

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology
of Egypt / Egyptology

**THE RIGHT OF SPECIAL NEEDS TO HOLD PUBLIC OFFICE IN THE
IRAQI LEGISLATION**

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Dr. Rasha Shakir Hamid , Dr. Khalid AbdulameerAbboodi , The Right Of Special Needs To Hold Public Office In The Iraqi Legislation , Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(7). ISSN 1567-214x.

Keywords: Disability , People with disabilities, The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, The Authority.

Abstract:

Researching the rights of special needs in the Iraqi legislation in general, and their right to assume public office in particular, is one of the most important topics that deserve research, especially since the Iraqi legislation has responded only relatively to what is stipulated in international standards related to the rights of this group of Society. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities stipulated in Article (5) the principle of equality and non-discrimination. By that, it had followed the path of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article/ 2, 25) as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article/ 24), the Covenant of the International Conference on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (Article/ 10), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article/ 2) ratified by the Republic of Iraq. The 2005 Iraqi constitution has explicitly and clearly indicated in Chapter Two of the section on Rights and Freedom, the principle of equality and non-discrimination among all Iraqis in rights and duties before the law, including persons with disabilities who possess all the rights and who bear the same duties without discrimination.

Introduction:

Disability in itself does not constitute an impediment to accessing public office, regardless of the type of disability in the event that a person with a disability is scientifically qualified, and good intentions are available to others, so he/she is entitled to what is assigned to him/her, whether the person is blind, lame, or disabled because he/she can be creative if given the opportunity. Therefore, he/she is entitled to responsibility. This confirms that the disabled must be given the opportunity to access public office positions regardless of the position of this job.

In order to do that, the right of special needs to assume public positions in the Iraqi legislation to ensure this right in international agreements, constitutional and legal texts, and the extent to which these texts are applied on the ground are issues discussed in this section.

The problem of study:

This segment still faces many obstacles at the national level in practicing this right. Hence, some questions must be asked:

1. The Law of Care of People with Disabilities and Special Needs No. (38) of 2013 stipulated in Article (16) allocates a percentage of (5%) to this category in appointing and in the field of employment and private projects and obtaining loans. The question here is whether this was applied in the field of public employment. In other words, when advertising jobs, have the ministries relied on allocating this percentage to people with disabilities?
2. The question also arises about the extent of conformity of the legislative texts in Iraq to international standards and international agreements as one of the countries party to them?

The significance of study:

Caring for people with disabilities is considered one of the most important criteria and evidence for the progress and attendance of states. The value of society is measured by the care, rehabilitation and insurance of the rights of people with disabilities.

The aims of study:

The current study aims at:

- Searching the rights and guarantees of people with disabilities
- Addressing the most important legal problems in the Iraqi legislation.
- Focusing on the importance of this group in society and the necessity of providing them with the necessities for a decent life.

The methodology of study:

In the present study, the inductive and analytical method is adopted to investigate conformity and compatibility with the international agreements.

The research plan:

To achieve familiarity with all aspects of the topic, the present study is divided into two sections. Section one presents the concept of disability. It is also divided into two subsections. The first subsection presents the definition of disability and people with disabilities. The second subsection presents types of disability. Section two discusses the position of the Iraqi legislation on the rights of people with disabilities in practicing public jobs. It is divided into two subsections. The first subsection discusses the authority concerned with the representation of persons with disabilities in Iraq. The second subsection discusses the position of the Iraqi legislation on practicing this right. The present study ends with a conclusion that includes the most important results and recommendations that have been reached.

Section one:

The concept of disability:

Disability has gained recognition at the international level as a human rights issue. Disability has been subjected to a set of studies that offer deviation from international and local laws and regulations that contribute to the integration of persons with disabilities with obligations and rights and equality with others. They are natural persons and part of the members of society. So, this section is divided into two subsections addressing definition of disability and people with disability in the first subsection. The second subsection addresses the types of disability.

The definition of disability and people with disabilities:

This subsection is divided into two points. The first point deals with the definition of disability and people with disabilities. The second point deals with the causes of disability.

The definition of disability:

In this section, the definition of disability and the definition of people with disabilities will be discussed in the following two paragraphs.

First; The definition of disability

Disability is defined as an organic or mental injury that severely limits or reduces the activities of an individual in one or more life skills (Preparation Committee at University Book House, 2009: 16). The World Health Organization defines disability as a condition that limits The individual's ability to perform one or more jobs that are essential in daily life, such as self-care or the practice of social relations and economic activities within the limits that are considered normal (Al-Muhaid&Rudeinah: 4).

The Iraqi legislator has defined disability as a restriction or lack of a person's ability due to a direct or imbalanced defect to perform interactions with his/her surroundings within the extent to which a person is considered normal (ibid).

Second; The definition of people with disabilities

There are a set of jurisprudential definitions that can be summarized with the following definition; They are those people who differ in one way or another from the people whom society considers normal. More specifically, they are the people whose performance is

physically, mentally, or behaviorally different from the performance of their ordinary peers (Abdel Hafedh, 2008: 13).

The Universal Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines people with disabilities as any person who is unable to fully believe in himself, in whole or in part, the necessities of normal individual or social life due to moral or non-moral deficiencies in his/her life and rational abilities (Article (1) of the special announcement of Rights of Jurists).

The Iraqi legislator has defined people with disabilities as whoever has lost the ability, in whole or in part, to participate in the society's life like others as a result of physical, mental, or sensory impairment that led to a deficiency in his/her performance (Article/ First/ F/ 2) of the law of care in the Disabled and special needs). It is noticed that the definition of people with disabilities mentioned in the above law coincides with some of the definitions in the international documents to some extent. The Iraqi legislator was not satisfied with the definition of people with disabilities. Thus, another term that is "special needs" was added. This term is Broader than the term (with a disability), where the person with special need is defined as a person who has a deficiency in carrying out his/her role and tasks with regard to his/her age and social, economic, and medical environment, such as education, sports, vocational training, family relations, etc., and short stature is considered with special needs) (Article (First) Paragraph (VII) of the Disability and Special Needs Care Law).

It is noticed that there is diversification in the concept of disability, which is relative. It differs from one person to another. It is necessary to balance the diversity of disability with its own nature. It should not be expanded in order not to add social groups who don't have the characteristics of the disabled in order to differentiate among them in rights and privileges. The Iraqi legislator has added the term (special needs) which is more comprehensive and broader than the term disability. It includes the categories whose deficiencies.

Causes of disability:

There are many causes of disability that can be divided into three stages:

1. The first stage; It includes the genetic causes and the congenital causes. It is the stage that is before birth. It includes a group of genetic factors that affect the fetus at the moment of fertilization. They are affected by a group of genetic factors specific to the parents. They need to be monitored by the parents before birth during pregnancy (Abdel Hafedh, 2008: 17).
2. The second stage; This stage includes the causes that may lead to the injury of the child during childbirth. The child may be seriously injured at this stage. This may affect the future of the child. The newborn may be exposed to pressure during difficult birth, which affects the brain cells. It is a major cause of disability and mental Health (ibid).
3. The third stage; This stage includes the reasons that afflict a child or a person after birth due to reasons including the diseases that may afflict the individual and which may cause disability, including poliomyelitis, measles, or arthritis, as well as taking drugs and alcohol of all kinds.

Types of disabilities:

This subsection is divided into three points. The first point is devoted to the sensory disability. The second point is devoted to the motor disability. The third point is devoted to the mental disability.

The sensory disability:

It is a disability resulting from injuries in hearing or speech. It occurs as a result of injury to the main nerves of the sensory organs: eyes, ears, or tongue.

First; Hearing Impairment; It comes as a result of an imbalance in one of the functions of the ear. The hearing process performed by the ear is the result of a set of functions that lead to the realization of vibration generated by objects, vocal machines, or larynx and transmitted to the outer ear, eardrum and bones. The three hearing aids are hammer, anvil, or stirrup bone.

Second; Speech disability; Speech is directly related to the brain that dissolves symbols of speech and vibrations and mainly controls the language. Therefore, any injury or disease that affects the central nervous system will lead to delaying or absence of speech (Al-Yuzbaki, 2002: 74).

Third; the visual disability; The individual may develop an anatomical deformity, an injury to a disease or a wound in the eye, which leads to a visual disability, which is defined as a weakness in any of the five visual functions: central sight, peripheral vision, visual adaptation, bilateral sight , And seeing the colors (Al-Dabaa, 2007: 83).

Second; Motor disability

An injury to the central nervous system, skeleton, or other muscles may lead to depriving the injured of the ability to perform their physical and motor functions. Among the types of this disability that affect the movement of the body and affect movement are (polio, muscle atrophy and ascites of the brain), which led To the emergence of prosthetic devices such as prosthetics or wheelchairs, and the paralysis that affects the individual, whether total or partial, which leads to the inability to make any movement, whether on the level of hands or legs is the most prominent example of movement disability (Al-Sadiq: 19).

Third; Mental disability

Mental disability is defined as a significant decrease in the level of general actual performance accompanied by a lack of adaptive behavior. It appears in the growth stage, which negatively affects the educational performance of the individual (RatawiZaidan, Al- Shakhs,and Al-Jabbar, 2006: 67).

It should be noted that Articles (52, 53, 54) of the Iraqi Social Welfare Law No. (126) of (1980) specified the authority designated to determine the type of disability in Iraq, which is the Diagnostic Center for Disability. It is part of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Department of Social Protection. This center works to classify persons with disabilities to degrees according to the degree of disability. This center includes specific committees formed for this purpose. These committees include a group of doctors specializing in various medical, psychological, and social fields. These committees practice their tasks by working to diagnose

disability and its nature and define treatment. It is the competent authority thereof that fully supervises the units concerned with social care for the disabled, sets plans for them, and works in coordination with the various relevant bodies for the purpose of facilitating their work. These committees also work on direct technical supervision in the field of preparing and training workers in the field of social care.

Section two:

The position of the Iraqi legislation on the rights of persons with disabilities to possess public office:

Most of the countries of the world have been keen on taking care of people with special needs in various fields. Therefore, they have issued many legislations, regulations, and documents that help them to obtain their rights and enable them to contribute to the development of society just like their peers from ordinary people. Among these countries is Iraq where there are various rights that people with special needs in Iraq possess according to the various laws that dealt with these rights. For the purpose of clarifying the position of the Iraqi legislator regarding the rights of persons with disabilities in assuming public jobs, the statement of the competent authority to represent persons with disabilities in Iraq will be discussed in the first subsection. The second subsection is allocated to clarify the position of the Iraqi legislator From practicing the right of holding public office.

The competent authority to represent people with disabilities in Iraq:

The Iraqi legislator has defined the body that takes care of people with disabilities and special needs and the method of its formation and the powers practiced by the board of directors of the authority. This is what will be addressed in two points. The first point is devoted to explaining the formation of the body. The second point deals with the powers practiced by the board of directors of the authority.

Formation of the organization (the Authority for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs).

The Iraqi legislator stipulated in the Law of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs No. 38 of 2013 that a body called "the Authority for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs" be established with a moral personality and financial and administrative independence. It is represented by the President of the Disabled Persons Association with special needs (Item (First) of Article (4) Of the Disabled and Special Needs Act).

It also stipulated that this body should be linked to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The headquarters of the organization be in the city of Baghdad and it would have to open sections in the governorates that are not organized in the region (item (second and third) of Article (2) of the Law of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs).

The law also stipulates that this body shall be headed by an employee with a special degree appointed in accordance with the law. He/she will have two deputies, one for technical affairs and the other for administrative affairs. Each of them is with the rank of general manager who holds at least an initial university degree and who has experience and specialization and has a service of no less than fifteen years, Provided that one of them is a person with a disability (Clause (First, Second) of Article (5) of the Disabled and Special Needs Law).

It is noticed that making this body linked to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is unacceptable. It was more appropriate for the Iraqi legislator to make this body (an independent body), with an independent financial liability so that this group is not wronged and to be truly represented.

Powers of the Board of Directors of the Authority:

The Authority's Board of Directors undertakes a set of specializations as follows:

1. Drawing up and approving the general policy of the organization's working in caring for persons with disabilities and special needs, rehabilitating them and following up their implementation procedures.
2. Proposing the annual budget project and the agency's owners.
3. Approving the final statements and submitting them to the competent authorities in accordance with the law.
4. Proposing internal laws, regulations and instructions.
5. Supervising and following up on securing the special requirements of people with disabilities and the special needs of all fields in coordination with the relevant competent authorities.
6. Proposing a recruitment policy for people with disabilities and those with special needs by preparing programs and a description of jobs that can be filled by them.
7. Forming committees, naming them and defining their terms of reference.
8. Setting plans for the following:
 1. Training and research preparation.
 2. Comprehensive national awareness to prevent the occurrence of disabilities, alleviate its severity, and prevent its exacerbation.
9. Approval of opening sections of the organization in provinces that are not organized in a region.
10. Approval of the controls and procedures for granting identity cards for those covered by the provisions of this law.
11. Submitting semi-annual reports to the Council of Ministers on the activities of the Authority.
12. Monitoring and following up the implementation of the Board of Directors' decisions.
13. Supervising the preparation of the general budget of the organization and presenting it to the Board of Directors.
14. Inviting and hosting experts and specialists according to the need of the organization to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors without voting (Item (First) of Article (9) of the law of the Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs).

It must be noticed that the Iraqi legislator placed the presidency of this council to a director of persons with disabilities to meet the required conditions. So, it is closer to this category in achieving their demands and practicing their rights.

Second; The position of the Iraqi legislation on practicing this right.

In this subsection, the extent to which the Iraqi legislation conforms to international agreements will be discussed in the first point. In the second point, the position of the Iraqi constitution and regular legislation regarding the regulation of the right to work and practice public office will be discussed.

The extent to which the Iraqi legislation conforms to the international agreements:

Article 5 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities enshrines the principle of equality and non-discrimination on the growth proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Articles (2, 25) of the Universal Declaration Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Article (24) International Covenant on Economic, Social, Political and Cultural Rights and Article (10) of the Conventions and Rights of the Child Article (5) ratified by the Republic of Iraq assure the equity and non-discrimination. The Iraqi legislation in the field of advancement of persons with disabilities is consistent in its essence, and in its provisions with these principles through the approval of the Law for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs No. (38) of 2013. This law counted all provisions or actions Which entail exclusion resulting in a reduction in the chances or harm of persons with disabilities as discrimination within the provisions of the above-mentioned law. The Iraqi legislator has approved the principle of (special empowerment) by adopting special personal procedures aiming at ensuring effective equality in the opportunities and treatment among persons with disabilities and the nature of people. The Iraqi legislation has adopted The quota system through allocating a percentage of (5%) to them in recruitment, in the field of employment, in private projects and in obtaining loans. The opportunities are equal with the other people without discrimination.

The Universal Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has also given special attention to this right. It affirms that they have the economic and social security and an adequate standard of living according to the ability to obtain a job to retain or to engage in a restricted, profitable, and rewarding profession, and to belong to a union Work (Article 7 of the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also indicated that persons with disabilities have the right to work on an equal basis with others in the public and private sectors without discrimination due to disability in relation to all matters related to all forms of employment, including conditions of employment, continuing work, career progress and safe working conditions and enabling them to practice their practical and union rights and ensuring that they have access to general programs of technical and vocational guidance and continuing vocational training.

As this agreement recommended to the States parties to combat slavery and servitude for persons with disabilities at work and protect them from forced labor, the need to provide them with the

opportunity to earn a living in a job they freely choose or accept in a labor market and work environment open to persons with disabilities and inclusive of them and facilitating their involvement in them, including those who face a disability in their work path (Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

Iraq is among the many countries as a party to the International Labor Organization conventions, including agreements related to employment, the labor market, wages and human resource development, guarantees for the employment of working women, protection of indigenous peoples, vacations and rest (Article (28) of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

Iraq is also a party to the following ILO Conventions:

1. Convention No. 131 of 1970 fixing the minimum wage.
2. Convention No. 100 of 1951 regarding equal remuneration.
3. Agreement No. 14 of 1921 regarding the application of weekly rest in the industrial facility.
4. Convention No. 106 of 1957 regarding weekly rest in commerce and offices.
5. Revised Convention No. 132 of 1970 regarding labor inspection.

It is noticed that the international community has worked both at the level of international organizations and international agreements and treaties to pressure all countries in the need to legislate laws that preserve the dignity of the disabled and work to ensure equality with peers from members of society, as well as the need to integrate it with the surrounding environment. It set a set of rules that must be achieved for the purpose of community-based rehabilitation.

Second; Employment of people with disabilities in the Iraqi constitution and regular legislation.

It has already been shown that the rights of people with disabilities are various. The laws that dealt with these rights are different depending on this diversity. The right of the special needs to be employed according to the Iraqi legislation and laws will be shown. The 2005 Iraqi constitution confirmed this in many of its articles. It stipulated that the State shall provide care for the disabled and the special needs and ensure their rehabilitation in order to integrate them into society. This shall be regulated by law (Article (32) of the Constitution of Iraq of 2005). It also stipulated that the state guarantees for the individual and the family and the private child and family a guarantee of Social, health, and basic rights to live in a comfortable free life, providing them with adequate income and adequate housing (Article 30 of the Constitution of Iraq of 2005.).

The constitution also stipulated that “(equal opportunities are a valid right for all Iraqis. The state guarantees the necessary measures to be taken to achieve this)” (Article (16) of the 2005 Iraqi constitution.)

The constitution also stipulates the right to work as work is a right for all Iraqis in a way that guarantees them a decent life (Article (22 / First) of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution).

It is noticed that the Constitution of Iraq contained in a number of articles texts affirming the rights of the disabled and the special needs, the right to work, and the need to legislate the necessary laws that provide them with a free and dignified life.

In the same direction, the Iraqi legislation confirmed these rights as the Law of Care of People with Special Needs No. 38 of 2013 recognizes the right of a person with a disability to obtain a job that is commensurate with his/her circumstances by encouraging appropriate professional training for people with disabilities and developing their capabilities in accordance with the needs of the labor market. The Iraqi legislation is in line with what is mentioned in the international agreements in the field of advancement. It is compatible with the disabled and the special needs. Ministries and entities not associated with the Ministry and public sector companies are required to allocate jobs for people with disabilities not less than (5%) of the declared job grades. The employer in the mixed sector is obliged to use one worker with a disability if he/she employs a number of workers not less than (30) and not more than (60). They are obliged to employ (3%) if the total number of workers is more than (60) workers (Article (16) of the Welfare of the Disabled and special needs law). The penalties are up to (500,000) five hundred thousand dinars imposed if the employer in the mixed sector refuses to implement these legally established percentages. Despite the specific percentages in the appointment, especially since the large number of wars that Iraq has gone through that left a large number of disabled people, there is no real application of these texts due to the lack of seriousness of those in the concerned authorities to implement these texts and put them seriously. This is the responsibility of the labor offices of the Department of Labor and Social Security, which is the administration responsible for work in Iraq. It is one of the most basic means of monitoring employment And labor market trends through registrants and operators through these offices directly or indirectly, or operators through employers whose offices are notified of their works. The department collects and analyzes data on the reality of employment and labor market trends and issues them in quarterly and annual reports as well as conducting periodic surveys of projects and Laborpowers , wages and studies on the reality of labor gatherings are being published and distributed to the relevant authorities, especially the Ministry of Planning.

The legislator was also keen to provide monthly aid. The Social Protection Law No. 11 of 2014 was enacted. It stipulated the provision of monthly aid to people with disabilities who are unable to work. But, these aids are very little and do not fit with the economic situation that The Iraqi citizen lives in.

The law also requires the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to work on appropriate professional training for people with disabilities and special needs and develop their capabilities in accordance with the need of the labor market and train teachers working in this field, as well as provide equal job opportunities in their place of employment according to their qualifications. The law also obligated all state institutions to encourage them Through their employment and providing them with job opportunities. The law also granted them a set of other privileges, including (Article (16) of the Social Protection Law No. 11 of 2014):

1. Exemption of 10% of income tax income.
2. Giving soft loans according to the law.
3. A monthly allowance appropriate to the disability environment.

The law also provided for persons with disabilities from those whose disabilities prevented them from meeting the requirements of their regular daily life and need those who accompany them to meet their needs continuously, which is determined by a specialized medical committee and according to the instructions issued by the Ministry of Health on 11/16/1998, which is related to estimating the degree of disability for them. They have the right to a full-time appointee at the government's expense (Article 19 of the Social Protection Law No. 11 of 2014).

It is noticed that the Iraqi legislator has provided people with disabilities and special needs with a set of rights and privileges that contribute to providing them with equal work opportunities and throwing them into society, which helps them to integrate with the rest of the community, which contributes to reducing their suffering and raising their standard of living for the purpose of providing a free and dignified life for them.

The results:

1. There is a wide interest at the international level by the countries of the world in the matter of the disabled and the special needs through the large number of international agreements.
2. The Iraqi legislator has used the term people with disabilities and people with special needs. The term people with special needs is broader, more accurate, and more comprehensive.
3. Determining 5% for the purpose of employing people with special needs in the public and mixed sectors without specifying sanctions on the public sector in case of non-compliance with them.
4. The Iraqi legislator has provided a special allowance to the full-time employee for the purpose of helping the disabled who are unable to meet their needs.
5. The Iraqi legislator has granted a monthly allowance for the disabled and the special needs despite the fact that the sums are very small and not commensurate with the economic situation in the country.
6. The Iraqi legislator has adopted clear and detailed legislative texts that are compatible with international standards.

The recommendations:

1. The term people with disabilities and the special needs should be unified to become people with special needs as it is more comprehensive.
2. Raising the percentage of 5% in the employment of people with special needs because of the wars and terrorist attacks that Iraq experienced, which left a large number of people with special needs. Hence, the percentage should be made 10%.
3. Obliging the public sector to adhere to the percentages specified in the employment of people with special needs and imposing severe penalties in the event of non-compliance with them.
4. Increasing the amounts of the social aid in a way that is compatible with the economic conditions in the country by raising the benefit determined in the Social Protection Law.

5.The Iraqi legislator should make it a separate care and disability care organization instead of linking it to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

6.The presidency of this body should be by a person with a disability in order to be close to them and help in working for them.

Conclusions:

Having tackled the rights of persons with disabilities to hold public office,the researcher indicates some important things touched upon through the present study. The 2005 Iraqi constitution in Article (15) is based on the principle of equal opportunities as a right guaranteed to all Iraqis. Likewise, Article (22) is a clear indication of the right to work for all Iraqis. Article (32) also emphasized the need to take into account the right of the disabled in employment. There is a need to ensure them and ensure their rehabilitation and inclusion in society. Likewise, the Iraqi legislations emphasized these rights despite the problems that were explained through the present study. But, the most important thing that can be observed is the failure to activate these legal texts and their insufficiency in dealing with the problems of this group and their inability to provide a decent life for them.

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