

Inclusive Workplaces: Experiences of Employees with Disabilities in the Public Organizations

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Abstract:

Despite growing global attention to workplace inclusion, limited research has explored the professional realities of employees with disabilities in the Middle East. This study investigates how individuals with disabilities navigate employment within public organizations in one of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, emphasizing accessibility, institutional support, and career development pathways. Using a purposive sampling approach, employees with various types of disabilities participated in a structured survey assessing their workplace experiences and perceptions. Findings reveal that while most respondents reported satisfactory physical accessibility—such as designated parking areas and adapted restrooms—critical shortcomings persist in the availability of disability-friendly technologies, inclusive communication systems, and emergency preparedness. Respondents highlighted strong interpersonal and emotional support from supervisors and colleagues; however, representation of employees with disabilities in leadership and managerial roles remains exceptionally rare. These results underscore the need to move beyond compliance-based accessibility measures toward a holistic empowerment framework that integrates inclusive leadership pipelines, investment in assistive technologies, and proactive policy interventions. The study offers practical, evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, human resource practitioners, and public institutions striving to advance sustainable inclusion, equity, and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in the regional workforce.

Keywords:

Disability, disabled workers, public organizations.