

## Abstract

The present study tested an integrated model on the relationships between functional status of children with physical disability and psychological distress via caregiving-specific worry and affiliate stigma, as well as the associations with perceived social support, among caregivers of children with physical disability in Hong Kong. One hundred and thirty-one caregivers recruited from local non-governmental organizations and special education schools participated in the study from January to April 2012. Results from structural equation modeling showed that the proposed model had good fit to the data:  $\chi^2 = 110.87$ , ( $df = 84$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ),  $\chi^2/df = 1.32$ , CFI = .97, NNFI = .97, RMSEA = .05. It showed that child functional status was directly associated with caregiving-specific worry. Worry was directly associated with affiliate stigma, which in turn directly associated with psychological distress. It also supported the direct and indirect effects of perceived social support on ameliorating worry, affiliate stigma, and psychological distress. The present study contributed to the literature on caregiving by suggesting a mechanism of stigma internalization from caregiving-specific worry, and supporting the significance of perceived social support, among the caregivers. Practical implications of the findings were discussed.

*Keywords:* caregivers, physical disability, worry, affiliate stigma, social support