



Social policy inclusion and the disabled people in Egypt from 2014 till 2020

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Abstrac:

Globalization poses many threats to social policies for the Disabled people, but it also facilitating new links and alliances at a transnational level for instance with the Disabled rights movement, fostered by the UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities.

Disability affects the lives of hundreds of millions people around the world, the disabled people often live on the margins of the society and deprived from most of the life's essential experiences and encounter discrimination, rejection and unequal treatment (Zidan, 2012). However, they hope to get jobs, their own home, and the chance to socialize and vote. People with disabilities are not able to engage in various life realms such as education, employment and community engagement, like people without disabilities and that devalue them both socially and culturally (Marx, Thomese, Verdonschot & Meinniger, 2014). Also impede them from effective participation in society due to social and physical impairments. Thus, they are facing challenges and barriers that prevent them from having services and sufficient support. In this sense, it is conceivable that the disabled people are constitute a community whom are suffering from relative disadvantage and unfavorable comparisons to other groups because of their impairments (Oliver & Barnes, 2010). Disabled People are considered the world's largest and disadvantaged minority (Zidan, 2012). Thus, ensuring equality for the disabled people is an essential facilitator of participation and inclusion in society (Hassan, 2020).

Background

The purpose of this study is to highlight and analyze discrimination and inequality that based on disability and to develop a comprehensive description and knowledge about the importance of social inclusion and including disabled people in state's policies and laws. And providing a situational analysis of disability in Egypt during President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. Moreover, This dissertation will charts the important steps that are required in order to improve the disabled situation, combating discrimination and promoting equality increasing respect for disabled people's dignity, and promote the achievement of the human rights of persons with disabilities across the world. The Research question which the study tackles is: How the Egyptian political system perceives the disabled as a "Targeted" group of specific code of social policy?

Thus, by relying on a legal/constitutional approach, this paper will measure the gap between the declared policy and its implication of empowering the disabilities. Thus, this dissertation argues that empowering the disabled is one of the "new" themes in Sisi's policy to legitimize the 2030 Egyptian model of sustainable Development through leader's legislative procedures and "top" decisions implications.

The Study significance

The significance of this study is to shed the lights on the situation of the disabled people in Egypt and the importance of social inclusion in all societies. This topic should be considered from the most important topics because it protects the rights of the disabled which is human rights' issue. This dissertations also provides recommendations to improve the disabled social position, and suggests the needed policies to achieve social and disabled inclusivity. Even though, there are a lot of research studies that focus on the importance of tackling the rights of the disabled, they are not deeply contextualized. In return, this

dissertation will contribute in achieving social and economic development and the human rights of the disabled. Thus, this will enable looking beyond what is accustomed to.

Literature Review

This dissertation divides the literature review into two main sections; section agrees that the Egyptian constitution, law and regulations during President Abdel El-Fattah El-Sisi offers many commitments for the disabled people including, non-discrimination, educational, health, employment and all services' rights. The other section believes that there are many laws that ensures disabled peoples' rights, however no progress yet had been developed. This thesis believe that there is a literature gap because yet there is no ground results nor checks or balances to check whether the new policies are actually being implemented or not.

Rehab Ismail (2018), stated that with the initiative of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi a lot of efforts had been developed to ensure the disabled's rights, however more further efforts should be taken. Ismail said that the disabled issue had been tackled in the Egyptian constitution as article 81 of the 2014 constitution states "The state should ensure health, economic, cultural, sporting, entertainment and educational rights for the disabled, as well as job opportunities and adapting social facilities for the disabled" (Ismail, 2018). She stated that President Sisi issued a law which is no. 10 for the disabled in 20th Feb, 2018. And this law ensures the disabled life and ensure if they enjoys all human rights and freedoms (Ismail, 2018). Furthermore, Ismail stated that according to the Egypt National Review 2016, for sustainable development goals that law of "karama" (dignity) was launched and it aims to protect poor disabled and cover all their needs. She mentioned the projects that has been established in Upper Egypt to support with disabilities to operate and start

small projects for hand crafts. She points out to the initiative of “equal for a better living” that helps and provides disabled people with job opportunities (Ismail, 2018).

From an Educational perspective, multiple scholars stated that Khaled Abdel Ghaffar the minister of higher education said that society is now aware of the importance of including disabled people in education, thus a plan is developed to have more persons with disabilities in colleges to include 50 percent in universities in a facilitated way. Not only, they also trying to exempt people with disabilities from the tuition expenses and establish a department for the disabled needs and that already happened at Al-Mansoura University (Ismail, 2018). Moreover, the president of the University of Cairo stated that he will do all efforts to make the process of including disabled to universities easier because the new law provides disabled inclusion by ten percent of the students (Ismail, 2018).

Mahmoud Shalabi (2018) from a legal approach of disabilities stated a new law was enacted by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi on 19th Feb and was the first legislation that affects the rights of the disabled. He also stated that this laws provides the disabled with a lot of services and rights and includes policies to stop discrimination for the disabled people in employment, health, training and legal protection. In addition, this new law impose liability with 500 to 2000 L.E on individuals whom violates the disabled’s right (Shalabi, 2018). According to the rules of the united nation’s Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities that Egypt ratified in 2008; Egypt should provide the citizens with Educational systems that is suitable to the differences in society.

According to the Egyptian ministry of international cooperation (2016), Egypt committed itself in the constitution to develop sustainable development which was drafted in 2014, thus the Egyptian constitution is concerns with the goals of SD

and the 2030 global agenda that covers the three dimension as mentioned before the environment dimension, social dimension and economic dimension (2016). Even though, the challenges Egypt faced but Egypt has been keen toward achieving SD and ensuring that “no one is left behind” (Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016). Further, the Egyptian governments make efforts in order to achieve its strategy as well as developing a new “disability” law that goes in line with the (UNCRPD) for the sake of the disabled protection (NCDA, 2019).

However on the other hand there is a literature that believe that even though there is a lot of laws which are ratified for disabled people in Egypt, yet there is no cultural respect for disability in Egypt (Khaled, 2019). Hence, multiple scholars stated that Egypt has 12 million disabled people, according to the UNDP report, however they still lack the rights of the disabled and disregard them in many spheres such as education, and employment (UNDP, 2019). They stated that yes 2018 was dubbed as the year of disabled, even though after launching the new laws, the disabled live are still the same and nothing changed (Khaled, 2019). Moreover, multiple scholar accept the fact that there are laws that deals with rehabilitation and employment and set a place for 5 percent for the disabled however, this laws failed to address other issues (Khaled, 2019). Others stated that Egypt should obliged with the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, however there is other scenario that is actually happening on ground in the education sphere and even though the new laws in the education institution, nothing has changed till now (Khaled, 2019).

Others believe that the Egyptian schools administration are not civilized enough to develop the new laws, and mentioned the private school that refused smart students only because their mother’s was disabled (Hagrass, 2005). Earnest stated that she

encountered challenges in Asyut University because the lack of accessible services inside the University, and the problem was solved by studying from home and not to attend classes and that is totally humiliating to the disabled rights. Zekri stated that “Awareness about disability is essential when putting laws into practice” (Khaled, 2019).

Lord and Stein (2018) stated that Egypt had ratified the Convention of rights for people with disabilities (CRPD) in 2008, but the 2014 Egyptian constitution still needs accurate and detailed law in order develop its provisions. Moreover, they believe that the universal ratification of developing an inclusive education for disabled people that has been adapted by CRPD is not fulfilled in the Egyptian society (Lord & Stein , 2018). Furthermore, multiple scholars stated that the laws for disabled in the Egyptian constitution is not accurate because it lacks the way the law will be implemented in order to works toward the development of the policies. And also it lacks of accountability because it does tackles who is for instance responsible of the implementation if these policies. Thus, the new policies are not comprehensive enough and does not have accurate implementation guidelines (Lord & Stein, 2018).

One of the scholars stated that there is challenges that faces the Egyptian laws for disabled people which are the longstanding culture towards respecting people with disabilities in all spheres and this actually happened due to the traditional concept of disability which is biased because the concept actually stresses on their negative spheres and disregard their capabilities (Badr, 2019). To elaborate, from a cultural approach Hossam el Massah stated that there is a wider issue that should be tackled which is “Lack of respect”, Hossam stated that “we still lack the culture of respecting the disabled, no matter how many regulations we have, no progress will ever developed unless the issue of respecting changed” (Badr, 2019)

Conceptual Framework

This dissertation introduces these concepts to move and illustrate the literature with the most accurate definitions in order to establish a conceptual ground.

Disability

Disability is complex and dynamic so that it's difficult to figure out an acceptable definition for disability or disabled people. Even though, disability can be defined as a social construction that turns a health disorder into a social pathology that can restrict people from functioning full and effectively in their community (Mattila & Papageorgiou 2017). Furthermore, the traditional concept of disability is the person who is incapable to perform activities because of one or more physical, intellectual or mental impairments for example paralysis or blindness (Mickailaks, 2003). The way disabled people are dealt with is usually a result of shortcomings in the structural, social, cultural and political environments. Moreover, being disabled also has a huge social and economic impact on people with disabilities because usually they are at an increased risk of poverty due to the fact that they have very restricted access of being employed (UNDP, 2018). And this reduced access to employment and lower waged have a negative impact on their lives however the disabled people have extra costs of living than a normal man such as, medical care, assistive and personal supports (UNDP, 2018). Thus, disabilities is not only about medical situation, it is a social and human rights based model (UNDP, 2018).

Social inclusion and social exclusion

Social exclusion refers to a process in which individuals are denied of their opportunities, rights and resources. According to the disabled people they are most subject to be denied and excluded than others (Barnes & Elswick, 2016). Social exclusion usually seen as a circle with three main components which are

unemployment, poverty and social isolation (Oliver & Barnes, 2010). However, social inclusion is the opposite of social exclusion, it is the process in which those whom are socially excluded are socially included in society. Furthermore, ensuring social inclusion make society stable, more just and safer and these are the keys for more sustainable and healthy community (Barnes & Elswick, 2016). Moreover, Social inclusion involves the feeling of being accepted and valued, and being able to contribute and participate more in society (Harris, 2015). Ensuring inclusive communities provides individuals with equal opportunities and equal resources (Gupta & Thomas, 2013).

Theoretical framework

Sustainable development theory

The sustainable development theory is an economic development theory that ensures the needs of the present generations but without compromising the needs of the future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is concerns with maintaining and conserving the potential for further functioning and development for the sake of the future generations' needs (Konstanczak, 2014). It also ensures the long term stability of the government and economy. Because it focuses on the importance of integrating the environmental and social issues into all aspects of decision making (Bellon, Deverre & Geniaux, 2009). This dissertation chooses this theory because it focuses and deeply fixed the concept of inclusion which distinguishes sustainability from others. Additionally, because the sustainable development theory encourage the improvement of human lives, welfare and taking into account the rights of the new generations. Moreover, because disability is mentioned in many parts of SDGs such as education, inequality, employment and growth (Pardee, 2018).

The 2030 Egyptian Sustainable Development actually deals with three essentials dimensions which are economic, social and

environmental. Economic dimension deals with “four pillars”, the first one is “economic development”, that ensures that the Egyptian economy is well balanced and able to achieve sustainable growth (Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016). The second pillar is “Energy” that increases the efficient utilizing of renewable resources and that helps in preserving the environment. The third pillar is “knowledge, innovation and scientific research”, this pillar helps in encountering challenges and developing national objectives. The last pillar is “Transparency”, this pillar manages the state with transparency to increase the citizen’s satisfaction (Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016).

The Social dimension contains four pillars, the first pillar is “Social Justice” that ensure that by 2030 Egypt is a fair state that have equal economic, social, political rights and concerns with social inclusion. The second pillar is “Health” this pillar ensures that by 2030 all Egyptians will be provided by safe, and healthy life by an integrated and accessible health systems without any sorts of social gaps. The third pillar is “Education and Training” which provides educational systems without any discriminatory means. The last pillar is “Culture” and this develops a culture that respect differences and diversity (Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016).

The environmental dimension, contains two pillars “environment” that provides integrated environment in order to conserve the natural resources and “Urban Development” that improves that lives of the Egyptians (Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation, 2016).

Hence, by 2030 the new Egypt will ensure a society that is characterized by justice, social integration and participation in order to develop a better life for Egyptians. This dissertation see that SD theory cannot be segregated from the implementation of policies because it protects and aim to maintain the world’s

resources and improving the quality of human life (Egypt Economic Development Conference, 2015)..

Furthermore, Disability is included in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development as SDGs consists of 17 goals. SDGs specifically includes disabled people in four goals of these goals, goal 4 is “quality Education”, it ensures equal opportunities and inclusive education including the disabled (Pardee, 2018). Goal 8 is “Decent work and economic growth” promotes inclusive growth for all including disability people, goal 10 is “Reduced inequalities” this goal ensures the inclusion of disabled people (Pardee, 2018). Further, goal 11 is “Sustainable cities and communities” provides universal access for all citizens. The 2030 agenda ensures that “no one is left behind” and that “no one, no individual, no society, and no country is left behind”. Hence, the SDGs develops a just and inclusive world (Harrington, 2016).

Methodology

By relying on a legal/constitutional approach, this thesis measure the gap between the declared policy and its implication of empowering the disabilities through analyzing the official documents of Egyptian council for disability affairs as well as disability inclusive development of UNDP. Additionally, analyzing the code of Egyptian laws, regulations in terms of disabilities inclusion. The thesis also analyzes the instructions of the rights of persons with disabilities in the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Because it includes guiding principles for example, non-discrimination, participation and inclusion and pursuing equality.

Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is divided as follows. The first section tackles the conceptual/theoretical framework: Human rights of disabilities and SD. Section two will discuss social policy of disabilities in Egypt (Historical background). Section three, will

illustrate Sisi's priority in social policy between inclusion and exclusion. The last section tackles the cultural constraints.

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