

CHALLENGES FACING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

ALMUTAIRI, N. S. F.

*Independent Researcher, Kuwait City, Kuwait.
e-mail: dr.nourahalmutairi[at]gmail.com*

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Abstract. Deaf individuals with disabilities in the world and Kuwait face significant barriers in accessing governmental institutions, which hampers their ability to participate fully in society. This study employs a quantitative research methodology, utilizing a structured questionnaire distributed to 30 deaf participants at the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf. The research design focused on identifying the challenges these individuals encounter when interacting with government services. The findings reveal a critical lack of financial resources, with 100% of respondents indicating insufficient support. Additionally, 96.6% of participants reported inadequate programs tailored to the deaf community, and 93.3% acknowledged communication difficulties within government institutions. The study highlights the urgent need for improved accessibility, including the provision of sign language interpretation services and targeted training programs to facilitate integration. In conclusion, the research underscores the necessity for a comprehensive approach to empower deaf individuals in Kuwait, advocating for enhanced financial support and the removal of systemic barriers. By addressing these interconnected challenges, government institutions can create a more inclusive environment that enables deaf individuals to engage effectively in civic life.

Keywords: *disabled, government support, deaf challenges, disability policies, disability programs*

Introduction

According to reports by The Return on Disability Group (2024), 1.6 billion people in the world currently suffer from a disability. As for the population of people with deaf disabilities in the world for the year 2024 is 74,655,540, and the daily growth in the number of deaf people in the world is 1,722 (IMB, 2024). Deaf people with disabilities are facing more challenges which are dynamic, hence; it requires a thoughtful and organized way in dealing with it. The challenges they face are unpleasant and can lead to health, economic or development crises for governments (Almutairi, 2024). Hence, it is a birth right by being entitled to have the right to cure or preserve on themselves or others when someone gets hurt. It cannot be denied in this modern era, most of the government institutions have their own job descriptions in promoting, keeping, and running our government peacefully without opposing the laws they regulate. Therefore, when an emergency occurs, assigning someone to handle it and prevent it is a crucial step and plays a vital role. In order to quash the negativity of being challenged, people with disabilities are always looking for law, medical and creating their own groupings or organizations. They search and clearly observe what can be done when no one cares, starts, creates activities to influence and force healthier people to always think about their own survival. Deaf people with disabilities in many cases are not included in the decision making processes of their issues or cases let alone in the government; there is nothing at all which is prepared and acquainted for them.

Deaf people with disabilities represent a distinct group within society, as they navigate the intricacies of both deafness and various disabilities. In Kuwaiti society, deaf people face numerous challenges due to prevailing social attitudes towards

disability. Statistically, about 69,080 people with disabilities were registered in the Kuwaiti Public Authority for Disabled Affairs for the year 2024, while the number of people with hearing disabilities was 5,467 people. Thus, deaf people with disabilities warrant further exploration as these livelihoods remain under-researched, particularly in Kuwait. While Kuwait offers social support for people with disabilities, government systems often neglect deaf people with disabilities. Moreover, the dearth of literature on the plight of deaf further complicates understanding their lived experiences. To address this gap, the proposed study will examine the challenges faced by deaf in accessing governmental institutions in Kuwait. It aims to explore the experiences of deaf in dealing with government services, uncovering existing problems and potential solutions from their perspective (Abed et al., 2024).

Literature review

The article will concentrate on the significant barriers to communication that deaf individuals face and the potential benefits that could accrue to this population if they were empowered to engage with government institutions. A Programme of Action will be laid out, both geared towards overcoming these barriers, but also providing avenues for financial support. While many advances have been made, research has emphasized that this population still contends with significant communication and other barriers. Given this context, this article will provide practical suggestions for how to overcome communication barriers, particularly structured around supporting deaf individuals to effectively engage with government institutions. A Programme of Action will be outlined, with the intention of creating employment opportunities and avenues through which deaf people can apply for financial support.

Financial support for people with disabilities

The literature surrounding financial support for individuals with deaf disabilities reveals a complex interplay of economic challenges, social dynamics, and educational needs. In examining the financial implications for families of children with disabilities, Parise and Peijnenburg (2019) highlights the various financial hardships these families endure, particularly emphasizing the monetary disadvantages they face. The study underscores the inadequacies of insurance support and the pressing need for additional assistance to achieve financial stability. Parise and Peijnenburg (2019), illustrates these points through poignant examples of families struggling with out-of-pocket expenses for necessary therapies, which resonate with the broader economic context of the time. This foundational exploration sets the stage for understanding the financial strains that may also affect adults with deaf disabilities. Young and Hunt (2011) further complicate the narrative by critiquing the exclusion of d/Deaf individuals from the research landscape. They argue that the prevailing research paradigms often render d/Deaf people invisible, focusing instead on the condition of deafness rather than the lived experiences of those affected. The authors introduce the concept of "Deafhood," advocating for a shift towards research conducted "with" rather than "on" d/Deaf individuals. This perspective is crucial as it highlights the need for d/Deaf voices to inform policy and practice, particularly in relation to financial support systems that may not adequately address their unique challenges.

Building on these insights, Young and Hunt (2011) address the specific needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing students in postsecondary education. Their analysis emphasizes the

importance of creating effective support systems that consider both academic and personal-social needs. The authors argue that substantial financial resources are essential for providing necessary services such as interpreting and note taking, which can be particularly burdensome for institutions with limited budgets. This focus on educational accessibility and support underscores the broader economic implications for individuals with deaf disabilities, as the availability and quality of these services directly impact their academic success and future financial independence. Together, these articles provide a nuanced understanding of the financial challenges faced by individuals with deaf disabilities and their families, highlighting the importance of inclusive research and robust support systems in addressing these issues.

Training courses to encourage deaf people to integrate into society

Kuwait is one of the Gulf countries that signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006 and ratified it in 2010. The convention emphasizes providing equal access for people with disabilities to participate in social programs. Since the ratification of the convention, several disability policy documents have been devised by the Kuwaiti government institutions. The policy documents primarily emphasize providing people with disabilities equal opportunity and access to support social programs enacted by the government institutions. However, research studies conducted in Kuwait highlight that people with disabilities continue to face challenges in accessing the support social programs provided by the government institutions (Hurwitz and Kersting, 2019). Challenges include a lack vocational training courses that encourage disabled deaf people to integrate into society, resistance from hearing training centers to hire deaf people, a lack of awareness and knowledge among service providers of the skills and care required for deaf people with disabilities, a lack of support from deaf advocacy groups to moot the rights and privileges of disabled deaf people, and a lack of coordination in government implementation of policies and laws for the disabled (Mathay and LaFayette, 2019).

Government sectors adapting to deaf people in emergencies

Studies have shown that there is a large gap in the adaptation of some facilities to emergency situations with people with special needs, especially the deaf. Engelman et al. (2013) indicated the importance of emergency plans and training for people with special needs from the deaf category, and even indicated the urgent need to draw up policies and plans periodically and train on them for the deaf category because of their importance in integrating this minority group with society to follow up on events and emergencies. Engelman (2012) also confirmed that there is a lack of emergency resources for the deaf and hard of hearing group, and that there is fear and frustration about the attention paid to emergency situations by government agencies.

Sign language interpretation service

Deaf individuals have the same civic responsibilities, including voting, as non-disabled persons. However, there are obstacles that persons with disabilities encounter when trying to support the government. These challenges may be classified as structural, attitudinal, communication, or informational difficulties (Akeely et al., 2022). In Chapter Three, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the State of Kuwait Law that dated in 2010, in Article No. 5, "The government shall take all effective

administrative measures and provide the necessary equipment to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their civil and political rights. The government is also committed to providing offices to provide special services for persons with disabilities in all its institutions and governmental agencies, including a sign language interpreter and an assistant to serve the blind to ensure that they enjoy their rights on an equal footing with others.”

Theoretical framework

Has been used Empowerment Theory in addressing challenges faced by deaf individuals with disabilities in Kuwait. Empowerment theory serves as the foundational lens through which the challenges faced by deaf individuals with disabilities in supporting government institutions are analyzed. This framework posits that empowerment is a multi-dimensional process that involves increasing the capacity of individuals to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. In the context of deaf individuals in Kuwait, empowerment is particularly pertinent as they navigate systemic barriers that hinder their engagement with government institutions. Financial support for people with disabilities: The first variable in this framework addresses the necessity of financial resources to empower deaf individuals with disabilities. Financial support is essential for enhancing their economic stability, which directly influences their ability to participate in societal and governmental processes. Lack of financial resources often leads to dependency and marginalization, which are counterproductive to empowerment. By ensuring adequate financial support, government institutions can facilitate the economic independence of deaf individuals, thereby promoting their active participation in civic duties and decision-making processes. Training courses to encourage integration: The second variable emphasizes the importance of training programs tailored for deaf individuals. Empowerment theory suggests that skill development is crucial for fostering self-efficacy and independence. Training courses aimed at enhancing social integration not only equip deaf individuals with necessary vocational skills but also promote confidence in their ability to engage with society. Such programs can help dismantle attitudinal barriers, fostering an environment that values diversity and inclusion.

Sign language interpretation services: The third variable focuses on the provision of sign language interpretation services within government institutions. Effective communication is a cornerstone of empowerment, and the absence of adequate interpretation services creates significant barriers for deaf individuals. By integrating interpretation services, government institutions can ensure that deaf individuals have equal access to information and services, facilitating their full participation in civic life. This aligns with the principles of empowerment theory, which advocates for the removal of barriers that inhibit individuals from exercising their rights. Interconnections and implications: The interplay between these variables illustrates a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges faced by deaf individuals with disabilities. Financial support, training, and communication services collectively contribute to enhancing the empowerment of this population. By addressing these interconnected components, government institutions can create a more inclusive environment that not only recognizes the rights of deaf individuals but also actively facilitates their participation in governance and societal activities. In overall, this theoretical framework underscores the importance of an integrated approach to empowerment that addresses financial, educational, and communicational barriers faced by deaf individuals with

disabilities in Kuwait. By implementing strategies that align with empowerment theory, stakeholders can foster a more inclusive society where deaf individuals are equipped to support government institutions effectively.

Materials and Methods

The quantitative research methodology utilized in this study employs a structured questionnaire tool designed to collect measurable data. The questionnaires were distributed and administered in alignment with the predetermined methodology, and the resulting data were systematically organized and analyzed to draw conclusions and formulate recommendations. The quantitative approach was selected for its capability to yield statistically significant insights and facilitate comparisons across various demographics. The researchers aimed to quantify the challenges faced by Kuwaiti deaf individuals with disabilities in navigating support from government institutions. This method enabled participants to provide standardized responses, allowing for a robust analysis of trends and patterns within the population.

Study approach

For this study, a social survey was conducted. Survey research is a systematic method of collecting and analyzing data from a large number of people to gain insight into beliefs, opinions, or behaviors that are prevalent within a specific group of people. By using a structured approach, with a consistent uniform questionnaire or standardized interview given to all participants, survey research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the collective feelings or behaviors of a diverse group of people. This methodological process allows researchers to draw statistically significant conclusions and identify patterns or trends that may be indicative of broader social biases or behavioral norms. The even distribution of survey instruments ensures fair treatment of all respondents and facilitates data aggregation for meaningful analysis and interpretation. Through the consistent application of survey research techniques, researchers can obtain valuable information that sheds light on the attitudes, preferences, or tendencies of a wide range of individuals, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of prevailing opinions or practices within a particular population or community.

Research design

The study conducted quantitative research by collecting data through closed-ended questionnaires. It was designed to be easy to read and understand so that people with deaf disabilities can easily understand it. Quantitative research plays an important role in systematically studying social issues by collecting numerical data. This methodology enables researchers to delve into various phenomena, ultimately gaining a comprehensive understanding of patterns, behaviors, and trends in a precise and easily understandable manner. By using quantitative data, researchers can conduct statistical analysis to identify correlations and draw meaningful conclusions, thereby shedding light on complex social dynamics that may otherwise remain obscure. The systematic application of quantitative research methods generates valuable insights that provide a solid foundation for evidence-based decision-making and the development of effective strategies to address pressing social issues.

A specifically tailored survey questionnaire was carefully designed to meet the unique needs of Deaf people who use sign language to communicate. This initiative aimed to address the inherent challenges faced by researchers when collecting data from this specific population and to provide an effective and user-friendly solution to streamline the data collection process. By taking into account the preferred communication mode of Deaf sign language users, the questionnaire not only ensured inclusive participation but also improved the overall quality and accuracy of the data obtained. The meticulous attention to detail in the design of this survey instrument highlights our commitment to promoting accessibility and inclusivity in research practices and ultimately enable a more comprehensive understanding of the perspectives and experiences of Deaf people in both academic and wider societal contexts.

The population, sample and sampling technique, data gathering and analysis technique

This study was conducted on 30 deaf individuals with disabilities at the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf. The focus of this study is on individuals who are deaf participate at the Kuwaiti Club for the Deaf. The study tool was developed utilizing a closed questionnaire to gather data, with the aim of simplifying the vocabulary of the phrases to enhance comprehension for the participants, who are individuals with hearing impairments. The sample consisted of 30 volunteers and trainees from the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf. The research was conducted in the State of Kuwait, specifically in the Capital Governorate, Granada area, and at the Kuwaiti Sports Club for the Deaf. The data collection spanned a period of two weeks, from November 5 to November 19, 2023. Non-random sampling was employed in this case study and observational study to ensure the quality of the sample. However, this method presents several challenges, including elevated non-response rates. An interpreter was made available, and participants were guided to the Kuwait Club for the Deaf, where they were asked to complete the questionnaire exclusively among the deaf individuals present. A sign language interpreter facilitated the translation of the questionnaire items, allowing participants to respond after the interpreter initially introduced the researcher by name and academic credentials. Subsequently, the participants were informed about the research objectives and the specific points that would be addressed. They were also made aware of their right to withdraw or refrain from completing the questionnaire. Lastly, it was emphasized that their responses would remain strictly confidential and would not be disclosed.

The sample comprises individuals who are deaf, which presents challenges in administering the questionnaire. Engaging this demographic necessitates significant resources, particularly for the provision of translation services to ensure that the questions are communicated effectively. The sample size is limited to 30 participants, which is deemed sufficient to support the findings of this study and allows for reasonable generalization. A research study indicate that while larger samples are often needed to account for fluctuating results, smaller samples can yield accurate and generalizable outcomes without the complications associated with larger groups. Additionally, it is important to note that the sample exclusively consists of males, as the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf serves only male members. The study employed a closed questionnaire as the primary method for data collection. This questionnaire was designed based on the principles of empowerment theory, as well as insights from prior research related to the topic. Prior to its administration, the questionnaire underwent

testing with three individuals from the Kuwaiti Sports Club for the Deaf to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the questions for the deaf participants. An ethical review was necessary to ensure the protection of both participants and researchers. Securing ethical approval indicates that the researcher has complied with the established ethical standards pertinent to research studies. Written consent was acquired from the director of the Kuwait Sports Club for the Deaf. It was essential for each individual to provide consent prior to completing the questionnaire. Participation was entirely voluntary, allowing respondents the option to withdraw or refrain from answering any questions during the process. Additionally, a sign language interpreter was made available to clarify the purpose of the questionnaire and its practical objectives.

Results and Discussion

The present research utilized a descriptive methodology to detail and examine the responses gathered from the area of investigation. The sample for the study comprised 30 male individuals who are deaf and are members of the Deaf Sports Club in Kuwait. Participants were selected through a random sampling method, specifically including only those who completed the questionnaire and provided their consent to take part. The specifications of the sample are outlined in *Table 1*. The study involved a sample of 30 male Muslim participants from the Kuwait Deaf Club, with ages ranging from 18 to 51 years. This age demographic is significantly impacted by the empowerment process, as these individuals possess specific needs, requirements, and perspectives regarding empowerment. The majority of the participants are currently employed, actively exercising their rights and responsibilities, while retirees continue to seek empowerment on personal, psychological, and professional levels for the benefit of future generations. In terms of marital status, the sample comprised the highest number of married individuals, totaling 13 out of 30, followed by 8 single deaf individuals, 6 divorced individuals, and 3 widows. The significance of empowerment extends to educational qualifications, as it facilitates access to knowledge and skills, thereby enabling participation in political processes and decision-making. The educational background of the sample revealed that the majority were high school graduates, with 17 out of 30, followed by 7 individuals who completed middle school, and only 6 who held university degrees. The predominance of high school graduates influenced the responses to the questionnaire, resulting in a notable number of answers indicating "I don't know." The alpha strength of the validity of the results is very high, based on the previous study. If the study reaches a Cronbach's alpha value more than 0.7 these are good results and can be generalized (*Table 2*).

Table 1. Represents the specifications of the study sample.

Category	Frequency
Age	
18-28	5
29-39	7
40-50	10
51 and above	8
Marital status	
Single	8
Married	13
Divorced	6

Widower	3
Educational qualification	
Middle school	7
High school	17
University	6
Employment status	
Employed	13
Unemployed	2
Retired	15

Table 2. Calculating the stability of the tool using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Number of questions	Number of respondents	Cronbach alpha
6	30	0.71463415

The overall average score of the responses is notably high (Table 3), with a rating of 2.62 out of 3. It is evident that there is a significant lack of financial resources available for the deaf community, as all respondents unanimously indicated a 100% agreement on this issue. This highlights a critical gap in support that needs to be addressed to improve the quality of life for individuals within this demographic. Furthermore, a substantial majority of participants expressed concerns regarding the availability of programs tailored for the deaf, with an impressive approval rate of 96.6 out of 100%. This indicates a widespread recognition of the inadequacies in existing programs designed to support the deaf community. Additionally, there was unanimous agreement (100%) on the need for more training courses focused on facilitating integration into society, underscoring the urgency of this requirement. Communication barriers within government institutions were also a significant concern, with 93.3% of respondents acknowledging these difficulties. When asked about the preparedness of government institutions in emergency situations, 80% indicated uncertainty. Lastly, regarding the presence of interpreters for the deaf in government settings, a striking 83.3% of participants reported that they were unaware of any available interpreters, further emphasizing the need for improved accessibility and support services.

Table 3. The sample's responses to the question.

Category	Degree of response			SMA	Std. Deviation	Degree response
	Yes	I dont know	No			
Are there few financial resources?	N 30	0	0	3	0	High
	% 100	0	0			
Is there little interest in programs for the deaf?	N 29	1	0	2.96	0.182	High
	% 96.6	3.33	0			
Is there a lack of training courses that help integrate into society?	N 30	0	0	3	0	High
	% 100	0	0			
Do you face difficulty communicating in government institutions?	N 28	2	0	2.93	0.253	High
	% 93.3	6.66	0			
Do government institutions accommodate deaf people in emergency situations?	N 1	24	5	1.86	0.434	Medium
	% 3.33	80	16.6			
Are there sign language interpreters in government institutions?	N 3	25	2	2.03	0.413	Medium
	% 10	83.3	6.66			
General average			2.62	0.214	High	2.62

The results of this study reveal a critical need for enhanced support for the deaf community, particularly in the areas of financial resources, training programs, and communication accessibility. The overall average score of 2.62 out of 3 indicates a strong consensus among respondents regarding the challenges faced by the deaf community. Notably, the unanimous agreement (100%) on the lack of financial

resources highlights a significant gap that must be addressed to improve the quality of life for individuals within this demographic. Financial support for the deaf community, the literature underscores the financial hardships faced by families of individuals with deaf disabilities. Parise and Peijnenburg (2019) emphasize the inadequacies of insurance support and the pressing need for additional assistance to achieve financial stability. This aligns with our findings, where respondents indicated a critical lack of financial resources, suggesting that government institutions must prioritize financial support systems tailored to the unique challenges faced by the deaf community. Young and Hunt (2011) further complicate this narrative by advocating for research that includes the voices of d/Deaf individuals, which is essential for informing policies that adequately address their needs.

Training and integration programs, the study also revealed a substantial majority (96.6%) of participants expressing concerns about the availability of programs tailored for the deaf. This finding resonates with the literature, which highlights the lack of vocational training courses that encourage integration into society (Mathay and LaFayette, 2019). The need for training courses is further supported by the Empowerment Theory, which posits that skill development is crucial for fostering self-efficacy and independence among deaf individuals. By providing targeted training programs, government institutions can help dismantle attitudinal barriers and promote an inclusive environment. Communication barriers in government institutions, communication barriers within government institutions were a significant concern, with 93.3% of respondents acknowledging these difficulties. Engelman et al. (2013) stress the importance of emergency plans and training for individuals with special needs, particularly the deaf. The lack of awareness regarding the availability of interpreters (83.3% unaware) further emphasizes the urgent need for improved communication services. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the State of Kuwait Law mandates that the government provide necessary services, including sign language interpreters, to ensure equal access for persons with disabilities. However, the current gaps in implementation highlight the need for more robust policies and training for government staff.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study, supported by the literature, underscore the urgent need for a comprehensive the deaf community in Kuwait. By addressing financial support, training opportunities, and communication barriers, government institutions can create a more inclusive environment that facilitates the active participation of deaf individuals in society. This aligns with the principles of Empowerment Theory, advocating for the removal of barriers that inhibit individuals from exercising their rights and engaging with government institutions effectively.

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Conflict of interest

The author confirms that there is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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