0.595	$p < 0.001$
Social Stigma and Discrimination	0.466	$p < 0.001$
Access to Education and School Support	0.488	$p < 0.001$
Access to Healthcare and Professional Services	0.547	$p < 0.001$
Financial Burden of Caregiving	0.527	$p < 0.001$

investigation examines the statistical association between parental perspective and caregiving issues with parental psychological stress, stigma, access to education, access to healthcare and financial hardship. This table presents the first inferential evidence of the correlations among the study variables.

Pearson correlations showed that all five independent variables were positively and significantly related to parental perspective and caregiving problems. The

dependent variable was most related to parental psychological stress ($r = 0.595$, $p < 0.001$), followed by access to healthcare and professional services ($r = 0.547$, $p < 0.001$) and financial burden of caregiving ($r = 0.527$, $p < 0.001$). School support and access to education had a moderate positive link ($r = 0.488$, $p < 0.001$), while societal stigma and prejudice had a large positive relationship ($r = 0.466$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 9).

Multiple Regression Analysis

The five independent variables were pooled as a multiple regression analysis to investigate the cumulative explanatory power. Model summary R, R Square, Adjusted R Square, F value and significance level. This

table shows the extent to which chosen psychological, social, educational, healthcare and financial factors explain difference in parental perspective and caregiving issues.

Table 10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F Value	Significance
1	0.740	0.548	0.542	91.492	$p < 0.001$
Not aware	128	32%			
Total	400	100			

Table 10 presents the model summary of multiple regression analysis. The R Square value was 0.548, which means that 54.8% of the variation in parental perception and caregiving problems was explained by the five independent variables. The value of Adjusted R Square was 0.542 indicating the model to be strongly explanatory. The F value was 91.492 with $p < 0.001$, which indicated the whole regression model was statistically significant

(Table 10).

The table of regression coefficients displays the effect of each independent variable on parental perception and caregiving issues separately. It reports unstandardized coefficients, standard errors, standardized beta values, t-values and significance levels. The table presents an overview of the statistically significant predictors and the variables with larger influence in the model.

Table 11: Regression Coefficients

Predictor Variable	B	Standard Error	Standardized Beta	t-value	Significance
Constant	-0.371	0.212	—	-1.755	0.080
Parental Psychological Stress	0.321	0.045	0.298	7.083	$p < 0.001$
Social Stigma and Discrimination	0.135	0.041	0.130	3.248	0.001
Access to Education and School Support	0.180	0.044	0.163	4.055	$p < 0.001$
Access to Healthcare and Professional Services	0.261	0.045	0.237	5.760	$p < 0.001$
Financial Burden of Caregiving	0.222	0.048	0.190	4.614	$p < 0.001$

The regression results showed that all the five independent factors had positive and substantial effect on the parental perception and caregiving issues. The largest effect was found for parental psychological stress (standardized beta = 0.298, $p < 0.001$). Psychological stress was therefore the most important predictor of parental perception and caregiving difficulty. Access to healthcare and professional services was the second most important predictor (standardized beta value = 0.237, $p < 0.001$). The financial burden of caregiving had a substantial positive influence as well (standardized beta value = 0.190, $p < 0.001$). Access to education and school support had a significant influence of 0.163 beta. Social stigma and prejudice had a significant effect of 0.130 beta (Table 11).

The findings showed that psychological stress, social stigma, education-related difficulty, difficulty accessing healthcare, and financial hardship increased the sense of caring issues among parents. Therefore, all the five independent variables were significant predictors of parental view and caregiving issues of parents parenting children with special needs in Bangladesh.

Findings

The findings of the study reveal that parents of special needs children in Bangladesh are faced with various caregiving obstacles. The descriptive data indicated the highest mean score was for financial burden, followed by parental perspective and caregiving issues, access to education and school assistance, access to healthcare and professional services and parental psychological stress. This means that families are heavily impacted by the economic cost of treatment, rehabilitation, special education, transport and daily care. The correlation analysis indicated that all the independent variables were positively and strongly correlated with the parental perception and caregiving problems. The largest association was with psychological stress, demonstrating that emotional strain, worry, mental fatigue and less personal time are important to the experience of caregiving. Caregiving issues were closely associated to healthcare access and financial load, suggesting that service lack and economic pressure worsen the parental difficulty. The regression analysis also indicated substantial impacts of all the five factors on parental perspective and caregiving problems. The biggest predictor was parental psychological stress,

followed by access to health care and professional services and financial cost of care giving. These findings point to the fact that the problems of raising a kid with special needs are not limited to one domain only. Parental experience is rather formed combined by psychological, social, educational, healthcare and economic elements.

The analysis confirmed the research aims of the study. It highlights the major impact of psychological stress, stigma and prejudice, hurdles connected to schooling, restrictions to the health care services and financial load towards the caregiving responsibilities of the parents. Therefore, enhancing mental health assistance, eliminating social stigma, improving inclusive education, expanding healthcare and rehabilitation services, and providing financial support may help alleviate the caregiving load of parents raising children with special needs in Bangladesh.

CONCLUSIONS

The study explored parental perception and challenges of raising a child with special needs in Bangladesh. The study revealed that parental psychological stress, social stigma and discrimination, limited education support, poor healthcare access, and financial burden significantly affected caregiving challenges. Psychological stress, healthcare access and financial burden were the strongest predictors among these factors. According to the study, caregiving is not only a family responsibility but also a psychological, social, educational, healthcare and economic issue. The role of psychological stress as a major contributor to caregiving challenges is supported by the work of (Rusu *et al.*, 2025), who found that greater parental stress was strongly associated with lower parental well-being. (Fang *et al.*, 2024) also found an association between parenting stress and parent, child and situational factors, supporting the idea that parental difficulties are influenced by a range of circumstances. The study recommends more mental health support, inclusive education, trained teachers, accessible therapy and rehabilitation services, public awareness, and financial assistance for families raising children with special needs in Bangladesh. The results add to the literature by offering a quantitative understanding of the main factors affecting parental perception and caregiving difficulties. Government and charitable involvement in a media-driven disability awareness campaign can assist promote awareness and combat the shame and stigma associated with disability in Bangladeshi society (Jalil *et al.*, 2025)

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