

# The Stigma Index

Enosh Association 2022

# ENOSH



The Israeli Mental Health Association

Research conducted by: Yifat Media Research

# Methodology

## Research purpose:

To examine the use of expressions related to the world of mental health as they appear in traditional media and online social media networks.

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## Research framework:

A representative sample from the Israel media: print, digital, and postings on social media.

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## Analysis method:

Qualitative content analysis, which reliably reflects how the average Israeli perceives the media coverage

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**Number of articles in the media:** 1,450

**The number of discussions on social media:** 78,399

## Indicators:



Number of articles/appearances in the media



Number of posts/chats on social media

## Structure of the analysis:

**Expressions:** psychotic (insane, crazy), psychopath, mentally ill, schizophrenic, split personality

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**Who used the expression:** the media, politicians, celebrities, etc.

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**Classification of usage:** correct, incorrect, offensive/damaging

# Correct, incorrect usage

We classified the usage of the employed expressions into three categories: correct, incorrect, offensive/damaging

1. **Correct usage:** a small minority of the total uses; discussion of a diagnosed mental condition.

Example from literature: "Sorrow and Bliss", by Meg Mason. a humorous, sensitive glimpse into the mind of a mentally ill person.

2. **Incorrect Usage:** Common phrases and descriptions that are inaccurate but not offensive.

"As we have said before, we are not excited about the concept of unicorns and we are not looking for companies that recruit at crazy value levels..."  
(Calcalist)

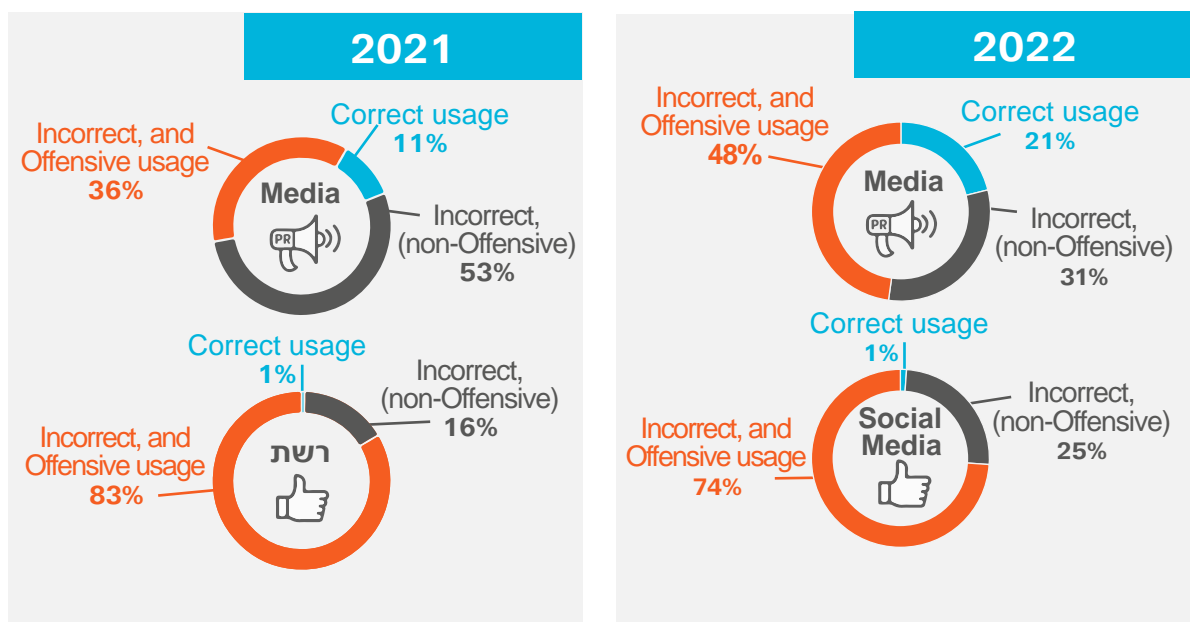
3. **Offensive/damaging usage:** the vast majority of online usage: the term is employed to express something negative.

"Gantz is mentally ill and dangerous to the security of the country."  
(Comment on Facebook)

In relation to the previous year's index, there has been a change in the discourse in both traditional media and online social media. In the traditional media, there was an increase in the proportion of correct usage, alongside a simultaneous increase in offensive/damaging usage, in comparison to incorrect but non-offensive language. On the internet, we saw a decrease in offensive discourse.

**The absolute majority of incorrect use of phrases on social media is offensive.**

Correct, Incorrect, and Offensive expressions in the media and online in 2022 as compared to the previous Stigma Index.



# Examples by type of usage

## Correct usage

Posted by Bennett Borakasim  
"I have a dissociative disorder, which is similar to a split personality."  
"How does it feel?"

forum community

Questions and answers about schizophrenia

www.rmgcity.co.il

## Incorrect (but not offensive) usage:

"Insanely enchanting beaches"

An article in Haaretz: "What Instagram doesn't tell you:"



"Oskar Gluch and Eran Zahavi:  
This is a crazy combination."

Tweet on Twitter

"At his peak in Chelsea, he was a bit of a psychopath."

forum community

## Offensive usage:

"People scream at me in the street, they call me a murderer and psychopath."

Prof. Dan Ariely did not anticipate the outpouring of hatred towards him. What began with entanglements with vaccine opponents and continued with evidence of alleged falsification of data in his studies – this turned into the most difficult period of his life." Haaretz

Yossi 19:47 30.08.22

"Another crazy leftist from Balfour, it's a shame the Arab didn't beat him."

!TalkBack in Walla

"We are surrounded by psychopaths."

Coverage of the war in Ukraine, broadcast stations

Haaretz



Eliran Lusky

"He's mentally ill, I swear he has a serious split personality."

A comment on a Facebook post about Zelensky, who changed direction after his speech at the UN.

# Examples of incorrect use of expressions

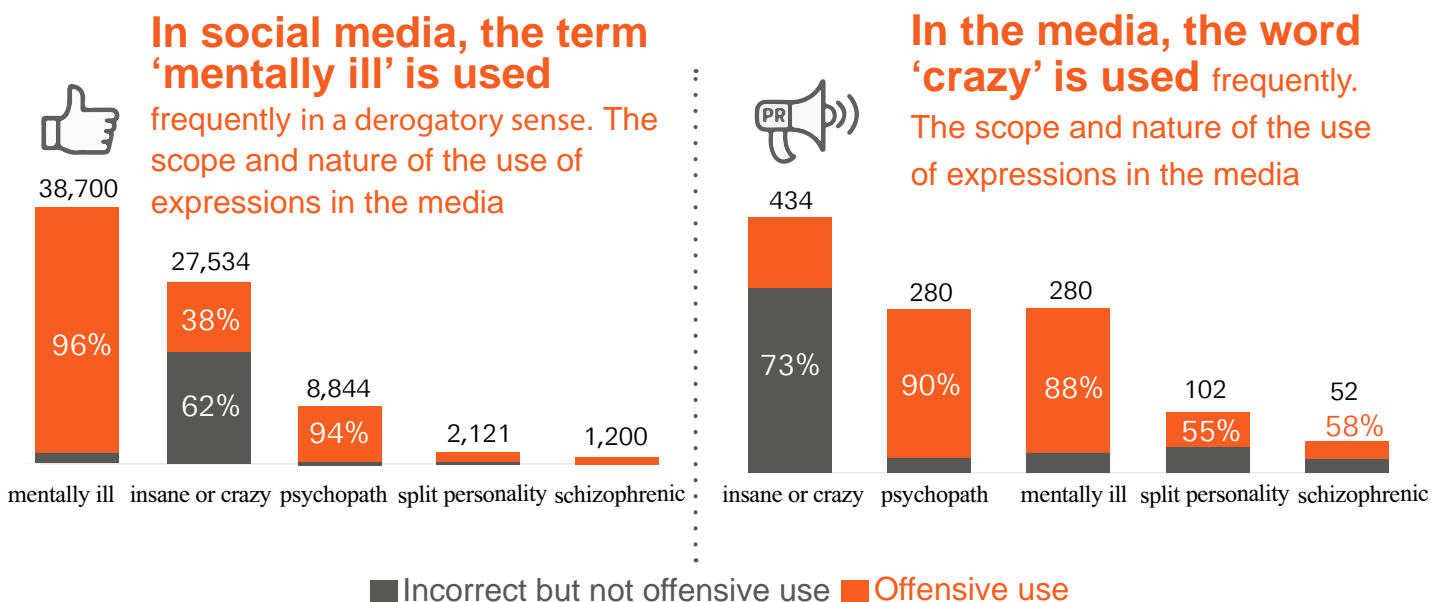
- ◆ In the media, the word “crazy” (or “insane” or “psychotic”) is the most popular of the terms analyzed. It is often used to describe anything severe or extreme.
- ◆ On the internet, “mentally ill” is the most commonly used expression. It is almost always used in a derogatory manner.
- ◆ On the internet, the word “crazy” is also frequently used to describe extreme cases, and is the only term analyzed which is often used in a non-offensive manner.
- ◆ Both in the print media and online, the expressions “mentally ill” and “psychopath” are mainly used in a derogatory manner.
- ◆ Often “psychopath” is used specifically to describe criminals and murderers.

## Crazy (insane, psychotic) is a commonly used adjective, also in a positive manner.

For example, regarding a player for the HaPoel Tel Aviv team: “He constantly kept his eyes on ball, he is crazy sick about the game.” Mako-N12

Netta Barzilai’s response to Omer Adam’s song: “It’s crazy.” Mako-N12

A story about Gaza City: “On my way back from another crazy trip to the most insane city in the Middle East.” Local newspaper from Kiryat Gat



# Examples of the use of these expressions

## Mentally ill

f

If Abbas helps the Left, then he is praised, but if he is connected to Netanyahu, the crazy Left condemns him. That's how mentally ill the Left is.

Safety restraints: forced hospitalization and denial of the freedom of a mentally ill person, to prevent him from harming himself: involuntary medical treatment

Netanyahu and Olmert testify in the "mentally ill" lawsuit.

## Psychopath

f

"Putin is a psychopath, if we give him a smack in the face he will go into the corner and shut up."

Leonid Nevzlin refers to Putin as a psychopath

f

"Dahmer, like many other psychopaths, operated with a clear mind."

Reference to criminals

t

"Another mentally ill psychopath in the service of the head psychopath."

t

"Netanyahu, the narcissistic psychopath still isn't in prison... apparently not."

Tweets about politics on Twitter

## Split personality

"Special: Political polarization is a split personality."

t

"It depends which personality is writing because part of narcissistic personality disorder is a kind of split personality."

## Crazy/Insane

"Did anyone else hear a crazy boom just now in the area of central Tel Aviv?"

"The bus driver drove like a crazy person, save us."

"Insane prices, the apartment won't stay on the market for more than seven minutes."

## Schizophrenia

"German schizophrenia"

"Your schizophrenia is out of control."

"Alma (played by Rosa Salazar in Alita: Battle Angel) comes from a family that suffers from schizophrenia: her grandmother was hospitalized several times."

# Who used these expressions in the media

- ◆ Politicians often use these expressions in ways that are incorrect and even offensive. In fact, politicians use these expressions more often than other groups and account for about a quarter of the incorrect usages.
- ◆ Prominent examples: Olmert’s trial for calling Netanyahu “mentally ill” was in the headlines.
- ◆ Putin was often called a psychopath during the Russian-Ukraine war.
- ◆ In general, polarization and divisiveness in political discourse led to the use of these expressions, not only among politicians (examples on the next slide).
- ◆ The media (reporters, broadcasters, columnists) are responsible for about a fifth of the incorrect use of these expressions. Unlike last year, in which most of their usage was not offensive, this year much of it was considered offensive.
- ◆ It is interesting to note that the use of these expressions is mainly characteristic of the print media, especially editorials and opinion columns. They are less common in the broadcast media.

## Politicians often use these expressions offensively.

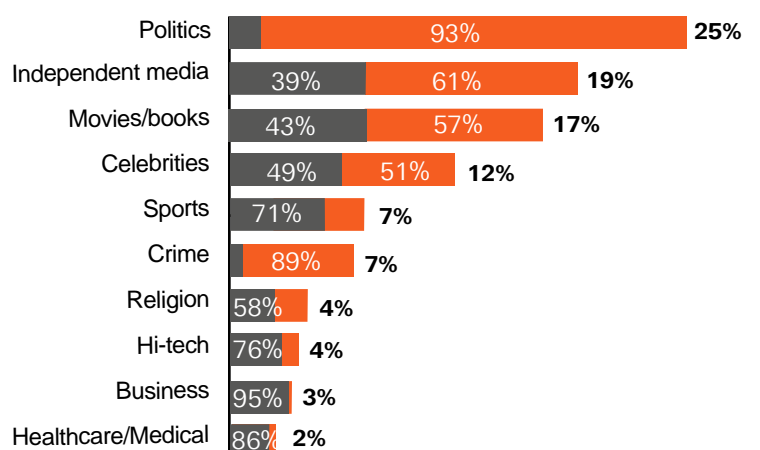
Knesset member May Golan: “Bennett’s split personality is costing the public millions of shekels.”

Olmert, on calling Netanyahu mentally ill: “We don’t want people in that [mental] state to lead the nation.”

## The print media leads the use of these expressions; politicians use them in offensive ways | Breakdown according to who used the expressions.

Media outlets are the most prominent in the use of these expressions.

Media outlet	Number of articles in which this media outlet used the phrase	Percentage of usages that were offensive
Haaretz	118	71%
Mako-N12	64	44%
Ma’ariv	54	70%
Israel Today (Yisrael HaYom)	42	71%
Walla!	36	56%
Yediot Aharonot	28	57%



■ Incorrect but not offensive use ■ Offensive use

# Examples of offensive discourse in the context of political polarization and divisiveness

## In the traditional media:



Minister Avigdor Lieberman: "Israel has a split personality."

Arutz 7

Olmert: "I did not establish a fact." Netanyahu's lawyer: "You are cuckoo."

ynet

MK May Golan: "Bennett's split personality is costing the public millions of shekels."

0404.co.il

In an interview with Haaretz, Zehava Galon called the Netanyahu-Gantz coalition a "Coalition of mobsters." Netanyahu is described as "a crazed psychopath"

## On social media



Gili Gil  
@GiliGil791196

"With absolutely no connection to Omer Adam, Michaeli either has a split personality or she's just a crook."



Nilya 168 Yarkon  
@Nilya25820952

"Netanyahu, the narcissistic psychopath still isn't in prison... apparently not."



Dan  
@Dan7992270

"In the end, what will be remembered about Bibi? A narcissist, a sick miser surrounded by mentally ill people and chauvinists who are a distillation of the garbage of Israeli society."



Yisroel Laia  
@Yisroel7197351

"Bennet A is boycotting Bennet B; the man is schizophrenic."



Iron A  
@IronA12

"Bennet is mentally ill."

"With his condition, they'll surely hospitalize him."



Idan Ratsabi  
@Ratsabi

"Not just crazy, a complete psychopath. They all got together, Sa'ar, Bennet, Lieberman."



Yair B  
@YairB21340

"In my opinion, it is becoming increasingly clear that Yair Lapid has a twin brother (unmatched). The other possibility, that he is schizophrenic, is no less frightening."




# Division according to social network

- ◆ Most of the uses of these expressions are found on Twitter, where the discourse is centered around more of a clique and focused on politics and issues that arise in daily life
- ◆ This is an interesting statistic since in general there are fewer conversations on Twitter than on Facebook
- ◆ This is further proof that the offensive use of the expressions we analyzed contributes to polarizing and divisive discourses, which is even harsher in tweets on Twitter.
- ◆ Many uses of the phrases in online conversations are offensive, especially in replies and TalkBacks.

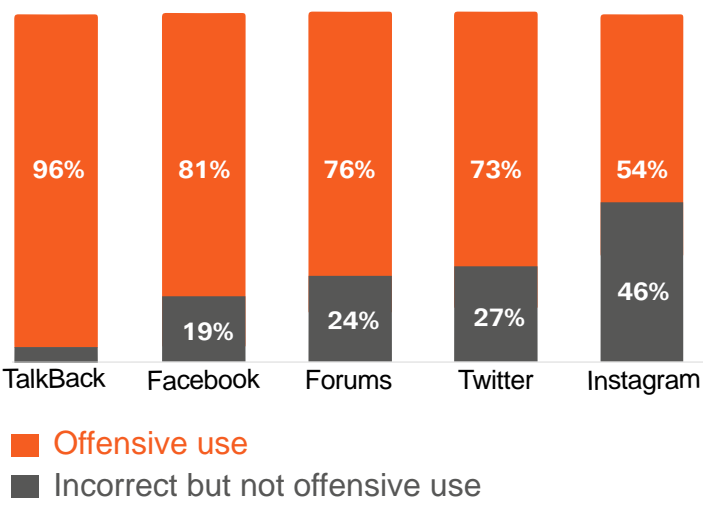
## Examples of offensive uses of the phrases on Twitter

Replying to @Ayelet\_Shaked  
 "You have a split personality, sicko."

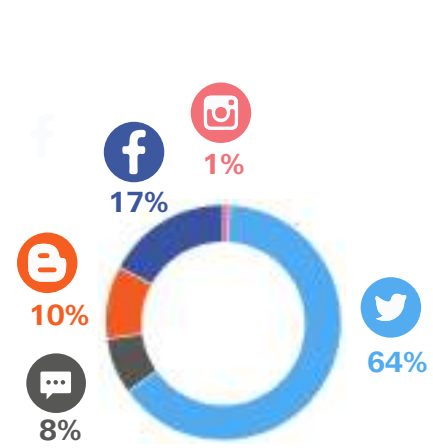
Replying to @BarashiKinneret and @netanyahu  
 "What a pathetic child. Your mother taught you to worship a psychopathic narcissist with a split personality disorder."

 גורא לכב  
 @GoraLeKeb  
 "What? You're crazy. I'm not surprised by anything, you are the drippings from garbage."

### TalkBacks are the most offensive | Breakdown of the use of phrases in the division according to social network



### Twitter users lead the use of these expressions | Breakdown of the use of phrases in the division according to social network



# Discussions about the correct use of these expressions.

- ◆ Among the many appearances of these expressions in the media and online, there is often discussion about how they are used.  
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- ◆ This issue mainly comes up after one of the expressions is used offensively, resulting in criticism or lawsuits.  
.....
- ◆ The most publicized lawsuit of 2022 was, of course, the lawsuit of Bibi (Netanyahu), concerning Olmert calling him “mentally ill.” This lawsuit received extensive coverage in print, online, and social media.

## Criticism of the offensive use of the expression

“Once again, the phrase ‘mentally ill’ starred at the beginning of hot topics on Twitter. Until when?”

“‘Mentally ill’ ‘schizophrenia’ ‘needs to be involuntary hospitalized’. Twitter is full of people making such diagnoses without the slightest understanding of the subject, and they are using offensive phrases that stigmatize and shut up people in a closet, who are actually dealing with a mental disorder. Do us a favor and stop for a second before tweeting such things. Happy holiday.”

Twitter tweets

“Olmert and Netanyahu are intensifying the harm against people dealing with mental illness.”

Article in Haaretz

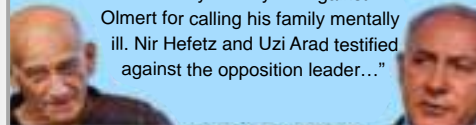
## Claims resulting from the use of these expressions

Twitter tweets

“If someone would write that I am mentally ill and I had been secretly hospitalized for a mental illness, I would sue. I believe that you would too if they did something like this to you. By the way, defamation suits are an exceptional case in that the burden of proof is on the defendant, who must prove that his words were true.”

### The Clash of the Prime Ministers:

“Former Prime Ministers Netanyahu and Olmert appeared in court for a hearing in the defamation lawsuit filed by Netanyahu against Olmert for calling his family mentally ill. Nir Hefetz and Uzi Arad testified against the opposition leader...”



## Criticism of offensive use of an expression towards members of the LGBT community

“Being gay in the Palestinian Authority is like a death sentence. Right as I was entering, the guards kicked me. They said I’m not a man, that I’m mentally ill, that they don’t want people like me in Palestine.” Haaretz



Yorai Lahav Hertzanu - יוראי להב הרצנו - עקוב @YoraiLahav



“On the one hand, the Prime Minister embraces the LGBT community and demands what should be self-evident -- equal rights. On the one hand, there is a frustrated Knesset Member who takes refuge in homophobia and calls my friends and the members of my community ‘morally weak’. The choice could not be any clearer than that.”

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